

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF STRESS ON TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

Ayesha Serfraz, University of the Punjab
Ahmed Muneeb Mehta, University of the Punjab
Hina Saleem, University of the Punjab
Samra Banaras, University of the Punjab
Volkan Altintas, Izmir Katip Celebi University

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on student-teacher relationship at University level to bring up the stress factors that affect the enactment and efficiency of both teachers and students. It also tries to identify the factors that influence both student-teacher relationships especially at high level when they have to interact more as they move towards projects/research leaving book behind which demands personal time/support of teacher/supervisor more than ever during academic life of a student. The main aim of the current study is to highlight the tension level amongst pupils and mentors and how this stress affect student-teacher relationship, since both are the foundations of any society, if any of them is not working with full efficiency and taking work as stress, it may have spill over effects over economic activities. The sample of this research consists of 160 contributors in which 80 were students and 80 were teachers. The participants of the study are university students and teachers from University of the Punjab, Pakistan. The sampling technique is purposive since the members of the study have been selected according to the objectives of the research which focuses only on the students and teachers of Punjab University. Based on the analysis, it was concluded that stress has a significant positive effect on both student-teacher performance which further affects the productivity and hence the economic activities get affected. The findings suggest that stress is strongly but negative associated with academic achievements. Due to low productivity, both students and teachers are unable to give their 100% which causes further stress and negatively affect social, economic and ethical activities. The findings of the study will help to highlight and eliminate the stressors that lower the performance of student and teachers which would ultimately help to flourish the social and economic factors.

Keywords: Teacher's Performance, Student's Performance, Socio Economic Factors, Ethical Factors, Stress, Education.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the most common issues these days, but most of the people do not like to talk about it as they feel ashamed or hesitant which leads to suicides and criminal actions. The effects of stress can be disastrous and unpredictable; therefore it needs to be carefully handled (Elias et al., 2011). There are different concepts of stress, it can be professional, it may be related to personal life or it can be genetic but stress has become one of the most talked about issues

among people of all classes, unfortunately many people try to ignore it instead of finding solutions. Normal concept of stress emphasizes that Stress typically happens when the desires of an individual surpass his capacities (Khan et al., 2013). Stress is identified as a “*state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances*”. Stress is normally caused by the factors like financial issues, environment of a person, social and economic situations, academic and such factors are called stressor. These normally result in negative effects on health including loss of appetite, sleeplessness, anxiety, depression mood swings and many more (Keinan & Malach-Pines, 2007). Same results were found by (Abrar et al., 2020) that there exist between abusive supervision and stress, therefore organization should interfere in reducing stressors and that there should a proper policy framework to smooth teacher-student relationship. Same views have been expressed by (Bezpalova et al., 2020), in the present world, advanced education now contributes to the area of spirituality, cultural norms, social-economic improvements and betterment of all individuals in the society specifically. Therefore, in this globalized world, proper policies are very important to keep a smooth flow of higher education.

Then again, it isn't just society or a person who feels the negative impacts on their wellbeing, yet additionally the overflows can be seen overall economy because of reduced productivity and lack of motivation towards work. If the individuals feel stressed in their personal life, it will be reflected in their professional lives, too. Furthermore, the productivity decreases which results in low economic activity both at the micro and macro level. In addition, from political and economic point of view, these effects are not limited to geographical boundaries, but also international relations which can disturb, for example, low trade and investment patterns can cause low economic growth. Having a good mental and physical health is very important to perform different tasks at all levels for all starting from a simple daily wage earner to a politician running a country. Adding on, if one fears about his/her health, it will be reflected on the performance at workplace and may result in loss of job causing further crises related to finances and economic issues.

Regarding the impact of stress at the international level, many researchers are of the view that both mental and physical health are an integral part of human being and a person must be healthy in both sense to perform better in all fields of life. According to a study, 74 countries (both industrial and developing) have been analysed over the period of 1980-2000, the results show that the countries in which population is healthy, has more productive workers and they witness high level foreign direct investment inflows (Giorgi et al., 2015). Therefore, to understand the impact of stress on social and economic factors this article aims at understanding the basics of stress i.e. studying the very basic reason for stress which has been taken as academic stress since this is the starting point of every person's social interaction and absorbing economic gains. For this purpose, some questions have been proposed which include an understanding of stressors that influence the academic performance of students. Keeping a balance these articles also studies the pattern which cause stress to makers of any society i.e. teachers. The analyses have been done to see what factors cause stress to mentors and what kind of spillover effects a country faces. This article is unique and innovative in the sense that it analyses the two-way causation of stress between and teachers and students and what effects it can have at a social and economic level, whereas, majority of literature is based on analysing stress factors related to students only.

Purpose

The core drive of this research is to analyse the main stressors that affect the academic performance and the student-teacher relationship within the framework of the following research questions:

1. Does stress affect academic performance of students?
2. Does stress affect student- teacher relationship?

METHOD

This study uses inferential statistics to examine the connotation between anxiety/tension/stress and academic activities of both students and teachers. A sample of 160 participants has been taken out of which 80 are students and 80 are teachers associated with University of the Punjab, Lahore. Purposive sampling method has been used and interviews have been conducted by using a self-developed questionnaire which is divided into three parts. Firstly, it asks about demographics of a person, in second part, it asks three closed ended questions to get a deeper understanding between teacher-student relationships. The last part of interview consists of 16 objects in Perceived Academic Stress (PAS) scale which has been altered according to need of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic Stress on Students and its Social and Economic Impacts

It cannot be ignored that a healthy and productive relationship is very important for the growth of society and economy. But there are different expectations that affect this relationship. Mentors expect that their students are obedient, efficient, and hard-working and are able to meet deadlines without warning, whereas, students expect that teachers should be polite, unbiased, and available when required and accommodating (Essel & Owusu, 2017; Mainhard et al., 2009). In many cases, students work to make arrangements for fee. In case of females, some of them get married during their academic life and also have to manage their families. Sometimes, they have to give up their education to perform household activities. According to Fazal et al. (2020), females are given less opportunities for studying as compared to their male counterparts and those who get permission, face double difficulty; manage their home stress and it academic stress which causes stress and makes it harder for them to focus on their academic work which creates difficulty for them to concentrate fully on their academic work (research project). Alternatively, teachers also have to tackle multiple tasks which include handling so many students at the same time, preparing and delivering lecture and viz a viz managing their family life too (Meng & Wang, 2018). These are the stress-causing situations which cause a friction between teacher–student relationships which further affects the quality of work. When the quality of work is affected, negative effects are observed both at the social and economic level. Undergraduate students face more stress comparatively as majority of them have to work and manage their studies same views have been presented by (Baldwin et al., 2009) who emphasize that graduating students (final years) face stress while balancing work and studies. In addition, less time for examination is also a strong stressor among student (Ongori, 2009). Correspondingly, lack of

ample time for studying and completing long and heavy academic tasks without any proper guidance is also a stress causing factor especially in case of those students for whom the expectation level is high (Behere et al., 2011). Consequently it weakens a society since anxiety and stress have negative impacts on health and productivity which further weaken the entire economic structure.

Talking about stress at academic level, many researchers have pointed out that completing difficult projects, unhealthy competition among students, loss of self-confidence, disturbed relationship with teachers and family issues are also included in the list of stressors. (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Huss Factors such as difficult assignments, undesirable timings like one which both students and teachers are facing during the pandemic while having online classes, biasedness from teachers and tough syllabus from teachers result in tension, thus increasing the stress (Nakalema & Ssenyonga, 2013). Majority of learners discover it to be problematic to undertake their project in class, which increases stress (Bitzer & Bruin, 2004). Above all, weak students go through more stress as they are unable to cope up with the competition and tasks given by teachers (Petersen et al., 2009). Numerous investigations presume that rigorous burden and workload and academic burden act as factor primary stressors at University level (Seyedfatemi et al., 2007). Several researchers also establish that completing course in a short span of time; undertaking exam and factor of competition also lead to an increase in stress level (Abouserie, 1994). Attempt to lean during a short of 6 months (semester time) and trying to get good grade are also among stressor related to education/academia (Kariv & Heiman, 2005) because most of the teachers give more importance to good grades irrespective of the fact whether they know the underlying concept or not because it is a common belief that only high GPA guarantees good job and better living standard (Nakalema & Ssenyonga, 2013) consequently the pressure builds up which negatively affects the health of students and instead of increasing their efficiency, this pressure reduces their productivity (Olowookere et al., 2015) and students go through depression, frustration and anxiety which increases stress level (Prabu, 2015).

Academic Stress on Teachers and its Socio Economic and Ethical Impacts

Tension and frustration are very common problems in developing countries where employer does not care whether his employees are working without stress nor need any kind of help which can help them in any case so their health does not get affected and productivity does not decrease. Also, the workers do not feel insecure about job and income and is motivated to work in a healthy environment (Imtiaz & Ahmad, 2009). Extreme levels of stress and anxiety exert negative effects on an individual in every sense. McShane & Jennifer (2011), and consequently, lack of motivation and absenteeism is observed in such organizations where workers are not given due attention (Dollard & Metzer, 1999). The effect of tension can be can result in as absenteeism and unemployment which results in reduced income level and low growth of economy. As mentioned earlier, low economic growth does not only affect the individual growth of a country but also its performance gets negatively affected at the international level. In an organization, employee performance and goal achievement get negatively affected by stress (Jalagat, 2017). Gluschkoff et al. (2017) have noticed that occupational stress negatively impacts organizational performance as well as the cognitive patterns of employees working at different levels. Network members start feeling frustrated as a

result of continuous stress. Work related stress affects the productivity and outcome as above mentioned factors create serious health problems (Laal, 2013). All these socio-economic, personal and academic factors affect productivity levels of individuals (Kohn & Frazer, 1986). Misra et al. (2000) and their concentration diverts from work (Khan et al., 2013).

FINDINGS

Using self-developed questionnaire it was found that the both research questions prove right, i.e., students and teachers have a consensus that they face stress at university level which negatively affects their performance and also disturbs student- teacher relationship.

Comparative Analysis (Overall Mean Values)

Mean values have been calculated to examine the factors that affect student-teacher relationship. Also, at what scale they affect this relationship. Students and teachers and how much. Each scale out of four scales shows high mean value concluding that all the participants who took part in the study the stress factors mentioned in questionnaires affect their level of performance and student-teacher relationship. The findings can be summed up as below. The p. value that visibly embodies those only two scales:

1. Stress-related to students' academic self-perception (students view);
2. Stress-related to academic expectations (teachers view) are not as statistically significant as their p. value is greater than 0.05.

Based on the t-test analysis, the mean score of females is comparatively higher as compared to mean scores of which implies, according to results, that females take more stress as compared to males.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression tests validates that 4 scales out of total 8 scales added significantly for forecasting the strain and enactment of the sample (Students and Teachers). The part of all scales is significant at $p < 0.05$. The robust forecasters of the stress and performance are Stress Related to Student and Supervisor Relationship (Student), Stress Related to Faculty Work and Examinations (Teacher) and Stress Related to Student and Supervisor Relationship (Teacher) and Stress Related to Academic Work and Examinations (Student).

“Stress related to student -supervisor relationship (Student) is appearing to be 29.7% of the variance and is the most significant variable in this study. Stress associated to faculty work and examinations (Teacher) is the second most significant variable as its percentage of variance is almost 19.8%. Stress related to student- supervisor relationships (Teacher) is the third most significant variable that disturbs the performance of teachers with a variance of 16.4%. Stress related to academic work and examinations (Student) is the fourth variable that affects the performance with the variance of 15.4%.”

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this analysis is to feature the impact of stress on educational

performance using the baseline of teacher-student relationship. Job insecurity has been the most highlighting reason behind the stress among students (Elias et al., 2011). Students expressed that biased behaviour of teacher and insufficient supervision is unethical and they stand among the highest stress factors (Khan et al., 2013). University students were of the view that they feel most stressed while writing and submitting their thesis whereas, teachers responded that they have to supervise many students so doing multiple tasks. Also, the teachers pointed out that they have to deal with their personal life issues as well which makes them overburdened and increases their stress level. Teachers also expressed their annoyance for the students seeking guidance at an eleventh hour, yet heavy workload has been identified as more stressful factor by teachers. These responses are also braced by a Chinese study on faculty work in which the heavy workload and supervising a large number of students have been identified as high stress causing factors (Essel & Owusu, 2017; Meng & Wang, 2018). On the other hand, the results of multiple regressions show that the same results i.e. heavy workload and supervising a large number of students are on the top of stress factors list. Adding on, as discussed above that students who disturb teachers at an eleventh hour cause irritation and those who do not follow instruction even at that time cause too much stress for teachers (Essel & Owusu, 2017). Since teachers expect their students to be obedient especially when they invest time and energy in guiding them. The stress factor comes in between teachers and students when they do not respond as expected. Similarly, Burton et al. (2012) also established that different stressors such as heavy workload, overloaded with students and most importantly, carrying out their own research activities harmfully influence the association between the students and the university teachers. A very important point has been raised by the teachers in questionnaire that when they are not appreciated by their colleagues and seniors even after extracting time for conducting their own research, they feel demotivated and stressed. Same has been supported by (Aydoğan, 2008; Gagnon et al., 2019) that lack of support and appreciation increase stress levels.

It can be concluded that stress plays an essential role in every person's life. When teachers are stressed the whole society and economy gets affected because teachers are responsible for building a nation. Similarly, youth is the future of any nation. If the youth is in stress, a concrete foundation of any society or economy is not possible. Therefore, it is very important to conduct more research about this issue and try to find out a solution to remove the stress between makers and builders and strengthen societies and economies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study has examined diverse stressors which directly or indirectly disturb the student-teacher association and their enactment. Consequently, it is essential to categorize the stressors that distress this bonding. For this purpose, administration must formulate such policies which make university education a source of happiness instead of stress. Moreover, student-teacher relationship is very important because when makers of the society (teachers) are stressed and not giving their full potential, the building blocks (students) of society and economy would be standing on weak foundations. Although this area has been ignored by many researchers but this is vital for any society or economy to grow and reach the level of development. Policy makers must devise polices to eradicate these stressors by dropping the assignment load so that both students and teachers are able to improve their performance. Stress managing workshops and conferences should be arranged where an open discussion should be carried out and both

parties talk about their concerns without and hesitation. Besides, the educational atmosphere must be developed so that both mentors and pupils feel encouraged to perform better. Students need to be cognizant of the detail that teachers are also going through various types of stressors, so both of them need to interconnect about the stress-creating situations and to find the solutions. For his purpose, this communication gap between teachers and students should be removed keeping the lines of discipline in between. If this could be achieved, not only society would move on the path of development but increased productivity, high level of employment, job security etc. will reduce all kinds of stress taking country on the heights of economic growth and development.

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