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Stress among Private School Teachers**Niranjan Katel**

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Abstract

The modern lifestyle is accompanied by a great amount of stress, and private school teachers are also not far from it. The workplace is also more stressful than it used to be. Stress among private school teachers is influenced by a multifaceted phenomenon. For the completion of this research, the predetermined objectives were set first. The objectives of this study were to analyze and address the factors contributing to stress among private school teachers in order to implement effective support mechanisms and promote overall well-being within the educational environment. Altogether, 19 respondents, among them 1 principal, 2 management committee members, and 16 teachers (8 from the basic level and 8 from the secondary level) of a private school in Solukhumbu, were selected purposefully. The data and responses were collected from management committee members, principal, and teachers through an open ended questionnaire, and the responses were interpreted and described qualitatively according to the defined objectives. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is interconnected in this study to understand stress among private school teachers and use appropriate remedies in a specific order, starting with basic physiological needs and progressing to higher-level needs.

16 respondents working as a school teacher in a private school were burdened with excessive tasks, responsibilities, and demands within their professional role. They were facing high teaching loads with numerous classes, subjects, and students to manage. They had very limited time for lesson preparation and other innovations. Strategies such as workload management, providing adequate resources, promoting work-life balance, and offering support for professional development can help alleviate the stress associated with work overload and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Further, private school teachers in Solukhumbu were not getting the facilities of professional development opportunities like seminars, workshops, research, on-the-job training, and other soft skills workshops from the school administration. To address this issue, it would be essential for private school teachers, school administrators, and relevant stakeholders to collaborate and advocate for the

importance of professional development. Additionally, government policies or initiatives that support and incentivize private schools to invest in teacher training and other professional development courses. The responses of all the respondents showed that job security and stability are big worries for them. The survey showed that private school teachers in Solukhumbu had a lot of uncertainty about job security and stability, which is creating stress for the teachers. The school management committee and school administrators should prioritize clear policies regarding employment terms, the school's future plans, bonuses, insurance, retirement plans, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. All 16 respondents from different backgrounds responded that teaching is stressful and sensitive enough to address cultural differences, language barriers, and varying learning styles, which requires extra effort from the teacher. The school management committee and administration should prioritize the pressure of the sociocultural sensitivity of diverse students to the teachers. Limited participation in decision-making can generate stress by undermining teachers' sense of professional value, autonomy, and job satisfaction. Addressing these stressors involves implementing effective feedback mechanisms by the concerned authorities that provide constructive insights, recognize achievements, and support teachers.

Maslow's theory is a psychological theory that suggests teachers are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, starting with basic needs and progressing through safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. While Maslow's theory is primarily focused on motivation, it can be indirectly related to stress management. Implementing these recommendations requires the commitment of school administrators, policymakers, and educators to create a supportive and conducive environment for teaching and learning in private schools.

Keywords

stress, private school, private school teacher, Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Introduction

Teachers are the most valued assets in any country, and teaching is an extremely rewarding profession because it earns respect and prestige from society. However, it is also recognized as highly stressful and demanding. High rates of teacher occupational stress have been documented globally. For this, comprehensive efforts are needed to minimize stress among private school teachers, improve working conditions, and provide necessary support for them.

Teachers worldwide face a heavy workload that is also accompanied by demands from school administrators, peers, and colleagues, as well as students and their parents (Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010). Teachers stress is conceptualized as the experience of unpleasant and negative emotions resulting from their daily work (Collie, Martin, Malmberg, Hall, & Ginns, 2012).

When individual resources and capabilities are limited and the organization demands high results, this situation creates pressure and makes individuals feel stressed (Michie, 2002). Stress manifests in different forms: changes in behavior, social isolation in the office or home, anxiety, and depression. Stress at the workplace decreases employee performance.

"The effect of occupational stress and its relationship to teachers leaving the profession is a growing concern. Stress is defined as 'a disagreeable emotional experience accompanied with feelings of anxiety, anger, frustration, and tension and connected with specific environmental causes' (Kyriacou, 2001). Stress manifests in teachers and significantly impacts their sense of efficacy, job satisfaction, burnout, attrition, student engagement, and physical health.

Nagra & Arora, 2013 (2013) claimed that a stress-free teacher can teach more effectively in the classroom and can provide a better-quality environment, making the school a challenging and interesting place for students.

Stress is a relationship between the person and the environment, which has become one of the most serious health issues worldwide. Globally, the reported prevalence of stress shows that 28% of men and 53% of women go through work-family stress. The prevalence is even higher in Asian countries. In India, 87% of women are stressed for time to manage work and family.

Furthermore, this study is associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This motivation theory is used as a guiding theory in this study. As stated by Maslow's (1954), the employee in an organization is influenced by their current needs. The improvement of working conditions is referred to as a need among teachers. They have strong desires to improve their work conditions, and their accomplishments reflect their attitude. More specifically, the improvement of working conditions switches motivation to perform jobs among teachers. A study conducted by Davis and Newstrom (2002) mentioned that until and unless factors such as working conditions are fulfilled, teachers will be dissatisfied and ineffective. Therefore, satisfactory working conditions increase motivation, which further produces better attitudes (Jerome, 2013).

In connection with Nepal, the government of Nepal hardly invests budgets to improve the conditions of stress among private school teachers. In this context, working conditions are a big problem for teachers. With the hope of arriving at a better understanding of the sources of teachers' stress as one source of their job dissatisfaction in an attempt to offer solutions for them to survive the profession. Therefore, there is reason to expand research on stress among private school teachers. Teachers are the key stakeholders in running the educational system successfully. Without them, our education system cannot prosper in the long run (Timalsina, 2008). In this study, the researcher wants to know whether stress among private school teachers enhances the overall performance of the school. Here, the researcher is concerned with the stress among private school teachers in Solukhumbu district and how they perceive their stress towards it. In this study, stress among private school teachers contributes to the broader field of educational psychology and workforce well-being. It can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by educators, helping researchers and practitioners design interventions that go beyond superficial solutions and address the root causes of stress. In conclusion, the multifaceted dimensions of stress among private school teachers lie in its potential to enhance educational outcomes, foster a positive work environment, and contribute to the broader understanding of workforce well-being in the field of education. By comprehensively investigating the factors contributing to teacher stress, researchers can inform evidence-based interventions that benefit both educators and students. The objectives

of this research are to analyze and address the factors contributing to stress among private school teachers in order to implement effective support mechanisms and promote overall well-being within the educational environment.

Literature Review

In America, 14% of new teachers leave their job after one year (Colgan, 2004). Hare & Heap, (2001) observed that 5% of new teachers resign their job between one to five years. The reason behind leaving the teaching profession are poor pay, unsatisfied working condition, and poor public support. The intensity of stress may result in the rude behavior of teachers, an increase in absenteeism and teacher take early retirement.

A study by Borg and Riding (1991), showed high levels of occupational stress among Maltese teachers. Almost 34% of Maltese teachers reported their jobs as being either very stressful or extremely stressful. Ferguson, Frost, and Hall (2012, p. 27) as saying, "well above 26% of New Zealander intermediate teachers felt that teaching occupation was either very or extremely stressful".

Bradley, Wilhelm, Dewhust-savellis & Parker, 2000 Studies conducted between 1970 to 2017 identified the causes of stress in teaching and also identified the stress factors such factors are workload, lack of communication between teacher and higher authorities, scare of basic resources, lack of involvement of teacher in decision making, lack of peer-to-peer relationship, gap of student's teacher relationship, gap between parent's teacher relationship, no attention on student's discipline, and unhealthy working environment.

Mitchie, (2002) identified the five keys factors in his research that cause of individual stress, 1) long hours of work and work overload, 2) low worker interaction, 3) not good command over his or her work and in decision making the role of employee is very poor, 4) poor social activities in office and social life, 5) the hierarchy of management is unclear and the management style is autocratic.

Stansfeld et al, (2004) conducted a survey of occupational and mental health in the UK, the result of this survey revealed that women had much health disorder than men in occupational groups.

In stress, teachers become worried over routine matters and they blame others for their problems. They cannot focus on their teaching methods and their first priority to defend your-self (Fimian, 1982).

Block, (1977) states that stress destroys your personal life activities and your personal life may be imbalance and this stress result in like death, divorce or accident. He also told that when personal stress coupled with other types of stress like professional stress the teacher's health problems increase. Stress at the workplace create many problems in the human circulatory system and thus can be high blood pressure and heart attack problems. So never fight and flight in stress.

A disheartening moment for an individual when he compares his or her length of work and pays scale with others school teacher (Kaiser, 1982; Penny, 1982) very few promotion opportunities offered to teachers even who recuperate their periods (Alschuler, 1980). The institute expected from teacher fire drill training, student trip, school functions besides the

routine duties associated with teaching. Rewards for teachers are limited and their tasks are too many (Ahmed, I. 2018). These tasks include supervisory duty, supports in administrative projects and after school work (Penny, 1982).

Some students used abused language in the school, in this situation no morally or ethically supports given to a teacher from school management (Styles, 1977). Fimian, (1982) described that some teacher has not the ability to perform a specific task so when they take responsibilities feel stress. Student discipline is also a hefty source of teacher stress. In each class, a teacher faced every day 30 to 50 students. The lesson time of each subject 30 to 60 minutes, in this time the student asking an irrelevant question related to the subject, taking each other's, laughing and throwing things. The 50% of lesson time spend to control these actions and instruction to students (Alschuler, 1980). Some students chronically misbehave with teachers, this type of students produce greater stress (Feitler & Tokor, 1982). Altschuler, (1980) observed that a single teacher connects with 150 students per day, these students have different learning style, different personalities, and different attitudes. Some students slow learning while some intelligent and pick the ideas sharply. This situation is very critical for teachers and cause of stress.

Besides teaching the teacher done some duties and busy in papermaking, paper checking, compile results, maintain student personal file, arrange functions, training, workshops, and seminars. The 80% of his or her daily time spent on these activities. Thus, very little time left for his or her social and family life. His or her life totally unbalance and stress badly affects his or her health (McMillen, 1987). Otto, (1986) surveyed 16 schools of Australia and contact with 600 teachers. The result of this survey indicated that one half of the teacher consulted with the doctor within one-year work-related stress. Enever, (1988) conducted research and found that 34 percent of primary school teachers told the teaching profession is extremely stressful.

Stress and performance had a correlation if stress level increase the performance will decrease (AlKubaisi, 2003). Shbeir, (2009) described the implications of work-related stress like decrease employee productivity level, accident, lack of job satisfaction, increase in turnover, absenteeism, and illnesses. The stress changes the behavior of the individual and badly develop negative habits such as smoking, sleep disorder and not follow organization rule and regulations (AI-Emyan, 2005).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs :

A motivation theory proposed by Maslows (1954) believes that humans have certain needs. This theory elucidated five hierarchical needs that are essential for an organization and its employees' performance and attitude (Mullins, 2010). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is interconnected in this study to understand stress among private school teachers and use appropriate remedies in a specific order, starting with basic physiological needs and progressing to higher-level needs by the school management committee and administration.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature. Altogether, 19 respondents, among them 1 principal, 2 management committee members, and 16 teachers (8 from the basic level and 8 from the secondary level) of a private school in Solukhumbu, were selected purposefully. Primary data

were collected from 19 respondents, and secondary data were collected from published articles, research reports, and journals. The data in this study were collected from the teachers of a private school in Solukhumbu district. An open-ended questionnaire was the main tool designed to meet the objectives. The data collected from the respondents was tabulated and described qualitatively according to the defined objectives. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is used as the theory for the purpose of solving the problem of stress among private school teachers.

Results and Discussion

This research stress among private school teachers reflects the dimensions of stress among teachers. Here are some enlarged dimensions to consider. Understanding and addressing these dimensions can help create a more supportive and conducive work environment for private school teachers.

Work overload :

16 respondents working as school teachers in a private school were burdened with excessive tasks, responsibilities, and demands within their professional role. According to them, respondents were facing high teaching loads, with numerous classes, subjects, and students to manage. They had very limited time for lesson preparation and other innovations. Which is leading to frustration and stress.

Addressing work overload among private school teachers is crucial for fostering a positive and productive work environment. Strategies such as workload management, providing adequate resources, promoting work-life balance, and offering support for professional development can help alleviate the stress associated with work overload and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Further, the school management committee as well as the school administration should treat the work load of the teacher considering the physiological aspect of Maslow's theory.

Professional Development Opportunities :

Professional development opportunities are crucial for private school teachers. Private school teachers in Solukhumbu were not getting the facilities of professional development opportunities like seminars, workshops, self-study and research, on-the-job training, and soft skills workshops from the school administration. The principal of the school stated that there is not a clear schedule and budget plan to conduct the above-mentioned program. He further stated that only Montessori training for junior-level teachers was conducted previously by the school effort, but it is also not on a regular basis, and there is still a lack of professional development facilities for secondary-level teachers. The management committee and administration were showing their financial constraints as well as a lack of resources for organizing those programs. Private school teachers were feeling insufficient opportunities for professional growth, which is creating frustration and stress.

Professional development supports self-actualization by empowering teachers to realize their full potential in the ever-evolving educational landscape. Prioritizing such opportunities creates a fulfilling and supportive environment, enhancing teacher motivation and growth.

Job Security and Stability :

Job security and stability mean having a secure and stable job. The responses of all the respondents showed that job security and stability are big worries for them. The survey showed that private school teachers in Solukhumbu had a lot of uncertainty about job security and stability, which is creating stress for the teachers. According to the respondents, they were even not getting the government-scale salary. Respondents further stated that facilities like bonuses, insurance, retirement plans, disability coverage, and other wellness programs were managed by the school administration. Respondents stated that even they were appointed very orally without letters. The principal of the school stated that there is no clear policy or provision for the permanency of the teachers. He further stated that teachers are working on a temporary basis. The result showed that there is a high turnover rate due to job instability. The record of frequent departures of teachers showed an overall sense of instability and uncertainty. This is a stressful situation for all the employees of the school. Maslow's theory states that physiologically, a stable job ensures financial security, meeting basic needs. Safety needs are fulfilled as job stability reduces the fear of unemployment and related stress.

Finally, job security supports self-actualization by providing a stable platform for professional growth and the realization of one's full potential. Considering Maslow's theory of need, school administrators should prioritize clear communication regarding employment terms and provide transparency regarding the school's future plans, bonuses, insurance, retirement plans, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. Offering professional development opportunities and recognizing teachers' contributions can also contribute to a more stable and supportive work environment. Ultimately, fostering a sense of security and stability enhances job satisfaction and well-being among teachers.

Compensation :

Compensation refers to the total rewards received by an individual in exchange for their work or services rendered to an organization. It typically includes both monetary and non-monetary components such as salary or wages, bonuses, benefits (like health insurance and retirement plans), stock options, paid time off, and other perks. All the respondents responded that there is a lack of government-scaled salaries as well as other facilities like retirement plans, life insurance, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. Respondents related to teaching were not satisfied with their salaries. No, a fair compensation system was established there. Teachers are getting their salaries according to their individual agreements. Respondents responded that their compensation is inadequate to meet their basic necessities. Teachers leading to dissatisfaction and stress affect both the individual and the overall quality of education, so recognize and appreciate teachers for their contributions to the school community. Ensure fair and competitive compensation packages to reflect the value of teachers' work.

The school management committee realized the unavailability of those facilities and committed to incorporating them in the future. Prioritizing fair compensation establishes a conducive environment for educators to flourish, addressing various aspects of Maslow's hierarchy. Addressing these issues involves establishing transparent and fair recognition systems, providing regular feedback, and ensuring equitable compensation, as well as other

facilities like government-scaled salaries, retirement plans, life insurance, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. A supportive environment that values and appreciates teachers can significantly reduce stress and enhance overall job satisfaction.

Sociocultural Sensitivity :

All 16 respondents from different teaching backgrounds responded that due to the different sociocultural backgrounds of students, teaching is stressful and sensitive enough to address cultural differences, language barriers, and varying learning styles, which requires extra effort from the teacher. Teachers may feel pressure to create an inclusive environment while accommodating individual needs. Misunderstandings or unintentional insensitivity can contribute to stress, impacting teacher-student relationships. Balancing cultural awareness, fostering inclusivity, and adapting teaching approaches become additional responsibilities, increasing the complexity of their role. The school management committee and principal also agreed that creating an inclusive environment is a challenging issue, especially under the pressure of the teachers. To solve those problems, the school management committee and school administration need to support teachers with training, resources, and a culturally responsive framework to ease the stress associated with sociocultural sensitivity in the classroom.

Sociocultural sensitivity in teaching resonates with Maslow's theory of basic needs and incorporates a safe and inclusive classroom environment, addressing students' basic well-being. Safety needs are met by fostering a culturally sensitive atmosphere, reducing potential conflicts. Esteem is influenced as students feel valued and respected, enhancing their self-worth. Social needs are fulfilled through positive interactions among students from diverse backgrounds. Finally, sociocultural sensitivity contributes to self-actualization, allowing students to express their identity and cultural perspectives fully. Prioritizing sociocultural sensitivity aligns with Maslow's hierarchy, promoting a holistic and supportive educational environment that caters to the diverse needs of students.

To mitigate stress, the school management committee and school administration can offer professional development training on cultural competence, encourage open communication, and provide resources to help teachers navigate diverse classrooms successfully. Creating a supportive environment that values and celebrates diversity is essential to reducing the stress associated with sociocultural sensitivity in teaching.

Participation in Decision-Making :

The founder's board committee is the supreme body in making any decision about the school. According to the principles of the school, no teachers have been invited to the board meeting till date for any decision-making process. But in the meeting of the school management committee, the principle is holding the role of representative as a member of the whole school family, and the principle tables the issues related to school to make the necessary decisions. Teachers' respondents responded that teachers' participation in the decision-making process helps lead to more informed and effective decisions, which foster a sense of ownership and empowerment, which boost morale and job satisfaction.

According to the respondents, limited participation in decision-making processes can stress teachers, impact job satisfaction, and lead to frustration and a sense of undervaluation.

Involving teachers in decision-making fosters a collaborative and empowered environment, aligning with their need for esteem and self-actualization, according to Maslow's hierarchy. Open communication channels and shared decision-making contribute to a positive school culture, reducing stress and enhancing overall job satisfaction among teachers.

In summary, limited participation in decision-making can generate stress by undermining teachers' sense of professional value, autonomy, and job satisfaction. It's crucial for schools to foster a collaborative environment, involving teachers in decisions that impact their work and well-being.

Regular Feedback Mechanisms :

Responses collected from the teacher showed that a lack of regular feedback mechanisms can stress teachers as it hinders their professional growth. They further stressed that timely and constructive feedback is essential for refining teaching strategies and addressing challenges. Without it, teachers may feel uncertain about their performance, leading to anxiety and self-doubt. The absence of feedback can also impede their ability to meet evolving educational standards, potentially impacting job satisfaction. Regular and supportive feedback aligns with teachers' needs for recognition and self-improvement, contributing to a positive work environment and reducing stress associated with uncertainty about their effectiveness in the classroom.

The absence of regular feedback mechanisms for teachers aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, affecting their self-esteem and self-actualization needs. Constructive feedback is essential for recognizing teachers' professional contributions (esteem) and supporting their continuous growth and improvement (self-actualization). Without regular feedback, teachers may feel undervalued and uncertain about their performance, hindering their journey toward self-actualization. Implementing consistent feedback mechanisms fulfills these higher-order needs, contributing to a positive work environment, fostering professional development, and reducing the stress associated with unmet esteem and self-actualization needs within Maslow's framework.

In Maslow's hierarchy, self-actualization involves realizing one's full potential. Regular feedback plays a crucial role in this process, and its absence can hinder teachers' progress toward self-actualization.

Addressing these stressors involves implementing effective feedback mechanisms by the concerned authorities that provide constructive insights, recognize achievements, and support teachers' ongoing professional development. A supportive feedback culture contributes to a positive work environment and helps alleviate the stress associated with a lack of regular feedback.

Conclusion

The research on stress among private school teachers draws the following conclusion:

All 16 teacher respondents in private schools were burdened with excessive tasks, responsibilities, and demands within their professional role. All the respondents were facing high teaching loads, with numerous classes, subjects, and students to manage. They had very limited time for lesson preparation and other innovations. Further, the school management

committee as well as the school administration should consider the work load of the teacher, considering the physiological aspect of Maslow's theory. Private school teachers in Solukhumbu were not getting the facilities for professional development opportunities like seminars, workshops, self-study and research, on-the-job training, and soft skills workshops from the school administration. To address this issue, it would be essential for private school teachers, school administrators, and relevant stakeholders to collaborate and advocate for the importance of professional development. Additionally, government policies or initiatives that support and incentivize private schools to invest in teacher training and other professional development courses could help provide quality service delivery in the school. Job security and stability mean having a secure and stable job. The responses of all the respondents showed that job security and stability are big worries for them. The survey showed that private school teachers in Solukhumbu had a lot of uncertainty about job security and stability, which is creating stress for the teachers. Considering Maslow's theory of need, school administrators should prioritize clear communication regarding employment terms and provide transparency regarding the school's future plans, bonuses, insurance, retirement plans, disability coverage, and other wellness programs.

All the respondents responded that there is a lack of government-scaled salaries as well as other facilities like retirement plans, life insurance, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. Respondents related to teaching were not satisfied with their salaries. No, a fair compensation system was established there. Addressing these issues involves establishing transparent and fair recognition systems, providing regular feedback, and ensuring equitable compensation as well as other facilities like government-scaled salaries, retirement plans, life insurance, disability coverage, and other wellness programs. All 16 respondents from different teaching backgrounds responded that due to the different sociocultural backgrounds of students, teaching is stressful and sensitive enough to address cultural differences, language barriers, and varying learning styles, which requires extra effort from the teacher. Prioritizing sociocultural sensitivity aligns with Maslow's hierarchy, promoting a holistic and supportive educational environment that caters to the diverse needs of students. Limited participation in decision-making can generate stress by undermining teachers' sense of professional value, autonomy, and job satisfaction. It's crucial for schools to foster a collaborative environment, involving teachers in decisions that impact their work and well-being as well as increasing the quality of teaching and learning. Constructive feedback is essential for refining teaching strategies and addressing challenges. Without it, teachers may feel uncertain about their performance, leading to anxiety and self-doubt. The absence of feedback can also impede their ability to meet evolving educational standards, potentially impacting job satisfaction. Addressing these stressors involves implementing effective feedback mechanisms by the concerned authorities that provide constructive insights, recognize achievements, and support teachers.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory that suggests teachers are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, starting with basic physiological needs and progressing through safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. While Maslow's theory is primarily focused on motivation, it can be indirectly related to stress management. Implementing these recommendations requires the commitment of school administrators,

policymakers, and educators to create a supportive and conducive environment for teaching and learning in private schools in Nepal.

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