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TEACHER STRESS: THE SOURCES OF TEACHER STRESS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT

In this research paper it is tried to figure out the causes of stress in teachers who are teaching at different levels and what are the consequences that generate from the stress factors in Pakistani educational institutions? Active and passive coping strategies were used as moderators to find out their impact on the stress factors and on their consequences. The data was collected from the different schools, colleges and the universities from the different cities of Pakistan. Convenient random sampling technique was used for the data collection. Close ended questionnaires were used as measurement scale. Total sample size was 204. Multivariate analysis of covariance MANCOVA was used for the analyses. The results showed confirmation of first two hypotheses out of three. Stress factors were creating negative feelings among the teachers. Coping strategies which were used for the stress reduction and for the reduction of negative feelings were not highly effective. Active coping behavior is to some extent significant.

KEYWORDS

Stress factors/causes of stress in teachers, Feelings related with stress, Active and passive coping behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a persistent feature of existing life. The perspective of the intensification of stress is the "globalization of capital and communications, the rapid growth of information and technological developments, changed modes of economic production, economic crisis and increase moral and scientific uncertainty" (Woods *et al.*, 1997, p.1). Occupational stress and stress related problems are enhancing very rapidly especially in the western societies and it is very hot area of research (Newton *et al.*, 1995, Bartlett, 1998). No doubt stress is the dilemma in all the professions but in teaching profession it is going up (Kyriacous & Sutcliffe, 1979). The type of teachers stress was noted by Nias (1996). She mentioned in editorial introduction to a special edition of *Cambridge journal of education*. She mainly emphasized on the teachers emotion in that edition. She said that teachers most extreme and negative feelings appear when they talk about their colleagues, the structure of schooling or the effect of changing educational policies upon them. The most intensive, hostile and deeply distributing emotions described in these articles came not from the encounters with pupils or students, but with other adults, particularly colleagues, parents, school governors and inspectors. It is not clear why this shift should have occurred, or whether it simply reflects a change in research priorities. It does, however, open up a fresh area of discussion and reflection for the practitioners and academics like (Nias, 1996).

Teachers stress is not only one country problem actually it is a cross cultural disease (Mark & Riding, 1991). Either the nations are developed or underdeveloped they are facing this problem of stress.

High attrition rate among the UAE teachers is very high due stress and that stress is related with following factors: personal factors, economic factors, teacher preparation, employment factors, and social-cultural factors (Al Kaabi, 2005). According to Indian researchers stress is caused by wrong management and school policies, poor working condition and non cooperative behavior of pupils. It is also highlighted that stress prevail both in male and female staff who is working in educational institutions (Lath, 2010).

In China a big dilemma which is faced by teachers is low salary which never fulfills their basic needs. Thus, they are facing high stress level. If their wages meet one aspect of daily life then their pay plans deprive to teachers from other necessities of life. Different issues are highlighted including daily teaching hours; quality of housing; paid holidays; travel reimbursement, and; medical insurance. If the budget allocation ratio of these facilities is calculated then it will be same across the schools. This low budget allocation ratio is main cause of stress among the teachers (MKL Q&A, 2009).

In Pakistan education sector is gigantic crisis and facing different type of major problems. These factors lead to stress for teachers and ultimately their performance is suffered. At the school, college and university level faculty size is very essential. As Mughal and Manzoor (1999) noted that in Pakistan teachers and students are available in very less numbers as compared to other third world countries teachers.

The quality of education is very low in Pakistan due to lack of competent teachers. The competent teachers don't like to sustain in Pakistan due to a lot of problems which they have to face. Salary is another main issue for stress full situation. On the performance of employees no good compensation packages are given to the teachers. Due to that they are feeling insecure in their job and they are demoralized. The living standards of the teachers are not very high due to less income. High potential people are reluctant to come in this profession. The results are that higher education commission has to higher foreign teachers at the higher salary packages instead of providing attractive salary packages to their teachers (Rao, 2003). Faculty should be involved in making the educational policies but this practice is done by the non professional people (Haider, S. Z., 2008). Academic freedom is not given to the teachers in Pakistan. Qudus (1990) studied that educational institutions are established to enhance the learning capabilities of the students so they can become beneficial part of the society and their creative abilities can enhanced more. Education system in Pakistan can be refined only when the educationists get the autonomy to make the decision regarding education policies of the country according to the needs of time. This is the right way to boost up the education system of country (Varghese, 1980). The courses and curricula are not designed in accordance with the standard of higher education and no consent is taken from the teachers. When all these stress factors are cumulated then stress is generated in the teachers.

The purpose of this study is to identify how much stress is creating problems for the teachers and how the performance is affected by the stress. Stress creates the negative emotions that ultimately lead to negative performance. The area of study is Pakistani educational institutions so that it can be identified which problems are more relevant in creating stress in teachers. In different countries work related stress problems will be different. Here the discussion is also done about the coping strategies or coping behavior that is used by teachers to reduce the stress level and increase the efficiency level of employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Harmful physical and emotional responses are caused by occupational stress. In general, occupational stress arises from the working conditions/environment of an organization system. Researchers on stress make it clear that, to understand the complex area of stress, especially about the area of occupational stress, is very difficult (Lath, 2010).

The 21st century gives more importance to knowledge, information and learning. Education is important source of power. Knowledge-based society is only built when educational institutions get the due importance. First-class teachers are a must in the building of best educational institution. Thus, it is important to improve teacher's work performance by reducing their stress level (Cai-feng, 2010).

According to Derogatis (1987) stress is bifurcated into different areas one is a state of psychological pressure affected by three main sources: personality factors in which constructs of time pressure, driven behavior, important roles; environmental factors in which vocational, health and domestic satisfaction are included and last is emotional responses like hostility, anxiety and depression are incorporated. Kyriacou (2001) defined in his research paper that major sources of

teachers stress are enhanced by teaching the students who have very less motivation to learn, overload of work, uncertainties in policies, unfair evaluation and the non supportive attitude from the administration. Maslach and Jackson (1981) had identified two type of coping behavior in the case of stress. One is problem focused coping behavior in which problem is defined, substitute solutions are given to solve the problems, other is emotion focused coping behavior consist of affirmative reappraisal and comparisons as well as defensive strategies such as avoidance and minimization. Due to stress performance is impacted which is shown by negative emotions and burnout. Burnout has three components emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal achievement. Montgomery and Rupp (2005) presented the model in which they described external and internal stressful events. In external factors administration, colleagues, general work demands and institutional environment are essential factors for defining the stress. Domestic problems are related with internal factors. Coping strategies are divided into active or passive coping strategy. In the passive approach anxiety, depression or frustration are not tackle in the proper way. Usually external stressors in teachers create the negative feelings that are ultimately measure of performance. It is identified teacher-student conflict and discipline related problems are the most commonly identified stressors(Carter,1979;Chicon & Koff 1978,1980;Feshback & cambell,1978).There are other different stressors like staff inter-personal interactions(Feshback& Cambelland,1978,Pratt,1978),working environment in which poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources' are also included(Chicon & Koff,1978;Kyriacou & Sutcliffe,1978).Role ambiguity and perceived role conflict(Bensky *et al*,1980;Schwab & Iwanicki,1982) are also important factors of stress that cannot be ignored. It is also found that teachers who are working in cities or in urban areas faced high stress level than to those teachers who are teaching in rural areas and their stress level is also boost up when they are teaching the student of higher classes (Pratt,1978). It is also discovered by (Hiebert & Faber, 1984) anxiety, worry, general, disturbance, insomnia, nightmares, gastrointes and cardio vascular symptoms and other physical problems are most common stress factors. Bloch(1978) examined the medical reports of 253 teachers who were facing stress were giving the response in the form of different symptoms in which fatigue, irritability, neuromuscular disorders, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disorders, depression. So Bloch (1978) finally concluded that these teachers showed the symptoms of stress. In the above situations it is identified what are the stressful reaction but it is also too much vital what coping strategies should be used that will be more effective in that stressful condition (Hiebert & Faber, 1984). Dworkin and Telschow (1988) identified in their research paper that teachers in schools are in stressful condition. In their longitudinal study they took the sample of 291 schools at all the levels and they identified that different type of stressors are creating negative impact on the performance of teachers. They also identified that the level of reported stress and nature and the degree of victimization vary by the level of class that they taught. Stinnett (1970); Aaron, (1976) and Coates and Thoresen (1976) identified in their work what are the stressors that impact the performance. They mentioned that extra duties with teaching, lack of administrative support, the lapse of time of potential student, lack of material and inadequate infrastructure are included for creating stressful conditions. Stinnett (1970) identified that there are some school factors that are causing stress for teachers in which big class size, over crowding, noisy environment and extra assignments are included, and these factors create stress in teachers.

Dworkin, Haney and Telschow (1982) bifurcated the stressors into two categories that have greater impact on the performance of teachers. One are intrinsic factors that are related with the student discipline matters and regarding delivery of information. Intrinsic matters are related with administrative problems, conflict or miscommunication with colleagues, salary and other rewards factors are included. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) identified in their research work that the teachers who experienced stress are low performer, actually they are dissatisfied from the job and they want to quit the job. Otto (1982), Laughlin (1984) and Litt and Turk (1985) found inverse relationship between stress and job satisfaction. As the teachers are in stressful condition, they feel no convenience to carry on the job and ultimately their performance will be impacted. Joseph and Blasé (1986) conducted the qualitative analysis of sources of teacher stress and observe its impact on the performance of teachers. In that research it is identified that teachers who are facing the stress cannot sustain the positive behavior and in the result their performance is impacted. In this research paper it is identified that organizational, student, administrative and teacher related factors were relevant to teacher stress. The findings of this article are showing that work stress is strongly linked with the negative feelings in teachers. The major impact of stress is identified as stress level enhanced satisfactory goal achievement with students' difficult or impossible. The main terminology in the paper was used called performance adaptation syndrome. The main purpose of using that terminology is to find to develop teachers response to stress and the consequences for the performance. The consequences are shown in the form of negative feelings and negative behavior.

RESEARCH MODEL

This research model is based upon the above literature that identifies the causes stress factors and related feelings and the coping behaviors. On the basis of existence literature hypothesis are developed.

From this research model that is presented above it has been cleared how the stress is generated in the teachers and what are its consequences, coping strategies are also mentioned. Coping strategy are of both types that can be passive and active. By adopting these coping strategies stress can be handled in various ways.

It is found that usually stress factors are common in the teachers. Some factors have less validity in different environment and some have more. Kyriacou (2001) found the major stress factors that impact on the performance of employees. According to him lack of discipline, organizational problems, teachers' conflicts and student's tribulations create the stress. It is common that student behavior that is not supportive their absence, lack of interest, administrative problems, teachers non support attitude and their negative politics and organizational deficiencies are major sources of stress and these stress factors create the negative feelings among the teachers and these negative feelings are in the form of anxiety, low moral, depression, consider one self value less, upset ,face physical problems and uncertain about the results (Joseph& Blasé,1986)

Hypothesis1: Stress factors create the negative feelings in teachers.

The coping behavior of every individual varies. A situation that is harmful to one individual may not be stressful for other individual. Whenever there is threat to the well being of an individual then he or she responds it accordingly. If response to stress will not be flexible then that reaction will be considered as dangerous (Lath, 2010).

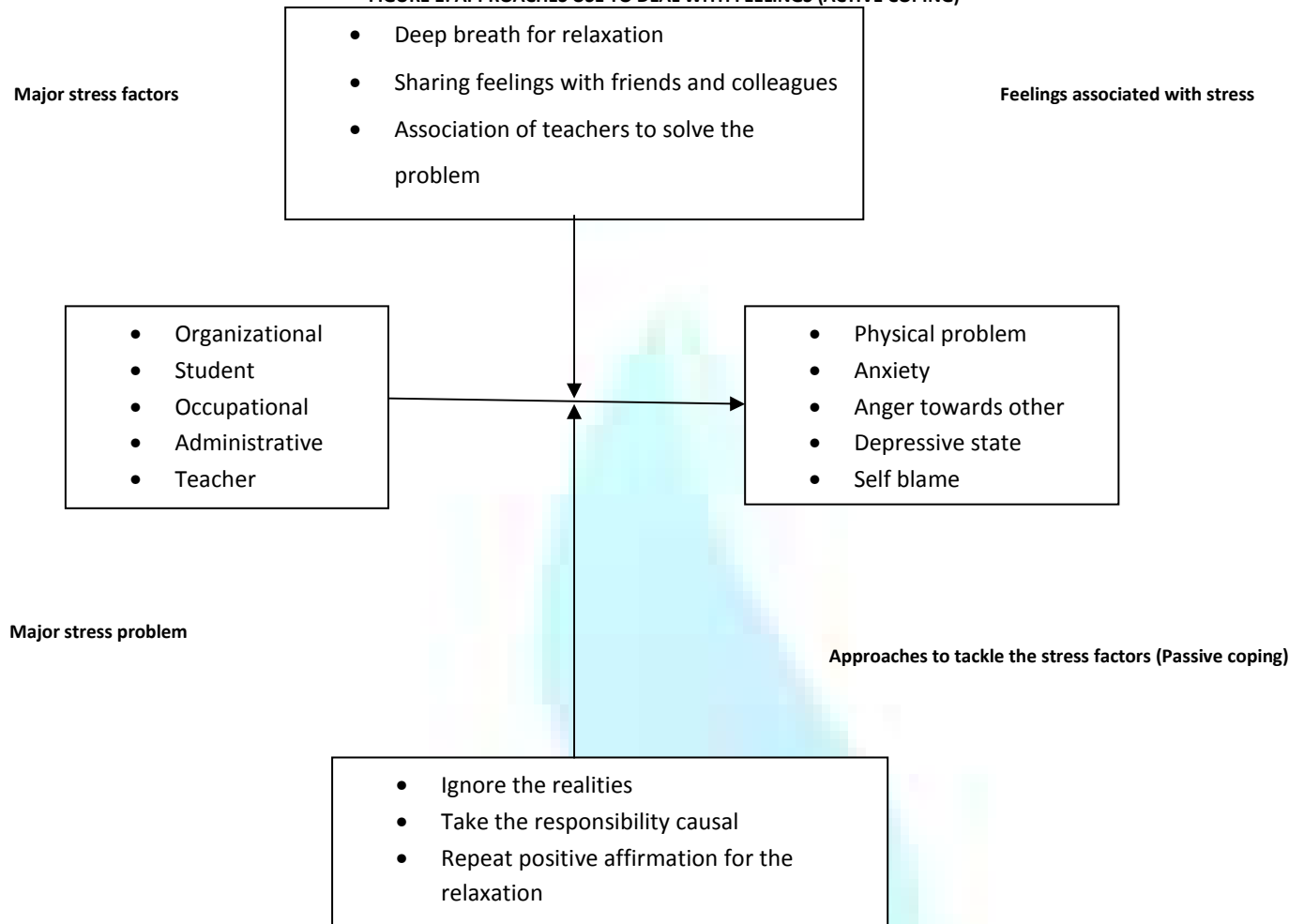
Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have found when the stress factors dominate in the teachers and they feel not better then the different types of coping mechanisms are opted. These coping mechanism are adopted for the reduction of stress. These coping strategies are used and they reduced the stressful condition. These strategies are further bifurcated into passive coping strategies and the active coping strategies. Active coping strategies are those in which positive actions are taken like try to remove those negative situation, trying to resolve the problems, doing exercise including deep breathing and making association with teachers to resolve the matters. In the same manner passive coping strategies/behaviors are also used for the reduction of stress these coping ways are only remembering of positive affirmative incident, ignore the realities or don't consider the realities seriously consider them as casual responsibilities.(Joseph& Blasé,1986).

Hypothesis2: Active coping strategies/behaviors are effectively used for the coping of stress factors and the removal of negative feelings.

Hypothesis3: Passive coping strategies/behaviors are used for the coping of stress factors and the removal of negative feelings.

In the figure of next page overall scenario is explicitly clear that what are the stress factors and what type of feelings are associated with stress. Active and coping behaviors/strategies are linked with both stress factors and its feelings are consequences. This overall model is based on the above literature.

FIGURE 1: APPROACHES USE TO DEAL WITH FEELINGS (ACTIVE COPING)



METHOD

SAMPLE

Data was collected from the different schools, colleges and universities teachers from the different cities of Pakistan. The sample size that has been selected was 240 and the response of 204 teachers received. Convenient random sampling technique was used for data collection. I selected the teachers from all the level to check the causes of stress in teachers and to find out its consequences at all the level of teachers either they belong from schools, colleges or universities because stress is the common cause of low performance in the teachers particularly in Pakistani society. In the sample high school teachers, college lecturers, assistant and associate professors and at the university level also lecturers, assistant professors and full professors were included. Private and the public both sector were integrated in the study. In the sample 59 were females and 145 were male. In the total samples 45 sample size was from schools, 92 was from colleges and 67 was from universities.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF SAMPLE

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	145	71
Female	59	29
Work Place		
School	45	22
College	92	45
University	67	33
Cities from where data collected		
Islamabad	80	39
Multan	85	42
Mirpur (Azad Kashmir)	39	19

MEASURES

A questionnaire was used for the collection of data and for the collection of all level of teachers either they belong from the school, colleges or universities. Same level of instrument was used due to problems similarities but the only difference was in the intensity of stress factors. I wanted to find out what stress factors were creating more stress in the school, college and university teachers. I took my measurement tool from the Joseph & Blasé (1986) article. In that article teacher stress inventory is elaborate in the detail. I made an amendment in the questionnaire. In that article for finding the causes of teacher stress,

totally open ended questionnaire was used in which this was asked from the teachers about the causes of their stress and about their feelings and their coping strategies. That was totally open ended questionnaire. But I did the amendment in the questionnaire according to the need of environment. That was totally close ended questionnaire. For the measurement of stress factors I have take different constructs in which organizational factors were measured by the lack of material, class size, extra duties and travelling. Students related problems were measured through low student achievements, student absence, lack of discipline and student apathy. Occupational stress was measured through different variable in which lack of professional growth, low salary, low advancement and less facilities were included. One other factor was administrative problem that was measured by taking different types of variables in which poor evaluation, lack of support, lack of knowledge or expertise and favoritism were included. Last factor was related with the teachers problems in which conflict, incompetence, negative attitude and the lack of communication were the variable that were used for the measurement. These all were independent variables that impact on the feelings of employees and ultimately their performance is affected. Negative feelings were measured by using the different constructs in which physical problems, anxiety, anger toward other, depressive state and self blame were included. Then coping approaches used to deal with the stress factors. These approaches were related with both stress factors and the negative feelings so they were playing the role of mediators. They were active coping strategies and the passive coping strategies. In the instrument 5 point likert scale was used for the measurement of items. 5 show the strongly agree/most effective, 1 show the strongly disagree/ very less effective and 3 indicate the neutral.

PROCEDURE

The data collected from the different major cities of Pakistan in which, Azad Kashmir, Multan and Islamabad were included. The questionnaires were sending to the respondents through e-mail or directly hand over to them. The questionnaires distributed in the universities, colleges and schools. Response was checked in both male and female teachers to find out the consequences of stress on them. The male respondents were more rather than female teachers. Some teachers were reluctant to give the response so from the sample size of 240 only 204 teachers gave response. Very low response was gained from the schools teachers. Convenient sampling was used for the data collection. Teachers were taken from the all the institutional level. Not only a specific category of teachers was study but all the types of teachers were included in the study either they were teaching in schools, colleges or universities. The purpose was to confine the results with the specific category of teachers but to generalize the results at all the teaching levels to find out the intensity of stress factors and to find out the probability of teachers for using the coping behavior for the reduction of stress. So for that purpose convenient sampling technique was used. SPSS 14 was used for manipulating the data. From the use of that software I run the different test by using the general linear modeling technique.

FINDINGS

The MANCOVA is applied to find out the significance of result. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows the significance of the results regarding of intercepts that are shown in table 2. The results of Leven test of variance in table 2 demonstrated that there is no equality of variance in all the stress related problems. In the case of stress physical problems, anger toward others and self blame are not more enhanced. But the anxiety level is enhanced due to the stress factors at the significant level. Its variance value is .636 and in the case of depressive state level of variance is .752 which identified that as stress factors were increased anxiety and depression level going to more boost. In table 4 results are explicitly shown. In the Multivariate test which are presented in table four, identified that intercepts shows stress factors are creating negative feelings in the teachers. Here the significant level is very high. Wilks' Lambda is .754 that shows that all the stress related factors are equally imperative in creating negative changes in the teachers. In the passive coping strategies it was shown the elements like take responsibility casual which significance value of .565 that showed less impact as moderator and same is the case with ignore realities, repeat positive affirmation for the relaxation having significance level value .292 and .422 respectively. Thus, passive coping strategy/behavior has no significant impact on the stress factors and stress consequences. When the active coping behavior or strategy was observed then it was shown association of teachers and sharing problems with friends and colleagues showed the significant results having significance value of .003 In both cases and observed value of alpha is .937 and .931 respectively which was more high. But the deep breathing for the relaxation having significant value of .196 and value of alpha is .509. It is shown that deep breathing for relaxation is less effective element for the relaxation. All the stress factors are shown significant impact on the performance of teachers by creating the negative feelings. This shown in the table 4 in which class size, student absence, Extra duties, Travel, student absence, Low salary, lack of knowledge, low professional growth, irresponsibility, conflict, negative attitude and the lack of communication are considered more stress full factors.

TABLE2 BARTLETT'S TEST OF SPHERICITY

Likelihood Ratio	.000
Approx. Chi-Square	59.747
Df	14
Sig.	.000

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows the significance of the results regarding of intercepts.

TABLE 3 LEVEN'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCE

	F	df1	df2	Sig
Physical Problems	8.828	199	4	.022
Anxiety	.919	199	4	.636
Anger toward others	14.025	199	4	.009
Depressive state	.734	199	4	.752
Self blame	8.631	199	4	.023

Leven test of variance in demonstrated that there is no equality of variance among the relevant variables.

TABLE 4: MULTIVARIATE TEST

Effect		Value	Sig	Partial Eta Squared	Observed power
Intercept	Wills'	.754	.000	.246	.998
	Lambda				
Ignore realities	Wills'	.944	.292	.056	.428
	Lambda				
Take responsibility causal	Wills'	.964	.565	.157	.272
	Lambda				
Association of teachers	Wills'	.843	.003	.066	.937
	Lambda				
Deep breathing	Wills'	.934	.196	.045	.509
	Lambda				
Repeat positive affirmation	Wills'	.955	.422	.154	.344
	Lambda				
Sharing with colleagues and friends	Wills'	.846	.003	.084	.931
	Lambda				
Present teaching level	Wills'	.839	.040	.029	.866
	Lambda				
Gender	Wills'	.971	.674	.041	.223
	Lambda				
No. of years	Wills'	.845	.564	.066	.701
	Lambda				
Lack of material	Wills'	.780	.071	.071	.933
	Lambda				
Class size	Wills'	.744	.041	.045	.957
	Lambda				
Extra duties	Wills'	.792	.185	.057	.881
	Lambda				
Travel	Wills'	.629	.000	.110	.999
	Lambda				
Student absence	Wills'	.680	.003	.092	.994
	Lambda				
Low student achievements	Wills'	.814	.321	.050	.815
	Lambda				
Student apathy	Wills'	.831	.445	.045	.756
	Lambda				
Student discipline	Wills'	.840	.525	.043	.723
	Lambda				
Lack of professional	Wills'	.801	.235	.054	.860
	Lambda				

Multivariate test identified, intercepts shows stress factors that are creating negative feelings among the teachers.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From the overall above findings different interpretation are revealed that shows that stress factor unquestionably create the negative feelings among the teachers. But some stress factors have more strongly influence for creating the negative feelings. Thus, first hypothesis is accepted that shows that stress create the negative feelings among the teachers who are working at the different level. When the consequences of stress are observed it is shown anxiety and depressive state are going very high in the case of high stress level. It is also observed that active coping strategy or behavior is act as better moderator as compared to passive coping behavior. Passive coping behavior or strategy has no impact on the stress factors or for the reduction of stress related feelings. Thus, second hypothesis is also accepted but reject the third null hypothesis. It means passive coping behavior has no impact on the stress reduction.

These results revealed that in Pakistan teachers are facing high stress level at all the level of teaching. As it is common issue in the different countries of the world. As in different researches it is found that mental health of teachers is not good as compared to general population and the reason of this problem is different types of stressors which are faced by them (Al Kaabi, 2005; Lath, 2010; Cai-feng, 2010).

Stress related symptoms are not same in every country. Somewhere teachers are getting due importance and their related issues are less like in Japan, France; the United States. Thus, intensity of the stress varies according to urban, suburban or rural settings. Thus, this serious problem of stress is main dilemma for teaching and learning environment, which may become poison as well as educational outcomes graph will move downward. OECD countries experience high levels of occupational stress. Highly stressed teachers may feel overwhelmed by their tasks, and ignore their responsibilities. Anxiety and depression level among the teachers enhanced due to different challenges (Sector Notes, 2007). These were expected results and in line with previous researches, major stress factors are creating negative feelings among the teachers. Intensity of feelings is different. Coping with stress in education depend on the nature of the problem, but generally imply involvement of a range of actors and response levels (Sector Notes, 2007). Here in Pakistani environment it is identified that teachers prefer to opt no specific coping behavior. It is a fact when teachers are inducted in our education system they are rarely provided any training regarding new challenges. Due to lack of training they are not aware of challenges of the future and hence are unable to prepare their students to play their due role (Khan, S.M, 2008). More efforts are required to overcome the problems relating to teaching staff. Need for different coping mechanism is required. Thus, the stress level of teachers should be reduced and they perform efficiently.

This study was based on the teacher stress and its consequences. From the overall results it is proved that stress creates the negative feelings in the teachers and that negative feelings ultimately impact on their performance. It is also observed that stress in teachers is created at all the teaching levels no matter they are university, college or school teachers. In Pakistani society stress is major dilemma in the low performance. The impact of coping behaviors as moderator is no more significant. There can be different reason why coping mechanism are no more effective. This is next query for research that why teacher do not want to cope their problems by using different coping strategies.

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