

## A Review on Stress Management Among College Teachers

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### ABSTRACT

Stress refers to a physiological and psychological response that occurs when an individual perceives a situation or demand as challenging, threatening, or overwhelming. It is a natural reaction that prepares the body and mind to cope with various challenges, whether they are physical, mental, or emotional. Stress is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that can have both positive and negative effects on a person's well-being. Stress in teaching is a prevalent issue that educators commonly experience due to the unique demands and challenges associated with the profession. The study aims to critically review the existing literature available on the stress level of teachers. The study also focuses on strategies adopted by teachers to cope with stress and concludes by finding out the research gap regarding stress levels among college teachers.

**Keywords:** *Stress, work-life balance, coping strategies, Stress management, Mental Health*

Everyone experiences stress, which is a typical human reaction. The human body is built such that it can experience stress and respond to it. Your body responds physically and psychologically to changes or challenges (stressors). That is anxiety. Stress can help us stay awake, motivated, and prepared to avert danger. For instance, if you have a big test coming up, your body may work harder and stay awake longer because of a stress response. But when stresses persist without relief or rest periods, stress becomes an issue.

Compared to other professions, teachers have higher than average levels of stress and psychosomatic diseases. The effects of teacher stress on their health, the motivation of their students, and the economy are extensive. However, because teacher stress research mostly focuses on self-reports, it evaluates stress based solely on subjective impressions. Education is a process that develops individuals' knowledge, attitude, and character, with teachers playing a crucial role in the educational system. Teachers inspire and guide students towards greatness, while stress can negatively impact physical, psychological, family, and social life. However, eustress and distress can help restore energy and improve performance.

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Stress management is an important topic in academia, particularly among college teachers. College teachers face numerous stressors in their profession, including heavy workloads, high expectations, tight deadlines, and the pressure to excel in research and teaching responsibilities. These stressors can have significant negative effects on the mental health and overall well-being of college teachers if not effectively managed. In addition, the impact of stress on college teachers can also have implications for student learning and outcomes.

Research has shown that high levels of stress among college teachers can lead to decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and even lower teaching effectiveness (Arvidsson et al., 2016; Kinman & Jones, 2008). Furthermore, the stress experienced by college teachers can also contribute to negative emotions, such as anxiety and depression, which can further impair their ability to effectively teach and support their students (Dewa et al., 2010; Kyriacou, 2001). Stress management is therefore crucial for college teachers to enhance their mental well-being and job satisfaction, as well as positively influence student learning outcomes.

To effectively manage stress, college teachers need to be equipped with appropriate strategies and resources. Regular workshops and training programs on stress management can be an essential strategy for college teachers to cope with the various stressors they face in their profession. Regular workshops and training programs can provide college teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify and manage their stressors effectively. These workshops can cover topics such as time management, setting boundaries, self-care techniques, and relaxation exercises. Moreover, health education programs that focus on promoting physical and mental well-being can also be beneficial for college teachers. Regular workshops for college teachers on stress management, time management, and health education programs can provide them with the necessary tools and strategies to cope with the demands of their profession and maintain their well-being. Additionally, curriculum reduction can be considered as a potential strategy to alleviate stress among college teachers. Reducing the workload and streamlining the curriculum can help alleviate some of the stressors associated with excessive responsibilities and time constraints in the teaching profession. These strategies can help college teachers better manage their stress and ultimately improve their overall well-being and teaching effectiveness. In addition to these proactive measures, college teachers need to adopt individual coping strategies to effectively manage their stress.

### *Objectives of the Study*

The main objective of the study is to assess the level of stress and coping strategies of the teachers working in colleges based on the literature review.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Keeping the study's goals in mind, the current study attempted to identify some of the research studies that have been conducted in the domain. The study only used secondary sources of data. Articles, journals, websites, magazines, and conference proceedings make up secondary data.

### *Purpose of the Study*

To lower teachers' stress levels, the goal of this study is to gain an understanding of ideas related to stress, stressors, and coping mechanisms.

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### *Causes of Stress*

The causes of stress among college teachers can vary, but several common factors contribute to their high levels of stress. One major cause is the changing job conditions and the insecurity of employment, which can lead to job dissatisfaction and increased stress levels. Poor salaries and biases in promotions are also significant stressors for college teachers.

Work overload is another prevalent cause of stress among college teachers. Many faculty members are often required to handle heavy workloads, including teaching multiple courses, conducting research, and fulfilling administrative responsibilities. These demands can lead to time pressure and feelings of being overwhelmed.

Role conflict is another stressor observed among college teachers. They may find themselves torn between various roles and responsibilities, such as balancing their teaching duties with research or service commitments. These conflicting demands can contribute to stress and job dissatisfaction.

Powerlessness is also cited as a cause of stress among college teachers. Limited autonomy in decision-making, lack of control over their work environment, and a perceived lack of voice in institutional decision-making processes can contribute to feelings of frustration and stress. It is important to note that the stress experienced by college teachers can have a trickle-down effect on their students. High levels of teacher stress can lead to disruptive behavior among students, resulting in disciplinary issues and even student suspensions.

To summarize, the causes of stress among college teachers include changing job conditions, job insecurity, poor salaries, bias in promotions, work overload, role conflict, and feelings of powerlessness. These stressors not only affect the well-being and job satisfaction of college teachers but may also have negative implications for student behavior and learning outcomes.

One of the studies used a questionnaire to collect data from 200 randomly selected teachers and found that most of them experienced stress in their work. The main stressors were identified as over-commitment, lack of autonomy, role conflict, role ambiguity, poor working conditions, and low salaries.

The review covers the definitions, causes, consequences, and interventions of teacher stress, as well as the factors that influence teacher wellbeing. The review also suggests some implications for practice and future research.

Richards, J. (2012) Stress among college teachers has been a significant concern in the education sector. According to a national survey conducted on kindergarten through Grade-12 teachers in the United States, teachers nationwide experience high levels of stress, with California teachers ranking at the top of the list.

Brown, S., & Nagel, L. (2004) Teacher preparation programs can play a crucial role in addressing this issue by providing students with information on the unique stressors faced in the teaching profession and equipping them with coping strategies.

The research study suggests that elevated stress levels among teachers can interfere with their ability to effectively learn and implement evidence-based interventions in the classroom, hindering their effectiveness and overall job satisfaction. Therefore, it is crucial

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for educational institutions to create a healthy work environment that promotes positive organizational climate, collegiality among teachers, ample resources and support, and manageable workloads.

Ryan, K C., & Dunn-Jensen, L M. (2016) College teachers face numerous stressful factors that impact their well-being and job satisfaction. These include heavy workloads, constant pressure to publish research or academic articles, administrative tasks, dealing with difficult students or classroom management issues, lack of support from colleagues or supervisors, constant evaluations and assessments, adapting to changes in educational technology, and maintaining a work-life balance. These stress factors can lead to burnout, mental health issues, and decreased job performance among college teachers. Source: Ample anecdotal and empirical evidence attests to the considerable stress that teachers at all educational levels experience at work.

**Literature Review on Teacher Stress** Previous research has highlighted the detrimental effects of stress on the well-being and job satisfaction of college teachers, as well as its impact on student learning outcomes (Lavigne, 2019; Maslach et al., 2017; Shao et al., 2018). Teacher stress is associated with burnout, emotional exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, and decreased motivation (Nauert, 2015; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). Furthermore, teacher stress has been linked to negative effects on student academic achievement and behavior in the classroom.

Causes of stress include high workload and work demands, time pressure, interpersonal conflicts with colleagues or students, lack of support from administrators or colleagues, and insufficient resources and support for professional development (Dworkin et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). High workload is a significant contributor to stress among college teachers. Research has shown that college teachers often face heavy workloads, with long hours and a multitude of responsibilities including preparing and delivering lectures, grading assignments and exams, conducting research or scholarly activities, attending meetings and committee work, advising students, and managing administrative tasks (Maslach et al., 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). In addition to workload, time pressure is another major stressor for college teachers.

### ***Impact of Stress on Teacher's Performance***

The impact of stress on college teachers' performance is significant and multi-faceted. Numerous studies have demonstrated that high levels of stress among college teachers can lead to decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (Lavigne, 2019; Maslach et al., 2017; Shao et al., 2018) These negative outcomes can in turn affect the quality of teaching and instruction, leading to decreased student engagement and learning outcomes (Maslach et al., 2017; Nauert, 2015). Furthermore, research has shown that stressed college teachers are more likely to experience decreased motivation and enthusiasm for their work, resulting in reduced effectiveness in the classroom

stress Management Techniques for College Teachers Research on stress management techniques for college teachers has gained increased attention in recent years. Research on stress management techniques for college teachers has gained increased attention in recent years. This review paper aims to examine the current literature on stress management among college teachers and provide a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of stress on college teachers' performance and well-being. Furthermore, this review paper will explore various stress management techniques that have been proposed and implemented for college teachers, to identify effective strategies for mitigating stress and improving overall well-being among

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this population. The purpose of this review paper is to analyze existing literature on stress management for college teachers and gain a comprehensive understanding of how stress impacts their performance.

Teachers often encounter various stressors in their daily lives, which can encompass a heavy workload, strict deadlines, the burden of meeting academic standards and expectations, limited control over their schedule, challenging students to deal with, administrative responsibilities to manage, and the continuous need for professional growth and stay updated with advancements in their field.

### *Stress Management techniques*

To minimize stress and ensure their overall well-being, college educators frequently employ a range of stress management strategies. A widely utilized approach among these professionals is self-care, which entails prioritizing one's physical, mental, and emotional health. This may involve engaging in regular exercise routines, maintaining proper nutrition habits, getting sufficient sleep, participating in recreational activities unrelated to work duties, as well as utilizing relaxation techniques such as meditation or deep breathing exercises. Additionally, time management is another effective stress management technique implemented by college teachers. Effective time management is crucial for prioritizing tasks, setting achievable goals, and avoiding overwhelming workloads. College teachers may also benefit from seeking social support by reaching out to colleagues, friends, and family for emotional assistance or guidance in dealing with work-related stressors. Additionally, participating in workshops and professional development opportunities focused on stress management can equip college teachers with valuable strategies and techniques to effectively cope with the demands of their profession.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the impact of stress on college teachers is substantial and can have detrimental effects on their performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. To mitigate this issue, there has been a growing emphasis on researching stress management techniques specifically tailored for college teachers. A key aspect of this research involves creating and implementing stress management programs that equip educators with effective tools and strategies to cope with stress and enhance their overall well-being.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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