

Stress Management: An Imperative for Business Educators in Colleges of Education for National Development

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Abstract

In all establishments, workers are the agents that implement the objectives, plans and policies of the organization, likewise in educational sector, the teachers implement the educational policies and plans. Stress sets in during implementation. Stress occurs when one perceives that demands placed on him or her, such as work exceed one's ability to cope. The study examined stress management: a tip for business educators in tertiary institution for national development. The business educators are the lecturers teaching students in business education. Business Education involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business. Business education program involves the training of students in relevant to the business world. The business educators are not only involved in academics duties but also engage in administrative functions. The paper defined the meaning of stress; various types of work place stress were stated. The paper highlighted the symptoms of stress or how to discover stress. Work related stressors were given, the paper analyzed unhealthy ways of coping with stress. Strategies for stress management for workers were also given. It was recommended that Mentoring new teachers/lecturers for an extended period of time can promote camaraderie. New lecturers should not be left alone, to just sink or swim, among other recommendations, communication lines must be wide open and make the flow of information transparent. Lecturers should be encouraged to attend a national and international conferences or workshops, it is a stress-buster, these conferences help to update their knowledge, and a form of relaxation.

Keywords: Stress, business educators, college of education, national development

Introduction

National development is the total effects of all citizen forces and addition to the stock of physical, human resources, knowledge and skill (John, 2018). Facilitating positive changes in teaching and learning, the educational developers are informed and continually working towards better changes on local and global levels. The major parties in educational development are the educators (teachers). The teachers implement the educational policies and plans. The business educators are the teachers or lecturers teaching students in business education. Business education involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business. Education in this field occurs at several levels, including secondary and higher education or University education. Deborah (2018) stated that business education program involves the training of students relevant to the business world. Business education at the National Certificate in Education (NCE) level is an umbrella, under which covers Accounting Education, Office technology management and Marketing. In some schools, they only have accounting education and office technology management. The business educators in business education have a lots of duties, like, lecturing (the NCE students, the NCE sandwich students, some schools has affiliation to university, the lecturer will teach the degree students and part-time/sandwich students), the lecturers attend to student's needs, going for SIWES supervision, teaching practice supervision, drawing of questions and marking guide, preparation of results, attending to other administrative functions (being a Dean, HOD, Committees members and others), doing research works and writing of papers in Journals for promotions and other assignment given by the management/Dean/Head of Department. All these activities or involvement may lead to stress.

Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize. Stress occurs when one perceives that demands placed on him or her, such as work, school or relationships exceed one's ability to cope. Some stress can be beneficial at times, producing a boost that provides the drive and energy to help people

get through situations like exams or work deadlines. However, an extreme amount of stress can have health consequences, affecting the immune, cardiovascular and neuroendocrine and central nervous systems, and take a severe emotional toll. Stress is one's body's way of responding to any kind of demand or threat. Stress also is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response, the body reacts to these changes with physical, mental and emotional responses (Cleveland, 2018). Stress produces numerous symptoms which vary according to persons, situations, and severity. These can include physical health decline as well as depression. The process of stress management is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society, although life provides numerous demands that can prove difficult to handle. Untreated chronic stress can result in serious health conditions including anxiety, insomnia, muscle pain, high blood pressure, heart disease, depression and a weakened immune system.

This stress as to be managed, the process of managing it, is referred to as stress management. Stress management refers to a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning. Stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well-being. Stress management can also be defined as a set of techniques and programs intended to help people deal more effectively with stress in their lives by analyzing the specific stressors and taking positive actions to minimize their effects." (Gale Encyclopaedia of Medicine, 2008). According to Agwu and Jessica (2012), stress management is the strategies of coping, recovering, reinterpreting, reframing and cognitive restructuring adopted by individual who is under stress, making changes that can reduce stress or taking actions that can alter stress impacts.

Major causes of work place stress

It is important to recognize the common causes of stress at work so that you can take steps to reduce stress levels where possible

(Akintola, 2018). According to Melissa (2018), work place stress can be caused by a number of factors including:

1. Long hours: Spending long time in the office or doing a particular duty over a long period without break.
2. Excessively high workloads: When the duties assigned are too much for a short time given.
3. Lack of support or information: Inadequate information on a job can be stressful.
4. Changes within the establishment: When there is a sudden change within the establishment, it can be stressful.
5. Insufficient skill for the job: When one is not skillful enough on a job, it can cause stress.
6. Over supervision: When supervision on a job is too much, the officer being supervised may be stressful.
7. Inadequate working environment: If the environment is not convenient for the workers, it may be stressful.
8. Insufficient resources to do the job: when materials, equipment to be used are not available or enough may affect the workers.

Symptoms of Stress

Better health channel (2018) gave the following types of stress symptoms

1. Cognitive Symptoms: The cognitive symptoms that the workers will experience are, memory problem, inability to concentrate on things, poor judgment to situation, seeing only negative things, anxious or racing thoughts and constant worrying on situation.
2. Psychological/Emotion Symptoms: Some of the psychological or emotional symptoms are; depression or general unhappiness, anxiety and agitation, moodiness, irritability or anger, feeling overwhelmed, unable to cope, loneliness, isolation, discouragement, pessimism and other mental or emotional health problems.
3. Physical Symptoms: Physical symptoms include aches and pains, diarrhea or constipation, nausea, dizziness, chest pain,

rapid heart rate, loss of sex drive, frequent colds and flu, fatigue, muscular tension, heart palpitation and sleeping difficulties, such as insomnia.

4. Behavioural symptoms: Behavioural symptoms experience include eating more or less, sleeping too much or too little, withdrawing from others, procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities, using alcohol, cigarettes or drugs to relax, nervous habits (like, nail biting), others include an increase in sick days or absenteeism, aggression, diminished creativity and initiative, a drop in work performance, problems with interpersonal relationships, mood swings and irritability, lower tolerance of frustration and impatience, disinterest and isolation.

Unhealthy ways of coping with stress

Krizia (2014), stated that when responding to stress, one may be dealing with stress in ways that could have long term negative effects on one's health. The following ways are unhealthy ways of coping with stress, smoking, caffeine overconsumption, not dealing with the problem at all, compulsive spending, drinking too much alcohol excessively, overeating or under eating, spending hours in front of the TV or computer, withdrawing from friends family and activities using over the counter drugs to relax, like, pain relievers, sleeping pills and muscle relaxers, they also include overworking, sleeping too much (can be linked to health problems like diabetes and obesity) or under-sleeping is linked to memory loss and hyper-anxiety, filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problem and taking out your stress on others (lashing out angry outbursts physical violence).

Stress management strategy

Stress management is all about taking charge of one's life style, thought, emotions and the way to deal with problems. No matter how stressful it is, there are steps to take to relieve the pressure and regain control. Lawrence, Melinda & Robert (2018) gave the following stress management self- help techniques for dealing with stress.

1. Identify the sources of stress in your life: To identify the true sources of stress, one needs to look closely at the habits, attitude and excuses. Ask the following questions, do you define stress as an integral part of your work or home life and also, do you blame your stress on other people or outside events or view it as entirely normal and exceptional.
2. Practice the 4A's of stress management: The helpful 4A's of stress management are avoid, alter, adapt or accept.

Avoid unnecessary stress

According to Lawrence, Melinda & Robert (2018)

- Learn how to say no: know your limits and stick to them whether in your professional life, reject any additional responsibilities. Do not take more than you can handle
- Avoid people who stress you out: When you discover that there is a particular person that causes stress in your life and you can turn the relationship around, limit the amount of time you spend with that person or end the relationship.
- Take control of your environment: You can control your environment to the level that will not stress you, for example, if there is a particular route you normally take where there is always traffic take another route through it may be longer. If the evening news makes you anxious turn the T.V off.
- Avoid hot button topics: Avoid any argument or topic that is hot which may lead to quarrelling. For example, if you get upset over religion or politics, cross them off your conversation list. If you repeatedly argue about the same subject with the same people, stop bringing it up or examine yourself
- Pen down your to do list: Analyze your schedule, responsibilities and daily tasks, if you have too much on you distinguish between the "should" and the "must". Drop tasks that are not truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

Alter the situation

Avoid a stressful situation try to alter it so that it will not present itself in the future. The following points will help,

- Express your feelings instead of bottling them up: - If something is bothering you, express your concern in an open and respectful way.
- Be willing to compromise: When you ask someone to change their behaviour, be willing to do the same if you both are willing to blend at least a little, you have a good chance of finding a happy middle ground.
- Be more assertive: Do not take a backseat in your own life, deal with the problem head on if you have an important thing to do, and your chatty friend is around tell him/her straight that you have only ten minutes to discuss.
- Create a balance schedule: Find a balance between work and family activities and solitary pursuits, daily responsibilities and downtime.
- Manage your time better: Poor time management can cause a lot of stress, if you plan ahead and make sure you don't over stretch yourself.

Adapt to the stressor

If you cannot change the stressor change yourself, you can adapt to stressful situation and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude.

- Reframe problem: View stressful situation from a more positive perspective for example other than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity to pause and regroup.
- Look at the big picture: Take perspective of the stressful situation and ask yourself how important it will be in the long run.
- Adjust your standard: Perfect is a major source of avoidable stress stop setting yourself up for failure by demanding perfection. Set reasonable standards for yourself and others and learn

- Practice gratitude: when stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life including your own positive qualities and gift.

Accept the things you cannot change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable such as the death of a love one, illness or a national recession in such case. The best way to cope to stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult.

- Do not try to control the uncontrollable: Several things in life are beyond our control, rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problem.
 - Look for the upside: When facing challenges try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth, if your poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.
 - Share your feelings: Talk to a trusted friend or a therapist and express what you are going through.
 - Learn to forgive: Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes, forgive whoever has offended you.
3. Get moving: Do not sit down and probably be thinking, but rise up put on the music and dance, walk around, use stair case at home or at work, play activity based video game.
 4. Connect to others: Spend quality time with people that makes you feel safe and happy, and not to those that add to your stress.
 5. Make time for fun and relaxation.

You can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself, take time for fun and relax, go for a walk early in the morning, spend time with nature, call a good friend, sweat out tension with a good workout, and write in your journal, take a long bath and light scented candles.

Do not get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs, take to the following;

- Set aside relaxation time: Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule do not allow other assignments to take the time of rest from you. Take a break from all responsibilities.
 - Connect with others: Spend time with positive people who enhance your life
 - Do something you enjoy every day: Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, example playing the piano.
 - Keep your sense of humor: This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing fights out stress
6. Manage time: Poor time management can cause a lot of stress, one can achieve a healthier work-life balance by not over committing one self, avoid scheduling too much in one day, prioritize tasks, break projects into small steps and delegate responsibilities.
 7. Learn to relieve stress in the moment: After a stressful meeting at work, immediately relieved yourself from stress by listening to music, quickly relax and refocus yourself.
 8. Adopt a healthy lifestyle, strengthening your physical health can increase resistance to stress.
 - Exercise regularly: Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effect of stress take 30 minute of exercise three times per week.
 - Eat a healthy diet: Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress. So be mindful of what you eat. Keep yourself balanced with nutritious meals throughout the day.
 - Reduce caffeine and sugar: High caffeine and sugar work against the body, by reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate and so on from your diet will help the body to feel more relaxed and the person will sleep better.
 - Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and drug: The relief is temporary instead of taking the above, deal with the problems head on with a clear mind.
 - Get enough sleep: Adequate sleep feel one's mind as well as the body, not having adequate sleep may cause someone to think irrationally (Land, 2001).

Conclusion

Stress has effect on the ability to carry out jobs effectively, it has a serious impact on careers, general well-being, and relationships. When administrative support is added to the formula for building resiliency and combatting stress, it has a great impact in work place. A less-stressed teacher can provide better instruction to students, assist colleagues, and can also lessen the head of department's job. Work place stress can be irritating, frustrating, uncomfortable and unpleasant. Workers should take action to minimize stress in working environment. To build defense against stress, meditation (meditation and mindful prayer helps the mind), physical relaxation, like network support, enough exercise and sleep, smile and laugh. Lecturers should learn how to cope with change and build resilience , so that they can overcome setbacks.

Way Forward

It is important for management and lecturers to recognize work related stress as a significant health and safety issue, stress can lead to serious health problems and sometimes death. The following recommendations will be of help;

1. A safe working environment must be provided by the employers as this will reduce injuries, illness and loss of time.
2. Communication lines must be wide open while the flow of information should be transparent. Management and head of department should not call a meeting when an email will work. The teacher should be given an appropriate amount of time to make changes in classrooms. Where there is good flow of communication, grievances and other issues will be resolved, this will enable free flow of work.
3. Employers and heads of department must encourage an environment where employees have more to say over their duties, promotional prospects and safety, this will increase productivity. Management should ask for, and uses, teacher input, recognizing that today's millennial generation of teachers

want to be heard. Not only do they want to express their views, but they feel they should be rewarded for suggesting changes and speaking their minds. When communicating with teachers, explain the rationale behind the communication, making the “why” clearly known. Today’s teachers want to ask questions and participate in discussions where there are safe, positive environments.

4. Workers should seek advice from health professionals when necessary, doing this will reduce symptoms of poor mental and physical health and it will help to improve employee health and wellbeing.
5. Business educators/Teachers should be encouraged to participate in professional development program for their specific grades and subjects. Attending a national conference or workshop can be an exceptional stress-buster, these conferences helps to update their knowledge, and serve as a form of relaxation, also giving the staff greater job satisfaction. A rejuvenated teacher can teach others what was learned at the event. Using experienced teachers to observe and coach other teachers may reduce the cost of bringing in so-called experts for workshops. This serves as a way to reward teachers and also helps the school district to grow its own new professional developers and administrators.
6. Enough equipment to be used by the business education students must be provided and adequate, and this will reduce the stress of teaching.
7. Business educators must improve in time management, have a time management tools, such as To-Do lists, action program to manage your priorities. Job analysis helps to prioritize work more effectively. This helps to reduce stress, because it get the greatest return from efforts, and minimize the time spent on low-value activities. Work and use the time management to plan the daily schedule.

8. Lecturers must make sure he/she is well organized. He/she should list out non-academic's tasks in order of priority, schedule the most difficult tasks of each day in the morning.
9. Employers must not deny his officers from going for his/her yearly leave, it will reduce sick leave usage and absences which will increase work engagement. In some institutions the lecturers take their annual leave immediately after the second semester examination.
10. If work related stress continues to be a problem, despite all efforts, the employees may need to consider another job or a career change.
11. Mentoring new teachers/lecturers for an extended period of time can promote camaraderie. Do not let new hires feel that they are left alone to just sink or swim. The mentor feels rewarded when sharing expertise. Providing release time for a book group or a professional learning community builds collegiality for teachers in all age groups. Celebrate birthdays and successes! Say thank you in person, with a card or email, and do so often.

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