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ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Accountability for learning is steaming into contemporary educational practice and implies that it holds all the stakeholders with responsibilities to high standards of performance of learners. The stakeholders of education do not need to wait for revolutionary changes in the educational policies. Rather the focus should be on what can be done right now to improve learning, teaching, and leadership. Although the policymakers play an important role in education, the plain fact is that accountability for learning happens in the classroom. Accountability breeds responsibility, and students who develop the tools to target and improve their academic shortcomings will, in turn, develop the skills they need to go far in life. This paper discusses some true aspects that can contribute to achieve accountability for learning and become responsible learners.

Key Terms: Accountability

Introduction

Accountability is the assignment of responsibility for conducting activities in a certain way or producing specific results. Holding teachers chiefly accountable for students diminished enthusiasm for learning, and lower levels of achievement is inappropriate. , teachers must be held accountable for what they do as teachers but not for what their students do as learners. Because every person is accountable for his or her own behavior but not for what other people do. Students are responsible for their own achievements. When students don't assume any responsibility for their actions and blame away poor grades and behavioral infractions on their teachers or fellow students, and constantly make excuses, the teaching community needs to think whether anything can be done to change their ways. Will increasing the student accountability for learning be a solution to this issue? The stakeholders of education do not need to wait for revolutionary changes in the educational policies. Rather the focus should be on what can be done right now to improve learning, teaching, and leadership. Although the policymakers play an important role in education, the plain fact is that accountability for learning happens in the classroom. Some aspects that can contribute to achieve accountability for learning and become responsible learners are discussed as follows:

The Government

The government at both, central and state levels need to have a plan in place so that all educators, parents, students and other stakeholders understand how schools will be monitored and what criteria will be used to determine school improvement. The government should invest in classroom resources and support teachers, set clear expectations, help teachers develop their skills, provide meaningful support that is tailored to the teacher's needs, and then provide a fair, multi-faceted review of how well teachers are serving the educational needs of our students

School System

The high level policy makers, boards of education and school system leaders need to be visionary, progressive thinkers who are well versed about what is happening around the country and how to keep their school system on the cutting-edge of transformation. A strong strategic plan that communicates the school's vision, mission, goals, beliefs, values and objectives should be transparent for all to see. Curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional learning are critical success indicators for school systems. All levels of system operation have to link back to improvement of student achievement. High expectations must be in place for school system leaders, principals, teachers, students and their parents.

Principal

Principals must be change agents, capable of dealing with vast ambiguities; human relations gurus; value the teachers and the students, school culture shapers; savvy budget administrators; and outstanding performance managers. If principals are knowledgeable, courageous and willing to hold everyone accountable for keeping their students at the center of everything they do, success is bound to follow. Principals operating at the proficient to exemplary level of these accountability systems will have the most positive impact on student achievement

Teacher

We have a responsibility to set a high bar for every teacher. The teacher has the most direct impact on a child's success in the classroom. An ineffective or an incompetent teacher can cause disastrous consequences on a child's performance. Proper training and stress on the importance of constructive support to every learner is imperative. Teachers need to help every student learn not just those students who are self-motivated learners. We look to teachers to model that love of learning implement superior teaching skills and craft their transactions according to the content, learn new ways to engage students, master their subject matter, seek advice and accept critical feedback, and constantly strive to enhance their competence and effectiveness. Teachers should work in tandem with parents to help students grow into self-conscious and constructive adults. Meeting that goal is not always easy, but once parents see the teacher as an advocate in their child's development, one can be make sure that the lessons from school are being enforced at home, and vice versa.

Students

Students must be taught to be responsible and take ownership for their education.. All the stakeholders of education as a process must remain steadfast in the mission to prepare 21st century students in our country to compete in a global economy. Failing to do so will be detrimental to not only the individual child, but to our future as a nation.

Peer Group

The factor that holds a direct bearing between the student and his accountability is the peer group. It is that factor that influences the student performance to a great extent .The group dynamics causes motivation in a generic sense thus either enhancing or decelerating accountability for learning.

Getting Students Invested in thier Work

Create an effort and achievement scale that students complete daily to show how they are meeting their school responsibilities. Students grade their daily commitment to schoolwork. At the end of the month, they tally their scores on a graph and explain what the graph says about their approach to learning. Students also create a list of up to 10 learning targets. Each month, they give

themselves a grade indicating how well they have met their objectives.

Parents

What is learned in schools can be easily unlearned if not sufficiently enforced at home, in the community, ingrained in character and properly supported. Parents need the requisite skills to help their children succeed in school. The local school and school systems should provide these skills through parent education workshops, parent involvement meetings, adult education classes and engagement in volunteerism. The chances of children being successful increase when their parents are fully vested in the school community; capable of monitoring school work; communicating effectively with teachers; and able to identify resources to help with social, emotional health issues and other impediments to school success. Parents should be partners in their child's education make learning a priority at home, advocate for their child, and understand how they can help make things better in their children's classrooms and schools

School

Generally, the school improvement plan is the accountability plan for the school. Ensuring student success in schools means holding teachers and other staff accountable for quality work directly impacting student achievement. Identification of root causes for lack of student success and aggressive interventions to address areas of weakness must be implemented. Use of research-based practices in all key areas of instruction, leadership and school operation should be evident in schools aiming for high levels of student success. Innovation and creativity should not only be encouraged but celebrated

School Environment & Rating

The overall ambience that a school provides has a direct link to the learner's achievement patterns. Focus should be given on including all the learners without leaving away a single student neglected. Motivating each with achievable goals proves constructive

Goals

Setting a high bar for every child, regardless of the challenges the child may face, and providing the teaching and support each child needs to meet those expectations. That's the promise of public education and the right of every child. To have a workable accountability system, there must be a desired goal (e.g., compliance with legal requirements, improved performance), ways to measure progress toward the goal (e.g., indicators of meeting legal requirements; indicators of performance), criteria for determining when the measures show that the goal has or has not been met, and consequences for meeting or not meeting the goal.

The Society and the Community

This is yet another relevant factor that influences the accountability for learning. In a generic way, the student who belongs to a community that fosters high levels of achievement or are academically oriented, tend to be more responsive, on the other hand, those who belong to a community who place learning and academic achievements down the list of priorities, eventually lack accountability along those lines.

Testing

We need to be accountable for the quality of public education, which also means we shouldn't over-test our children or devote excessive learning time to test preparation. The intention must be to test whether the child is learning.

Tests need to be fair, reflective of high standards, and done in moderation. They will tell parents and teachers if a child is learning the basics, while also developing critical-thinking skills.

Tests should be used to help identify a child's strengths and weaknesses, so that learning can improve for that child.

Creating a Positive and Respect Full Group atmosphere for Students

One place to start is creating a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to accountability and responsible learning. Establish, practice, and enforce expectations and consequences the goal is for students to take ownership of their own behavior. Creating a positive group identity and helping each student know that they are part of the group helps. Create a culture of mutual respect that allows students to feel like adults. Greeting students at the door is a big help. While the students are working, prefer to use facial expressions before words to address any inappropriate behavior whenever possible. If a teacher has to talk to a student about behavior, it should be done as briefly, matter-of-factly, and quietly as possible.

By treating their students as adults, but also reminding them that they are part of the larger class, teachers who work to create a respectful group mentality will have a greater chance of promoting personal accountability in their students. It is important to send the message through a teacher's demeanor and tone that he/she cares for the students. Kids respond better to a teacher who doesn't buy into the 'these are the worst kids' stigma and instead tries to get to know them and models respectful behavior, even when responding to disrespect.

Making Students and Parents Partners in thier Success

Students should have the opportunity to take charge of their academic success by formulating and following through on their own plan to improve. By assuming responsibility for their mistakes, students learn the true value of personal accountability. When students have a low grade at the midterm give them a blank plan with a list of approaches that will lead to improvement. The goals are realistic- no more missing or incomplete assignments, a target grade for the rest of the semester, and at least partial proficiency in the coursework, for example. Next they identify specific steps they will take to meet the goals for the remainder of the term. By allowing students to take the lead, the teacher puts them in charge of their own academic success. Students take more of a proactive approach to their class work when the student themselves chalk out their own plans and get it signed by the parents as well as the teachers. After two weeks, meet the student for a review-evaluate the plan, talk about whether it was realistic, whether they took the steps, and whether they met their goal. To ensure that students are held accountable at home and school, and to boost the likelihood that they will follow their own efforts to reach their goals, include parents in the conversation. This way, students can work from an unwavering foundation of positive reinforcement, which encourages them to reach their goals and also teaches them the value of personal responsibility.

Teacher Evaluation

We need fair, balanced and regular teacher evaluations that allow parents to trust that their child has a teacher who is passionate about his or her craft, knows how to engage students with creative lessons, and connects with students as individual learners. Test results that show how students are learning should be one measure of a teacher's overall performance, along with classroom observation, student surveys, and other indicators.

Conclusion

Accountability means holding everyone with responsibilities to high standards of performance. The only way we can answer that question is through shared responsibility, shared accountability. Students seem to respond productively when teachers give them the opportunity to take charge of

their academic success. By holding students accountable for their work and responsible for maintaining a personal level of excellence, teachers can provide their classes with the necessary tools they need to better themselves. Accountability breeds responsibility, and students who develop the tools to target and improve their academic shortcomings will, in turn, develop the skills they need to go far in life. And thus the breach between intention and reality can be narrowed down in institutions that are proactive towards progressive changes.

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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN DIGITAL LITERACY OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF KOTTAYAM EDUCATIONAL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Digital knowledge is a decisive power for today's students who need to know how to use technology to acquire knowledge, analyze and evaluate information, explore, draw conclusions, and test theories. They need to learn how to think critically and creatively, navigate in an increasingly digital world safely, and learn by doing. The presence or not of digital knowledge and skills in human beings determine new forms of Digital divide and social exclusion. The present study is an attempt to examine gender differences in Digital literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district. The study reveals that there exists significant difference in digital literacy with respect to gender among Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district.

Key Term: *Digital Literacy*

Introduction

The increased application of technologies in today's society provides an array of possibilities for young learners and supports the furtherance of their creativity and self-expression, both inside and outside of school. Young people use technology more than ever before to communicate, to find information on the internet, to play games and to share and sometimes create music, videos or other forms of media. In addition, digital technologies go beyond fixed contents and time borders for children to learn, as well as affects how information is produced and communicated.

Digital literacy is an urgent need for all young people in an increasingly digital culture. It furnishes children and young people with the skills, knowledge and understanding that will help them to take a full and active part in social, cultural, economic, civic and intellectual life now and in the future. To be digitally literate is to have access to a broad range of practices and cultural resources that will enable us to apply in digital tools. It is the ability to make and share meaning in different modes and formats; to create, collaborate and communicate effectively and to understand how and when digital technologies can best be used to support these processes. It means being able to communicate and represent knowledge in different contexts and to different audiences. It can be said that digital media is now a central aspect of most people's lives, whatever their age.

Today's children are growing up in a digital age. Digital media defines their lives in remarkable ways; they spend more time online, texting, watching TV and movies, and playing video games than they do in school or with their parents. Mobile phones are widely used by young people and adults alike. Online shopping and banking have become more prevalent and govern-

ment services have become increasingly internet-based. Web 2.0 technologies such as social networking sites allow people to collaborate by sharing and editing online content. The convergence of portable personal technologies, unfiltered access to information, and user-generated content profoundly influence the child.

UNESCO (2011) has identified Digital literacy as one of the most important "life skills". Digital Literacy is increasingly becoming an essential life skill and the inability to access or use ICT has effectively become a barrier to social integration and personal development. The skills, knowledge and understanding of digital literacy are therefore becoming indispensable as young people grow up in a society in which digital technology and media play an ever more important role. The Digital Age brings opportunities never before dreamed of. Whether applying for jobs online, reading the news, banking and paying bills, searching for information, or communicating with others, digital literacy is increasingly part of basic literacy.

Statement of the problem

In this Digital Age, every job and career, every field of study, and even our social and personal lives are increasingly impacted by technology. Digital technology is not only an inherent aspect of contemporary teenagers' lives, but it affects how they communicate, how they socialize, and ultimately who they are. The present study intends to find out Gender Differences in Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School Students. Hence the study is entitled as

"Gender Differences in Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School Students of Kottayam Educational District".

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the level of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district.
2. To examine gender differences in Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district with respect to gender.

Methodology

Survey method was adopted for the study. The sample of the study consisted of 106 XI standard students studying in three Higher Secondary Schools of Kottayam educational district. In the present study, to assess Digital Literacy of higher secondary school students, the investigator prepared separate rating scales for the three sub disciplines that comprise the domain of Digital Literacy namely

- Device Literacy
- Information Literacy and
- Digital Media Literacy

Analysis and Interpretation

1. To find out the level of Digital Literacy Higher Secondary School Students of Kottayam Educational District

Table 1
Level of Digital Literacy Higher Secondary School Students of Kottayam Educational District

Total	Level	Number	Percentage
106	Above average	21	20%
	Average	71	67%
	Below average	14	13%

From the Table 1, out of 106 students, 21(20%) students have above average Digital Literacy scores, 71(67%) students have average Digital Literacy scores and 14(13%) students have below average Digital Literacy scores. It is evident from the table that most of the Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district possess average digital literacy.

2. Testing significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district with respect to gender.

To compare the mean scores of Digital Literacy of boys and girls of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district, the data were analysed with the help of 't' test and the result is given in the Table 2.

Table 2
Data and result showing significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district with respect to gender.

Sample	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t- value	Table value at		Level of significance
					0.01 level	0.05 level	
Boys	51	116.76	18.19	8.64	2.58	1.96	p < 0.01
Girls	55	69.24	14.83				

From Table 2, it is observed that the obtained 't' value 8.64 is greater than the table value of significance at 0.01 level. Thus the null hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district with respect to gender" is rejected.

Further, the mean scores of Digital Literacy of boys is 116.76 which is significantly higher than those of girls whose mean scores of Digital Literacy is 69.24. It may therefore be concluded that boys were found to possess significantly higher Digital Literacy in comparison to girls.

Conclusion

The study reveals that there exists significant difference in the mean scores of Digital Literacy of Higher Secondary School students of Kottayam educational district with respect to gender. Digital literacy will facilitate empowerment of people needing technology skills for daily living, employment preparation and transition to higher education. Thus in today's high-tech world, digital literacy is a pre-requisite. Preparing for success must begin early, because without critical

digital literacy students will not succeed in this knowledge society where digital literacy and digital competence are given utmost importance.

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FOSTERING PUBLIC RELATIONS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Communication plays an essential role in effective public relations. Two-way communication between both the parties is essential and information must flow in its desired form between the organization and public. The receiver must understand what the sender intends to communicate for effective public relation. The receivers (public, target audience, stakeholders, employees, investors) must clearly understand the sender's message. PR or public relations is nothing but the practice of protecting as well as enhancing the reputation of any particular organization/firm or for that matter any individual. In today's world of fierce competition, where every organization strives hard to work toward its brand image, public relations have become the need of the hour. It is essential for every organization to communicate well with its public/target audience. The correct flow of information is essential. Here comes the importance of public relations. In the current scenario of cut throat competition, every organization struggles to stay a step ahead of its competitors. It is essential for every organization to communicate well with its stakeholders, partners and each and every individual associated with it.

Keywords: *Business Communication, Office Communication, Business Report.*

Introduction

Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization (such as a business, government agency, or a non-profit organization) and the public. Public relations may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment. This differentiates it from advertising as a form of marketing communications. Public relations are the idea of creating coverage for clients for free, rather than marketing or advertising. An example of good public relations would be generating an article featuring a client, rather than paying for the client to be advertised next to the article. The aim of public relations is to inform the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders and ultimately persuade them to maintain a certain view about the organization, its leadership, products, or political decisions. Public relations professionals typically work for PR and marketing firms, businesses and companies, government, government agencies and public officials as PIOs and non-governmental organizations, and non-profit organizations. Jobs central to public relations include account coordinator, account executive, account supervisor, and media relations manager.

Business Communication

Business communication is the sharing of information between people within and outside the organization that is performed for the commercial benefit of the organization. It can also be de-

defined as relaying of information within a business by its people. Business Communication is goal-oriented. The rules, regulations and policies of a company have to be communicated to people within and outside the organization. Business Communication is regulated by certain rules and norms. In early times, business communication was limited to paper-work, telephone calls etc. But now with advent of technology, we have cell phones, video conferencing, emails and satellite communication to support business communication. Effective business communication helps in building goodwill of an organization.

Business Communication can be of two types:

1. Oral Communication - An oral communication can be formal or informal. Generally business communication is a formal means of communication, like meetings, interviews, group discussion, speeches etc. An example of Informal business communication would be - Grapevine.
2. Written Communication - Written means of business communication includes - agenda, reports, manuals etc.

Office Communication for Business, Dealing with clients and customers

To commune means to make conversation. This is an ordinary function in our daily life. This is necessary to make contacts, to explain things, to exchange ideas, to convey information, to give instruction, and to remove misunderstandings. Communication is indispensable for existence. Communication, however, has a more specific meaning in management science.

According to Prof. Allen, "It is a bridge of meaning. It consists of a systematic and continuous telling, listening, and understanding." It is clear that communication is complete when the message sent by the communicator is understood by the communication. It is a bridge of meaning. Its importance is great and is growing. The success of an organisation depends upon how extensively and intensively communication is being carried out by it. It is described as a tool of management. It is the last word in management. Whenever more than one person meets together, there is communication between them.

Communicate more effectively with people at work, be they customers, co-workers, subordinates, or superiors. Other guidelines that can be suggested, include:

- ▶ Beware of interrupting
- ▶ Listen actively
- ▶ Avoid negative questions
- ▶ Be sensitive to differences in technical knowledge
- ▶ Use analogies to explain technical concepts
- ▶ Use positive instead of negative statements
- ▶ Be careful of misinterpreted words and phrases
- ▶ Remember that technical problems involve emotional reactions
- ▶ Keep the customer informed.

Public Interaction

At its essence, public interaction is defined as the manner in which people talk to and interact with one another. Public interaction is dependent upon the societal structure in which the communications occur. A public interaction is a social exchange between two or more individuals. These interactions form the basis for social structure and therefore are a key object of basic social inquiry and analysis. Public interaction can be studied between groups of two (dyads), three (triads) or larger social groups. Social structures and cultures are founded upon public interactions. By

interacting with one another, people design rules, institutions and systems within which they seek to live. Symbols are used to communicate the expectations of a given society to those new to it, either children or outsiders. Through this broad schema of social development, one sees how public interaction lies at its core.

Business Reports

Business reports are a type of assignment in which you analyse a situation (either a real situation or a case study) and apply business theories to produce a range of suggestions for improvement.

Business reports are typically assigned to enable you to:

- ▶ Examine available and potential solutions to a problem, situation, or issue.
- ▶ Apply business and management theory to a practical situation.
- ▶ Demonstrate your analytical, reasoning, and evaluation skills in identifying and weighing-up possible solutions and outcomes.
- ▶ Reach conclusions about a problem or issue.
- ▶ Provide recommendations for future action.
- ▶ Show concise and clear communication skills.

Characteristics of Business Report

Business reports carry information on facts related to business activities. The very nature of business report differentiates it from other reports. The unique characteristics of business report are discussed below-

- ▶ **Specific Issue:** Every report, including business one, is written on a specific subject. It is written to fulfill certain needs.
- ▶ **Pre-specified Audience:** An important characteristic of report is that it has a pre-specified audience. Usually a report is written for a limited number of audiences and the need of the audience is always kept in mind.
- ▶ **Specific Structure or Layout:** In preparing reports, certain structure or layout or format is followed. The layout or structure of a report is almost the same in every case.
- ▶ **Written on Past Events:** In most of the cases, the reports are written on past events. Most of the business reports carry the reasons of the happening of the incident, the ways of recovery etc. Reports are also written in past forms.
- ▶ **Neutral in Nature:** In drafting reports, impartiality is strictly maintained. No biased or non-objective material is included in it. Biased report may lead to disastrous decisions.
- ▶ **Factual Information:** Business report is always written based on factual information. The data collected on specific events is factual, not factious.
- ▶ **Joint Effort:** A report is an outcome of joint efforts of a group of people. No one can personally or solely prepare a report. Nowadays, in most of the cases, a committee is formed containing three to seven people for furnishing a report on certain incidents.
- ▶ **Orderly Presentation:** The information of a report is presented orderly so that the audience can get his needed information from where it is located.
- ▶ **Upward Flow:** The direction of a report is always upward in the organizational structure. The higher authority normally assigns the duty of preparing reports to their immediate lower authority and after preparing the report, they submit it to their boss

or higher authority.

- ▶ **Some Additional Aids in Presentation:** A report is always presented in an attractive way. In addition, analytical reports contain executive summary, contents and index, necessary charts, graphs and design, conclusion, recommendations etc.
- ▶ **Signature and Date:** It is customary to put the signature of the reporter with date at the end of the report. If it is prepared by a committee, the signature must be given by each member of the committee.

Types of Business Report

Reports may be classified based on several criteria, including their use (progress reports and financial reports), purpose (informational, analytical and persuasive reports), frequency of preparation (annual, monthly, weekly and hourly reports), length (short and long reports) and whether they are internal to the business, or are used outside the business.

The most common types of business reports may be divided into the following categories –

1. **Periodic reports** – These are reports that are prepared on a regular basis, for both internal and external audiences. Their purpose is solely to inform.

Examples of this type of report are –

- a) Routine management reports
 - b) Compliance reports
 - c) Progress reports
2. **Proposals** – Unlike periodic reports, the purpose of a proposal is to persuade. Proposals may be prepared for both internal and external audiences. Examples of proposals include research proposals and marketing strategy proposals to top management, proposals to the government to grant funds for building a research facility and proposals to consumers to buy a company's products.
 3. **Policies and Procedures** – The purpose of these reports is solely to inform. They are also prepared only for internal audiences. Examples include reports on company policies and procedures, written by top management and sent to all employees. This is part of downward communication.
 4. **Situational reports** – These are one-time, exceptional reports that are prepared when a unique event occurs. For example, if sales of the company have shown a significant decline, a study may be carried out to determine the reasons for declining sales and a report prepared on the findings. Similarly, a market feasibility study may be carried out before launch of a new product and a report prepared, based on the study. The purpose of such reports is usually to inform, analyze and persuade.

Conclusion

Public relations specialists establish and maintain relationships with an organization's target audience, the media, and other opinion leaders. Common responsibilities include designing communications campaigns, writing news releases and other content for news, working with the press, arranging interviews for company spokespersons, writing speeches for company leaders, acting as an organization's spokesperson, preparing clients for press conferences, media interviews and speeches, writing website and social media content, managing company reputation (crisis management), managing internal communications, and marketing activities like brand awareness and event management. Success in the field of public relations requires a deep understanding of the interests and concerns of each of the clients.

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A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND BURNOUT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

The efficiency of worker is affected by environmental conditions, in which they work. The work environment refers to the conditions which surround the work place where the worker performs the work. Burnout is the extreme tiredness due to excessive hard work. When job related demands and incompatible values and requirements become excessive, there may be types of reactions and a major negative type burnout. In social terms, the person may experience stress if exposed to conflicting social pressures, or forced to play inconsistent roles. In phenomenal terms stress may arise if the person's life style fails to match his aspirations or ideals (Henry and Stephens, 1977). The present study is a descriptive study using survey method. Occupational Stress Inventory standardized by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. P.A. Singh was selected and Teacher's Burnout was measured with a questionnaire constructed by the investigator.

The result of the present study shows that the mean scores of Occupational Stress in Male and Female Secondary School Teachers differ significantly. But the mean scores of Burnout of Male and Female Teachers do not differ significantly. This study also indicates that there exists a high correlation between Occupational Stress and Burnout among Secondary School Teachers.

Key Terms: Occupational Stress, Teacher's Burnout

Introduction

Work is the most valuable source of satisfaction as well as stress. People are often identified by the work they do. What happens to one at work is important to one's health and sense of well-being. The efficiency of worker is affected by environmental conditions, in which they work. The work environment refers to the conditions which surround the work place where the worker performs the work.

Recognizing the distraction stimuli known as stressors (which are both physical and psychological in nature) lead to stress reactions. When they are cognitively appraised as being threatening and beyond one's control, the deviations from normal states resulting from stress are known as strain. Both physical and emotional ailments as well as impaired job performance results from strain.

The concept of burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger in 1975 in New York and little later by Christian Malachand Ayala Pine in California. Burnout is the extreme tiredness due to excessive hardwork. When job related demands and incompatible values and requirements become excessive, there may be types of reactions and a major negative type burnout. The term burnout refers to a phenomenon human service that is not new. About thirty years ago, Schwartz and Will (1961) described essentially the above process as he observed it in a nurse on a psychiatric

ric ward. But they did not call it burnout, instead they used the term low morale syndrome. Also in discussing the dynamics they refer to terms such as anxiety, guilt and withdrawal.

Operational Definitions of the Terms

Occupational Stress

Dauhan (1984) defined teacher stress as, a process of behavioural, emotional, mental and physical reaction caused by prolonged, increasing or new pressures which are significantly greater than coping resources.

In the developmental terms, it may arise if the person is not prepared by his upbringing and education for the demands imposed on him by his style of life. In social terms, the person may experience stress if exposed to conflicting social pressures, or forced to play in consistent roles. In phenomenal terms stress may arise if the person's life style fails to match his aspirations or ideals (Henry and Stephens, 1977).

Burnout

Burnout may be defined as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that results from long term involvement in work situations that are emotionally demanding. Burnout is inconsistent with a sense of self determination of self-efficiency. Burnout diminishes the potential for subsequent effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

The present study is stated as "A Study on the Relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout among Secondary School Teachers"

Variables of the Study

Occupational Stress and Teacher's Burnout are the variables of the present study.

Objectives of the Study

- ▶ To find out the relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers.
- ▶ To find out the relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There is no significant relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers.
2. There is no significant relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender.

Methodology

The present study is a descriptive study using survey method. The investigator has collected data from the Secondary School Teachers of five Educational districts under Kottayam District. Occupational Stress Inventory standardized by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr.P.A. Singh (Department of Psychology, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi) was selected and Teacher's Burnout was measured with a questionnaire constructed by the investigator.

Population and Sample

A sample of 1000 secondary school teachers of various schools of Kottayam District was selected for the study.

Tools and Materials

The present study is an attempt to explore the relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout among Secondary School Teachers of Kottayam District by using survey method.

The following tools were used to measure the variables of the study.

- (a) Occupational Stress Inventory (standardized by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr.P.A. Singh).
- (b) Teacher's Burnout Scale (Developed by the investigator).

Analysis and Interpretation

Testing the significance of relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers.

The summary of the result of relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Data and results showing the relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers.

Variables	N	r	Critical Value at		Level of Significance
			0.05 level	0.01 level	
Occupational Stress	1013	0.770	0.027	0.036	p<0.01
Teacher's Burnout	1013				

From the table 1, it is evident that the Coefficient of Correlation between Occupational Stress and Burnout for the total sample of 1000 Secondary School Teachers (0.770) which is greater than the critical value of significance of 0.01 level (0.036). This indicates that there exists a high correlation between Occupational Stress and Burnout among Secondary School Teachers. When Occupational Stress increases Burnout also increases. Hence the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers is rejected.

Testing the significance of relationship between Academic Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender.

The summary of the result of relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender is given in Table 2.

Table 2

Data and results showing the relationship between Occupational Stress and Burnout of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender.

Variables	Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Table Value at		Level of Significance
						0.05 level	0.01 level	
Occupational Stress	Male	372	163.78	18.13	2.80	1.96	2.58	P<0.01
	Female	641	167.35	20.26				
Burnout	Male	372	344.17	38.54	0.073	1.96	2.58	P>0.05
	Female	641	344	34.68				

The above table shows that the calculated 't' value is (2.80) is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the calculated t-value is significant at 0.01 level. It shows that the mean scores of Occupational Stress in Male and Female Secondary School Teachers differ significantly. Therefore the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the Occupational Stress of Secondary School Teachers with respect to Gender is rejected.

But the table further reveals that the calculated 't' value of Burnout (0.073) of Secondary School Teachers is less than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the calculated t-value is not significant at 0.05 level. It shows that the mean scores of Burnout of Male and Female Teachers do not differ significantly.

Conclusion

Teachers have to function in potentially most stressful situations as they have to maintain good interpersonal relations with their principal on one hand and carryout the policies in class room to the students on the other. Hence clash of ideas, values, ideals and personalities are inevitable part of school organisation resulting in stress and strain. Thus the feeling of Burnout can affect the Mental Health of teachers to a great extent. Dellors (1996) in his report "Learning: The treasure within" remarks that, the importance of the role of the teacher as "an agent of change, promoting understanding and tolerance, has never been more obvious than today. It is likely to become even more critical in the twenty-first century".

However, it is unfortunate that despite the plethora of in-service training programmes on various pedagogic and managerial aspects there appears to be no programme on the crucial aspect which affects the Mental Health of teachers and the whole school system in the long run.

Agashe (1992) suggests that teacher empowerment is necessary in successful school restructuring and school reform efforts. So the policy planners, administrators and educators, therefore, need to address this crucial aspect of organizational development of school and equip teachers with enough skills to reduce their stress and in turn help in raising the efficiency of the school organization as a whole.

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