



SOCIAL SECTOR IN INDIA: COVID-19 Issues and Challenges

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9 Managing Online Teaching During COVID-19 Pandemic: What Makes the Female Teachers Stressed?

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Abstract

The spread of COVID-19 has led to the temporary closure of schools nationwide. Overcoming the teaching-learning challenges in the current situation of pandemic is a big hurdle as far as teachers are concerned. In addition, most of the female teachers have to manage the majority of the household chores by themselves. Keeping track of one's own children's studies which is again dealt via online classes has also loaded up the responsibilities of some of the mother teachers. This study aims at identifying the work stress faced by female teachers in dealing with online classes along with the fulfillment of familial responsibilities and day to day life activities. The data were collected from 85 female teachers with the help of questionnaire which was distributed on google platform. The analysis of the responses shows that online teaching is a stressful job. The sources of stress are also found to be the increased overall workload along with the difficulty in carrying out assessment and administrative works at school. The teachers hold concerns regarding the performance of the students and the fulfilment of educational needs of heterogeneous group through online distance mode. They lack enough time to spend with their families and also find their household chores to be messed up. The rigorous online classes have also affected the health of teachers in the form of headache, eye problems, body pain, anxiety etc. The study concludes that the majority of the teachers prefer usual classroom teaching compared to the current practice of online teaching.

Keywords: Female Teachers, Online Teaching, Work Stress, Familial Responsibilities, Usual Classroom Teaching

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Introduction

Mental well-being is important for a man to live a worthy life. For attaining a happy, prosperous, healthy and balanced living, mental well-being is inevitable. It decides the way one converse, think, socialize and behave. It also helps the person in making decisions and executing them effectively in each and every instance in life. Only the man who is mentally fit can divert his positive energy for the welfare of the people surrounding him and the society.

Teacher has the central role in the field of education, next to the student. Teacher is the one who sets the 'stage' for learners to construct their knowledge. From building positive classroom ambience to a mentor, teachers' role is rather important in building up the student into a 'complete' man, who will be productive to the world and the mankind.

For attaining the foundation for social and emotional aspects in child, facilitating student learning and to maintain a pleasant and positive school and classroom climate, the teacher's well-being is important (Von der Embse & Putwain, 2015). As explained by Greenspoon and Saklofske (2001), the mental well-being constitutes 'dual-factor': positive and negative. Stress is included as a negative factor of well-being (Renshaw, Long, & Cook, 2015; Mankin, Von der Embse, Renshaw, & Ryan, 2018).

To perform the multiple roles assigned to a teacher effectively, his mental well-being is important. Only a healthy mind can nurture the same in others. Only teachers experiencing less stress can maintain good rapport with the students and in turn bring success in executing the appropriate classroom management strategies (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). If the teacher is prone to issues such as stress, depression, anxiety disorders, they would not be able to focus and this would further affect the learning process and the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Work stress is common for teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Teaching is one among the most stressful professions known (Kyriacou, 2001; Johnson et al., 2005). "The teacher's patterns of higher levels of stress and lower levels of coping were associated with maladaptive teacher behavior and lower student outcomes" (Herman, Prewett, Eddy, Savalia & Reinke, 2020).

Teachers are meant to multitask to meet the demands of students, parents and the school administrators. Failure in these mushrooms the issues of work stress. Kyriacou (2001) explains teacher stress as the 'unpleasant, negative emotion such as anger, anxiety, frustration or depression' associated with the teacher's profession. The level of anxiety and stress experienced may vary from teacher to teacher (Betoret, 2006; Peker & Halat, 2009; Wang & Wang, 2015) and also depend on the level of education in which they are involved (Oltuis, Watt & Stewart, 2014; Ahmed & Julius, 2015; Desouky & Allam, 2017). For usual teaching process the classroom management, the execution of differentiated or individualized instruction, motivating the students contribute as stressors (Herman & Reinke, 2015). As far as the matters beyond the classroom are considered, for management, increased workload, matters related to wage, promotion and

career development etc. have direct influence on pounding the teacher stress. Issues in intrapersonal relationships in between colleagues, lack of resource support and the fear of monitoring from the part of school administrators also worsen up the situation (Kyriacou, 2001).

Not attending to the issues of stress for a long period of time may lead to teacher burnout (Dean, 2010; Travers, 2017; Netz & Rom, 2020). The chances of quitting the profession is also high in the case of burnout (Netz & Rom, 2020). Students, who are the central of teaching-learning process, are mainly characterized by their lack of maturity, decision-making skills and overall view about their roles in society and life within. So, it is inevitable to tackle the job-related stress of the teachers through appropriate intervention.

Overcoming the teaching-learning challenges in the current situation of pandemic is a big hurdle as far as teachers are concerned. The spread of the COVID-19 has led to the temporary closure of schools nationwide. Simultaneously, online learning has commenced to address the needs of the geographically separated learners from their teachers and educational institutions.

The huge intervention of technology into the teaching-learning process is found to be a great task for the teachers to deal with. It is evident that teachers are trying very hard to adapt to the innovative methods and strategies. But what about the emotional take of the teachers upon this shift?

There exist huge pressures upon the teachers to become technologically trained and dynamic. They cannot afford to make the students wait for them, as the transformation is urgent as compared to other aspects of human life. This has loaded up the mental stress among the teachers who are tangled themselves in great dilemma whether they can succeed or not.

The limelight of this study is upon the female teachers, who are not only burdened under the job pressure, but are also known as 'the manager' in their family and home. Their stress as a home maker cannot be ignored, especially, in the current situation in which they have to partially transform their home to work place in dealing with the online mode of teaching. Handling all the responsibilities with ease for such working women have almost become a myth in this COVID situation. Here, the investigators try to identify the work stressors among female teachers in managing online teaching during lockdown. The extent of these work stressors and its manifestations are also studied.

Research Questions

The research questions framed for the purpose of the study are as follows.

1. What are the major work stressors among female teachers in managing online teaching?
2. What is the extent of major work stressors faced by female teachers in managing online teaching?
3. What are the major manifestations of work stress among female teachers in managing online teaching?

4. What is the extent of major manifestations of work stress of female teachers in managing online teaching?
5. What is the preference of female teachers with online teaching and usual classroom teaching?

Methodology

Method and Sample

The study has adopted survey method and is conducted on a sample of 85 female teachers who carry out online teaching from their home during COVID-19 lockdown.

Tool Used

The tool 'Questionnaire on Work Stress faced by female teachers in managing online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic' is prepared by the investigators. The tool consists of 37 items out of which there are 35 alternate response items and the rest 2 items were checklists. The questionnaire is circulated as Google Form and the data are collected.

Statistical Technique

Percentage analysis of responses of female teachers obtained through questionnaire is used to answer the research questions.

Analysis and Interpretation

Major Work Stressors among Female Teachers in Managing Online Teaching
As the primary research question of the study was meant to identify the major work stressors among female teachers in managing the online classes during COVID-19 lockdown, the responses obtained through the questionnaire are analyzed and the work stressors are categorized and listed as follows.

1. Time Management Related Work Stressors:

- Stress in managing the job and household works in a balanced way
- Stress due to lack of enough time
- a) for planning and preparing the lessons
- b) to complete the household works
- c) for family members
- d) to look after the kids' studies

2. Work Related Stressors in General:

- Stress in managing the classroom with the class size provided
- Stress due to increased workload as a teacher
- Stress due to the difficulty in carrying out the procedure of assessment of the works submitted by students such as assignment, project, worksheet etc.
- Stress due to the messed up daily routine at home which used to be very

Technology Related Work Stressors:

3. Stress in not being technology updated as the present teachers are expected to be
- Stress due to the belief that the students are more technology savvy than the teacher herself
- Stress due to lack of enough training to use technology for teaching
- Stress due to the inability in using various technological applications
- Stress in coping with the situation when the work is brought to a complete halt in case of power failure in between online classes or urgent meetings

4. Discipline and Motivation Related Work Stressors:

- Stress due to concerns about the educational performance of the students
- Stress due to concerns regarding the fulfillment of needs of the heterogeneous group of students through online teaching
- Stress due to the fear in failure of
 - a) managing the classroom discipline
 - b) motivating the students to learn
 - c) managing the issues, concerns and complaints from parents

5. Isolation Related Work Stressors:

- Stress due to isolation from colleagues
- Stress in dealing with the household chores alone without others' help
- Stress due to lack of enough time to talk openly to any of the family members about the job-related issues and tension

Extent of Major Work Stressors among Female Teachers in Managing Online Teaching

For analyzing the extent of issues in each category, the investigators have set the following criteria for interpretation. The work stress is said to be major if the percentage of female teachers agreeing with the issue is greater than 25 and the issue is considered to be minor when the percentage is less than 25.

1. Extent of Time Management Related Work Stressors:

The percent of female teachers facing stress related to time management of online teachers is shown in figure 1.

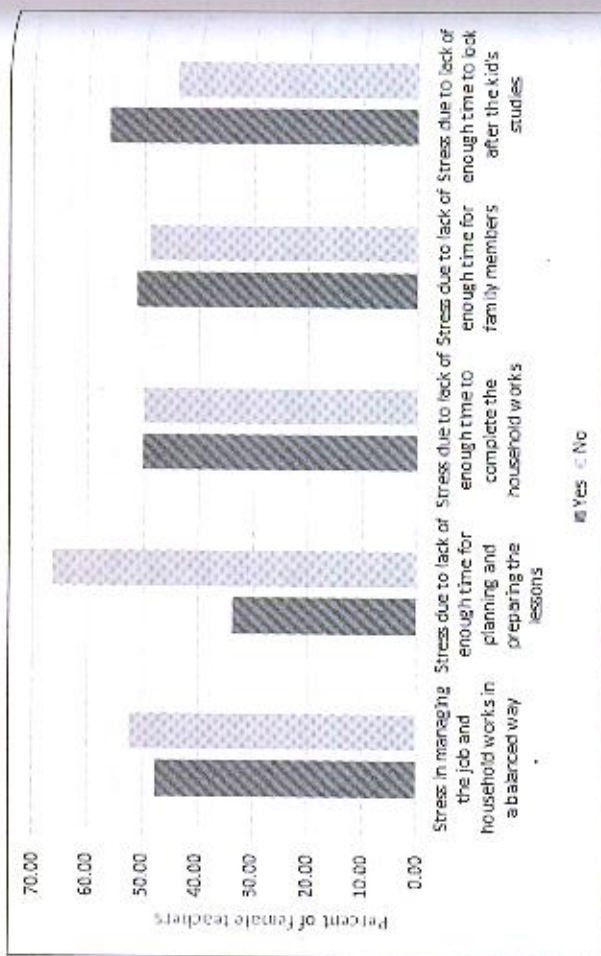


Figure 1. Extent of Time Management Related Work Stressors

As shown in figure 1, around 48 percent of female teachers faces stress in managing their job and household works in a balanced way. The stress due to lack of enough time for planning and preparation of the lessons is visible in 34 percent of female teachers. When coming to the case of lack of enough time to complete the household works, 50 percent of the teachers feel stressed. Approximately 51 percent of the teachers are stressed due to lack of enough time for their family members. Among the mother teachers, 56 percent have the stress that arises due to lack of enough time to look after their kid's studies.

The analysis of extent of work stressors related to time management shows that more than of the teachers find lack of enough time for planning and preparation of lessons as the stress factor. Around half of the teachers are stressed due to sub-factors such as managing the job and household works in a balanced way, lack of enough time to complete household works and also for the family members. Among the teachers who are mothers, more than half have the stress that arises due to lack of enough time to look after their kid's studies. So, all the sub-factors discussed under the work stressors related to time management are considered to be major.

2. Extent of Work Related Stressors in General:

The percent of female teachers facing stress related to work in general is shown in figure 2.

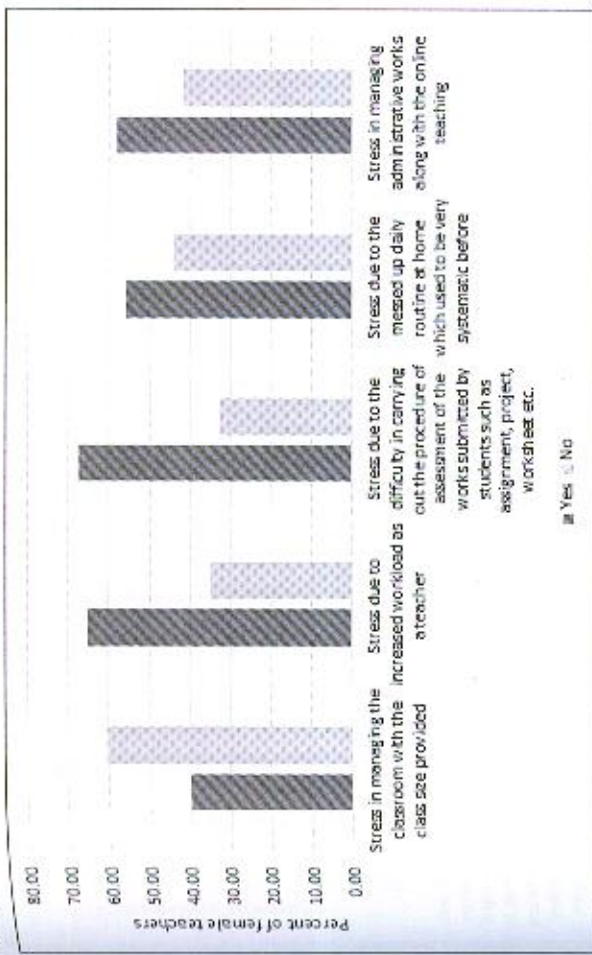


Figure 2. Extent of Work-related Stressors in general

According to figure 2, nearly 40 percent of female teachers faces stress in managing the classroom with the class size provided. The stress due to increased workload is evident in 65 percent of female teachers. When coming to the case of stress due to the difficulty in carrying out the procedure of assessment of the works submitted by students such as assignment, project, worksheet etc., 67 percent of the teachers feel stressed. Approximately 59 percent of the teachers are stressed due to the messed up daily routine at home which used to be very systematic before. Among the teachers, 58 percent faces the stress in managing administrative works along with the online teaching.

The analysis of extent of work-related stressors in general throws light upon the fact that more than of the teachers find it stressful to manage the classroom with the class size provided. Around of the teachers are stressed due to the increased workload and the difficulty in carrying out the assessment of students' works. The messed up daily routine at home and the management of administrative works along with the online teaching are the sources of stress for more than half of the teachers. In short, under the work-related stressors in general, all the sub-factors discussed are considered to be major.

3. Extent of Technology Related Work Stressors:

The percent of female teachers facing stress related to technology and its application is shown in figure 3.

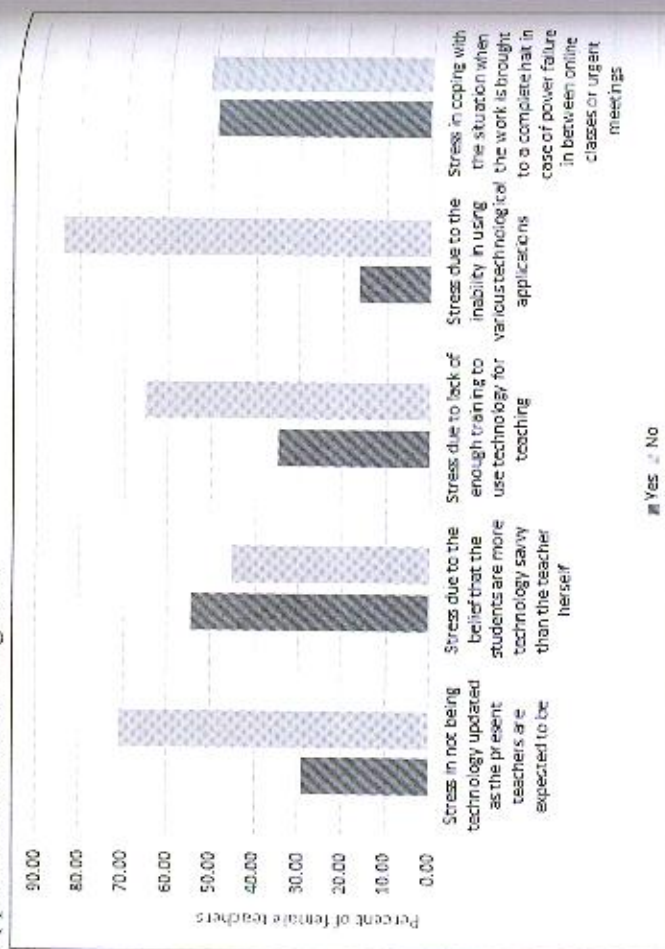


Figure 3. Extent of Technology Related Work Stressors

In figure 3, around 29 percent of female teachers feels that they are not technology updated as the present teachers are expected to be, which in turn becomes a source of stress for them. The belief that the students are more technology savvy than the teacher herself also causes stress for 55 percent of female teachers. Nearly 35 percent teachers are stressed as they lack enough training to use technology for teaching. 16 percent of the teachers believe that they possess inability in using various technological applications, which creates stress in them. The situation in which the work coming to a complete halt in the case of power failure in between online classes or urgent meetings causes stress in 49 percent of female teachers. The analysis of extent of technology related stressors shows that more than of the teachers are stressed as they are not technologically updated. Meanwhile the belief that students are more techno savvy than themselves are the source of stress for more than half of the teachers.

More than $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the teachers are stressed due to their lack of training in technology mediated teaching. The power failure issues in between the classes and meetings creates stress in nearly half of the teachers. So, all these sub-factors can be considered to be major work stressors related to technology. Only less than of the teachers holds the opinion that they are not capable enough to use various technological applications, which proves it to be a minor work stressor.

4. Extent of Discipline and Motivation Related Stressors:

The percent of female teachers facing stress related to discipline and motivation of students is shown in figure 4.

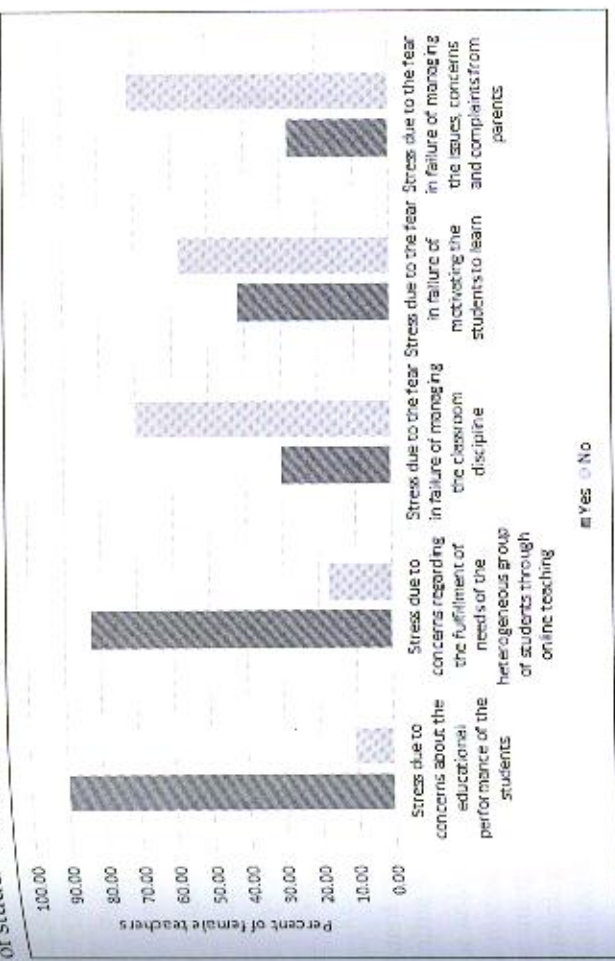


Figure 4. Extent of Discipline and Motivation Related Work Stressors

Figure 4 shows that nearly 90 percent of the teachers are stressed due to concerns about the educational performance of the students. Stress due to concerns regarding the fulfillment of needs of the heterogeneous group of students through online teaching is prevalent among 83 percent of the female teachers. Around 30 percent of teachers find it stressful when it comes to the failure in managing the classroom discipline. The teachers' failure in motivating the students is the cause of stress among 42 percent of them. 28 percent of the teachers opined that the management of issues, concerns and complaints from parents to be a work stressor.

In short, it can be explained that most of the teachers carry concerns regarding the performance of the students. Stress regarding the need fulfillment of students is evident in more than of the teachers. When it comes to the fear of failure in managing classroom discipline, nearly of the teachers find the situation to be stressful. The task of motivating the students to learn is stressful for more than of the teachers. More than of them shows stress in handling parents' issues, concerns and complaints. So, all these sub-factors are considered to be major discipline and motivation related work stressors among female teachers.

5. Extent of Isolation Related Work Stressors:

The percent of female teachers facing stress related to isolation is shown in figure 5.

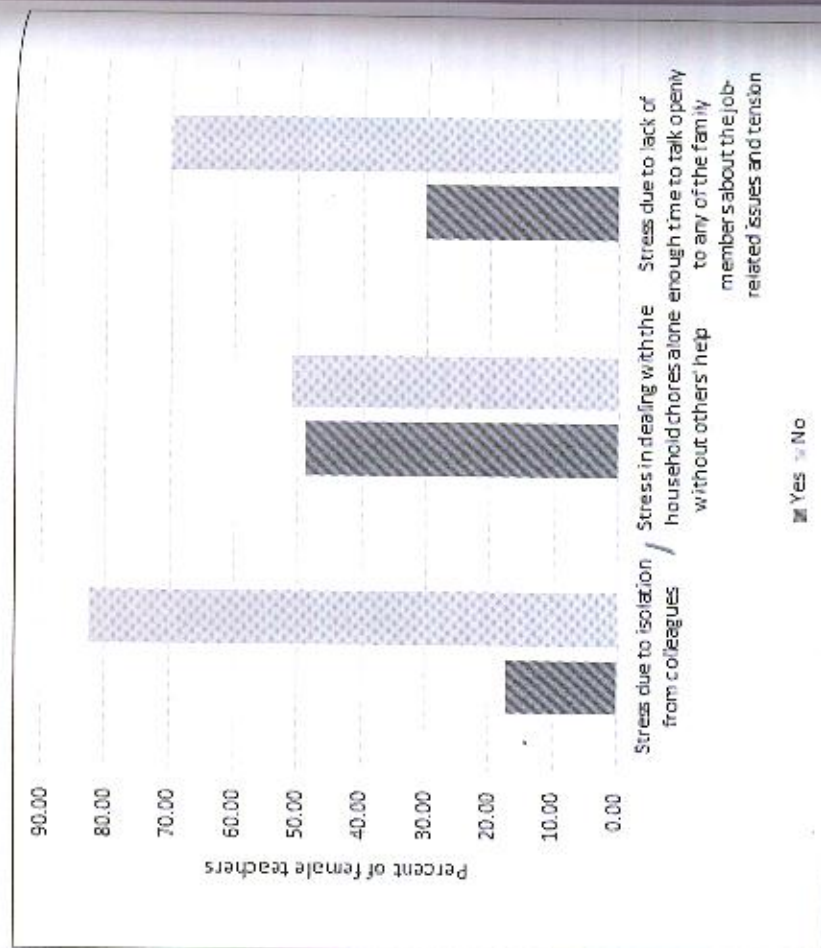


Figure 5. Extent of Isolation Related Work Stressors

From figure 5, stress due to isolation from colleagues is faced by 17 percent of the female teachers. Nearly 49 percent of teachers feel stressed in dealing with the household chores alone without others' help. Stress due to lack of enough time to talk openly to any of the family members about the job-related issues and tension is being expressed by 30 percent of the female teachers.

The analysis of extent of work stressors related to isolation reveals that only less than of the teachers face stress due to the isolation from their colleagues. So, it can be considered to be a minor stressor. Nearly half of the teachers have to deal with the household chores without other's help and this results in stress. Those who face stress due to lack of time to have open talks with their family members about the tension and issues related to job is nearly of the female teachers. So, these two work stressors related to isolation are considered to be major.

Manifestations of Work Stress of Female Teachers in Managing Online Teaching

To identify the manifestations of work stress of female teachers in managing online teaching, the responses obtained through the questionnaire are analyzed and listed as follows.

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Low / high blood pressure
- Head ache
- Stomach ache / cramps
- Eye problems
- Shoulder / back pain
- Relieving stress by misbehaving to parents / family members / students

Extent of Manifestations of Work Stress of Female Teachers in Managing Online Teaching

For analyzing the extent of manifestations of work stress of female teachers in managing online teaching, the investigators have set the following criteria for interpretation. The manifestation of work stress is said to be major if the percentage of female teachers possessing the same is greater than 25 and the manifestation is considered to be minor when the percentage is less than 25.

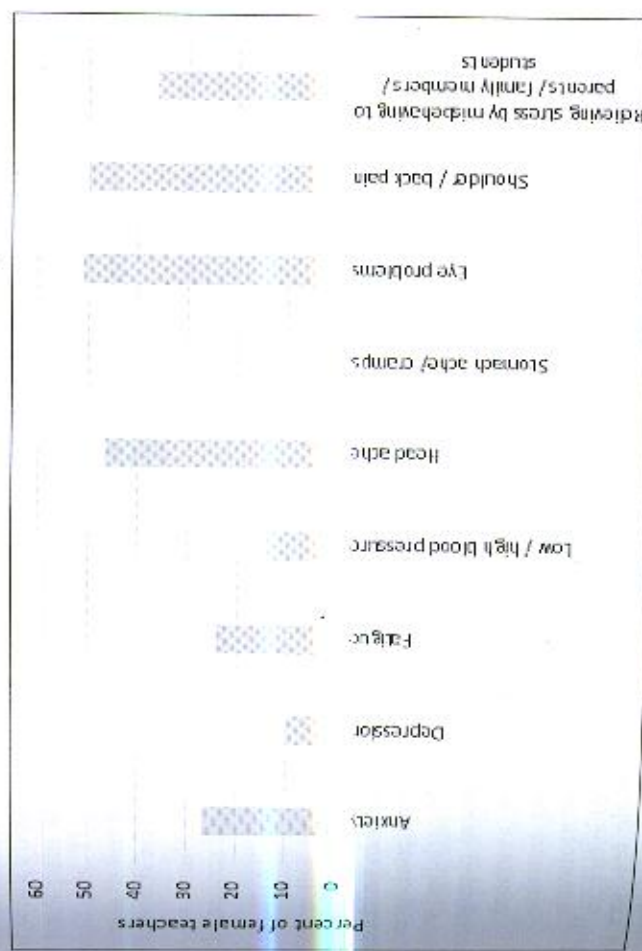


Figure 6. Extent of Manifestations of Work Stress

In figure 6, the various manifestations and their extent among female teachers are shown as 27 percent of female teachers experience anxiety, 10 percent experience depression, 25 percent experience fatigue, 10 percent experience low / high blood pressure, 35 percent experience head ache, 45 percent experience stomach ache / cramps, 50 percent experience eye problems, 50 percent experience shoulder / back pain, and 40 percent experience relieving stress by misbehaving to parents / family members / students.

fatigue, 14 percent for low or high blood pressure, 47 percent for head ache, 5 percent for stomach ache or cramps, 51 percent for eye problems, 50 percent for shoulder or back pain and 36 percent of teachers who relieve stress by misbehaving to parents or family members or students.

In other words, depression, fatigue, low or high blood pressure and stomach ache or cramps appears in less than of the female teachers, hence, can be considered to be minor manifestations of work stress. More than of the teachers have anxiety and more than of them have misbehaved to others to relieve stress. Also, around half of the teachers have manifestations of work stress in the form of head ache, eye problems and shoulder or back pain. In short, it can be explained that the forms of manifestations of work stress such as anxiety, misbehavior, head ache, eye problems and shoulder or back pain can be considered to be major as far as female teachers are considered.

Extent of Preference of Female Teachers with the Online Teaching and Usual Classroom Teaching

The percent of female teachers who prefer online teaching and usual classroom teaching is shown in figure 7.



Figure 7. Extent of Preference with Online Teaching and Usual Classroom Teaching

Figure 7 shows that 94 percent of female teachers prefer usual classroom teaching over online teaching. Only 6 percent of teachers, which is very minimal, prefer the online teaching. So, this implies that the female teachers are not satisfied with the present online mode of teaching. The teachers think that usual classroom teaching is better than the online teaching.

Conclusion

The results of the study help the investigators to reach the conclusion that among the pool of work stressors the major ones faced by female teachers in managing online teaching during COVID-19 lockdown are Stress in managing the job and household works in a balanced way; Stress due to lack of enough time for planning and preparing the lessons, to complete the household works.

classroom with the class size provided; Stress due to increased workload as a teacher; Stress due to the difficulty in carrying out the procedure of assessment of the works submitted by students such as assignment, project, worksheet etc.; Stress due to the messed up daily routine at home which used to be very systematic before; Stress in managing administrative works along with the online teaching; Stress in not being technology updated as the present teachers are expected to be; Stress due to the belief that the students are more technology savvy than the teacher herself; Stress due to lack of enough training to use technology for teaching; Stress in coping with the situation when the work is brought to a complete halt in case of power failure in between online classes or urgent meetings; Stress due to concerns about the educational performance of the students; Stress due to concerns regarding the fulfillment of needs of the heterogeneous group of students through online teaching; Stress due to the fear in failure of managing the classroom discipline, motivating the students to learn and managing the issues, concerns and complaints from parents; Stress in dealing with the household chores alone without others' help; Stress due to lack of enough time to talk openly to any of the family members about the job-related issues and tension.

The minor work stressors for female teachers in managing online teaching as identified by the investigators are Stress due to the inability in using various technological applications and Stress due to isolation from colleagues.

For the female teachers who manage online teaching, the major manifestations of work stress are in the form of Anxiety, Head ache, Eye problems, Shoulder / back pain and Relieving stress by misbehaving to parents / family members / students. The investigators could find out that the minor manifestations of work stress in female teachers are Depression, Fatigue, Low / high blood pressure and Stomach ache / cramps.

As a result of all the above reasons, most of the female teachers prefer usual classroom teaching over online teaching.

Implications

Since the findings of the study show that there is a large number of work stressors due to which the female teachers are dissatisfied with the online teaching-learning process taking place currently during COVID-19 lockdown, the investigators put forward the suggestions as follows.

- If the teachers have to continue the online mode of curriculum transaction for a prolonged period, we can expect a class of mentally and physically unwell teachers, who will be incapable of bringing forth well-educated and positive spirited younger generation empowered for nation building and societal development. So, it is the duty of the government and non-government agencies to structure remedial measures to tackle such situation urgently.
- There should be enough training and faculty development programs organized for the teachers at every level, not only to enhance the technological skills in online classroom transaction but also in carrying out the assessment with which the process of learning becomes complete. More

workshops and seminars can be organized to provide exposure to teachers upon the online resources available and how to create and apply them to meet the demands of the situation.

- Area wise or district wise network of teachers based on the disciplines and level of teaching can be mapped and can be set for collaborative works on e-content preparation. This can ensure that the work is equally shared and e-content thus prepared can be commonly used for the schools in that area or district to teach a particular subject. This method of shared responsibilities saves time and may provide a less stressful job environment for the teachers.
- Only a person with healthy mind and body can bring positive outcomes in their job. So, the teachers should give much importance to their own health more than their job. Following healthy diet plans along with ample exercises, both for the body and mind, in the form of yoga and meditation can be included as the part of the daily routine. The same routine can be made a part of the life of their family members too, thus, ensuring a pleasant and positive family environment at home.
- All teachers should find time to have open talks with family members and friends. They can share the tensions and concerns about their job with others, which will be a great deal of comfort for all stressed teachers. Also ensure that the teachers, administrators and staffs of the school to be a close knit, so that everyone will be exposed to good working atmosphere at job. Keeping the ego issues at the work place away, it is the motto of 'share and care' that should be brought deliberately into the school premises and also into the online virtual world where the teaching-learning process is carried out currently.

- Prolonged usage of computer and mobile phones may be the reason for increased eye problems and head ache among the teachers. So, the awareness to prevent the issues related to 'Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)' also known as digital eye strain is very important not only among the teachers, but also for the pupils. Taking appropriate breaks in between the online classes is very important for the teachers. They should remember to follow the 20-20-20 rule - taking break for 20 seconds, by looking into objects 20 feet away, after 20 minutes of continuous use of computers. Strain to the eyes can be reduced by adjusting the screen brightness of the electronic gadgets used. After consulting medical experts, lubricants for the eye can also be used to prevent eye redness or dryness. Glasses with anti-glare lenses are best to prevent eye strain. Teachers should also take care to follow proper seating posture which is important to prevent shoulder and back pain.

By implementation of all the above suggestions, along with the collaborative and synergistic efforts of all teachers, we can expect that the traumatic condition at job as a result of the numerous dimensions of work stressors can be eliminated to a large extent, thus, promising a well-equipped and healthy class of teachers for the upbringing of better citizens for the nation.

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Indian National Education Policy 2020: An Overview and Analysis

10

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Abstract

A well-defined and revolutionary education policy is essential for a country at school and college levels due to the reason that education leads to economic and social development. Different countries adopt different education systems by considering the tradition and culture and adopt different stages during their life cycle at school and college education levels to make it effective. Recently Government of India announced its new Education policy which is based on the recommendations by an expert committee headed by Dr. Kasturirangan. Former chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). This paper highlights various policies announced in the higher education system and compare them with the currently adopted system. Various innovations and predicted implications of NEP 2020 on the Indian higher education system along with its merits, are discussed. Finally, some suggestions are proposed for its effective implementation towards achieving its objectives.

Keywords: Higher Education, National Education Policy 2020, Overview, Analysis, HEIS, Implementation Strategies

Introduction

India, being a growing liberal country for educational reforms, currently has about 845 universities and approximately 40, 000 higher education institutions (HEIs), reflecting the overall high fragmentation and many small-sized HEIs in the country which are affiliated to these universities. It is found that over 40% of these small-sized institutions are running the single programme against the expected reform to a multidisciplinary style of higher education which is an essential requirement for the educational reforms in the country for the 21st