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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# A MIXED METHOD STUDY TO IDENTIFY THE STRESSFUL SITUATIONS AND INVESTIGATE THE STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS TO DEAL WITH STRESSFUL SITUATION IN SELECTED SCHOOLS OF INDORE, INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

A mixed method study was done using Exploratory Sequential Qualitative Quantitative approach to identify the stressful situations and investigate the strategies adopted by middle and high school teachers. In qualitative study, interview was conducted among two focus groups comprised of 7 participants of middle and high school teachers Working conditions and overloadness were the main cause of stress. A quantitative survey tool was distributed among 40 participants. Maximum participants utilized positive coping behavior followed by neutral and negative coping behavior to deal with stress. Quantitative data findings indicate that the overall mean percentage of stress was 64.97%, which indicates high level of stress. The highest stress causing factors were powerlessness 17.8% and role ambiguity 17.7%. The mean percentage for middle and high school teachers are 61.52% and 68.42%, which indicates average and high level of stress respectively. Since  $(t) = 2.66 > t_{0.05} = 2.02$  (table Value) which concludes that there is significant relationship between stress levels of Middle and High School Teachers. The study concluded that there is a need to implement positive coping strategies and stress management for teachers.

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## INTRODUCTION

In India teaching has been considered as the easiest profession with less working hours, vacations, good working conditions, less workload but researches done in various parts of India shows that now teaching may be considered as the toughest of all professions with so many factors causing stress within the school campus. Teaching profession is not only doing work and earn wages, its much more than that, teachers are the makers of future generation, they have to fully involve in the work. As a member of health care organization it's our duty to find the factors causing stress among teachers and coping strategies used by them.<sup>(1)</sup>

The same stresses or stressors are not prevalent in every classroom. There is large difference in the types of dissatisfaction between an urban, high poverty public school and a suburban, low poverty public school. Each teacher may not experience the same stressor and stress affects every person differently, but it is easy to see why the teacher turnover rate is above normal when compared to other professions.<sup>(2)</sup>

Stress of teachers is a result of individual as well as environmental factors. Environmental factors include poor working conditions, shortage of resources, more tasks at hands and student behaviour. Individual character may include age, years of experience, socio-economic conditions, personality and ability to cope. The research goal is to identify stressful situations and investigate strategies adopted by middle and high school teachers to deal with stressful situation. The purpose of this proposed mixed method study is to identify the stressful situations and investigate the strategies adopted by middle and high school teachers to deal with stressful situations.<sup>(3)</sup> Conceptual framework was developed on the basis of Person – Environment (P-E) Fit Model and General Systems Model.

## METHODOLOGY

In the present study Exploratory Sequential Qualitative Quantitative approach was used. In this study first the qualitative research was done and on the basis of findings from qualitative study quantitative research was done. A cross sectional research method was designed in this study. A mixed method design was used for the research study. One method of research usually does not answer all research questions, so on

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the basis of findings from qualitative research, and quantitative research was carried on. The qualitative study generated themes and helped the researcher to find the causes of stress and coping strategies used by middle and high school teachers to deal with stress. It also helped to prepare the quantitative survey tool that was used to collect quantitative data. The quantitative study helped the researcher to assess the level of stress among middle and high school teachers. Qualitative research was conducted on 14 teachers (7 middle and 7 high school teachers) of selected schools of Indore using non-probability convenient sampling, which allowed the researcher to select the participants who were willing to participate in the study. The data collection for qualitative research was completed in two phases. On first day on Focus Group one structured open ended questionnaire was asked and on Second Day structured open ended questionnaire was asked to focus group two. Strategies such as triangulation, member checking were used to check validity of the study. Data was analyzed using content analysis on the basis of which coding was done and themes were generated.<sup>(4)</sup>

The settings used for the quantitative research were the selected schools of Indore (M.P.) i.e. St. Arnolds H.S. School and Marthoma High Sec. School. The population for quantitative research comprised of middle and high school teachers of Indore. The samples were selected using non-probability convenient sampling, which allowed the researcher to select the participants who were willing to participate in the study. The sample size was 40 i.e. 20 Middle school Teachers and 20 High School Teachers. A quantitative survey tool was prepared on the basis of review of literature and finding of qualitative data which was gathered from the two focus groups.(Middle and High School Teachers). The data obtained was analysed by using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics.<sup>(5)</sup>

Permission was taken to conduct the research study from ethical committee of Bombay Hospital college of Nursing, Indore, also permission was obtained from the authority of schools from which the participants were selected It was ensured that the participants will not have any psychological stress or harm during the study and written consents were taken by the participants who were willing to participate and confidentiality of the participants was maintained.

## RESULTS

The analysis of the qualitative data was based on research questions. Coding was done using Atlis TI Software and themes were generated. These themes included Working Conditions, Overloadedness, Parent’s-Student’s attitude and behaviour, Relationship with co-workers, Unrealistic expectations, Role Ambiguity. Most of the teachers were using positive coping strategies like keeping cool and calm, thinking positive, meditation, exercise and relaxation, being open for change, coping with new generation. Neutral coping strategies were staying in clean and green atmosphere, having parent’s student’s affection and trust, and balancing stress by keep going and growing attitude. Very less teachers utilised negative coping strategies like stubborn attitude, sleeplessness,

aggression and isolation.

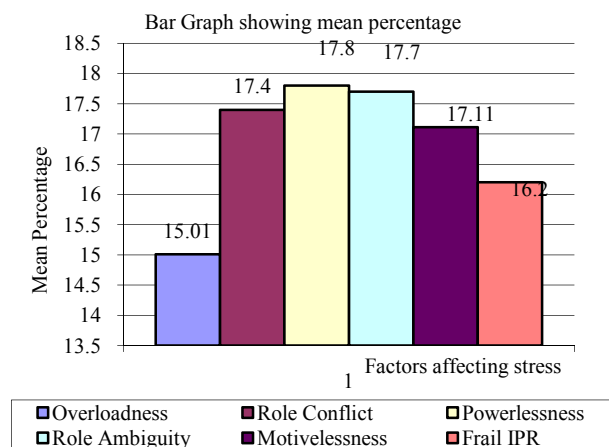


Fig 1

Quantitative data findings indicate that the overall mean percentage of stress was 64.97%, which indicates high level of stress. The highest stress causing factors were powerlessness 17.8% and role ambiguity 17.7%. The mean percentage for middle and high school teachers is respectively 61.52% and 68.42%, which indicates average and high level of stress. Since  $t = 2.66 > t_{0.05} = 2.02$  (table Value) which concludes that there is significant relationship between stress levels of Middle and High School Teachers.<sup>(6)</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As very less literature is available on the stress level of middle and high school teachers, the findings of this study can open up new aweness to detect strss levels of coping strategies. A larger target population would produce more generalizeable results about middle and high school teachers stress and coping strategies. Teaching profession is stressful occupation. Besides teaching middle and high schools teachers have to daily face lots of situations such as indiscipline students, working conditions administratative duties, role ambiguity, which increases the stress level of teachers. Finally teacher’s ultimate aim is to make their students a successful one and teachers feel rewarded when their students prove themselves and climb the ladder of success.

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