



A Study on Job Stress Among Special Educators Working with Mentally Challenged Children

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ABSTRACT

Stress seen in all people in various situations, it may be due to work, environment, people and other circumstances. Every individual undergo stress in some aspects. The teachers working with special children having very difficult task than teachers working with normal children. They have to put more effort to train up the children in doing their day to day activities, making them understand or understanding their needs are tough to manage, hence after parents the children are spending maximum time with teachers. For the teachers job will be challenging in educating those special children. The objective of the study is to understand the severity or degree of disabilities that can lead stress among special educators. To know about the personal and emotional acquirement of stress among special educators. Descriptive Research design is adopted in this study. The Sampling for the study was special educators from three special schools which is located in Coimbatore, the researcher has adopted census method. Tools used in the study are semi structured interview schedule

KEYWORDS : Stress, Special Educators, Mentally challenged children

Introduction

Effective performance on any work has a good psychological wellbeing of the workers. Work becomes very stressful when some of the conditions were not good in the work place or type of job an individual doing. Therefore the high degree of stress may affect the whole process of performance. Teaching normal children is a quite difficult in today's situation inspite of teachers teaching special children is a very big task and challenge oriented. Special educators are doing wonderful job they are spending more time with each and every children by teaching them different behavioral skills, conducting various activities to make them understand better. But they are not well recognized in the society, paying less salary, having more work load because in a class there are around 10 children which is difficult for the special educators. Aim of the study is to study the stress among special educators in dealing with mentally challenged children. The Objective of the study is to understand the severity or degree of disabilities that can lead to stress among special education teachers. To know about the emotional and personal acquirement of stress among special educators.

Research Design

This study is a descriptive one which is a fact finding investigation, in which the researcher can study on emotional exhaustion, degree of disability of children which cause stress to special educators and personal accomplishment of special educators.

Profile of the Agency

The researcher has taken data from three different schools from Coimbatore district.

1. Vidya vikasini opportunity school established in the year 1981 for the special children Nearly 150 special children with multiple disabilities like autism, mental retardation, dyslexia are there. Early intervention, Preschool, Primary, secondary and vocational training.
2. Amrit special school is multi-faceted organizations with a School for Mentally Challenged. Nearly 120 special children are there. They have Early Intervention Unit, Vocational Training Centre and Vocational Creative Unit.

3. The WVS school established in the year 2004. Around 100 special children is there. This organization provides services for Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy and mental retardation.

Universe of the Study

Universe

The universe of this study consisted of special educators from three special schools situated in Coimbatore district.

Sampling

The researcher selected whole universe from three different schools. So the researcher adopted census method.

Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was, to know the feasibility of the study, to understand the difficulties during the period of research. Researchers went around different schools and explain about the study and found the possibilities of conducting the present study.

Tools Used for Data Collection

In this study the researcher use interview schedule for securing relevant information through the questions. The semi structured interview schedule was prepared in English with minimum number of questions to collect the data from special educator of the mentally challenged children from three schools which is located in Coimbatore district.

Data Analysis

The collected data from special educators were coded in the Excel sheet by assigning alphabets according to the each question. These coded data was classified, tabulated and interpreted.

Tabulation

Table-1

Challenges Encountered By Special Education Teachers

Items	No Stress	Moderate stress	Extreme stress
Heavy Workload	4(12)	14 (44)	14 (44)

Increased or Lower population	4(12)	8 (26)	20(63)
Less progress in students academic	4(12)	21 (66)	7 (22)
Lack of Materials	12(37)	20 (63)	0(0)

The above table shows that more than half 66 % respondents having moderate stress due to lack of progress of the students in academic. Little more than one fifth (21%) of respondents has extreme stress in lack of progress. Less than one fifth 13% respondents have no stress in students progress. Majority of 87% respondents have moderate stress due to work load. Were as less than one tenth 13 % respondents do not have stress. More than half 62% respondents have moderate stress due to lack of materials. More than one third 38% respondents have no stress due to lack of materials. More than 63% respondents have extreme stress due to increased population in classroom Less than one third 25% respondents have moderate stress due to increased population in classroom and less than one tenth 12% respondents have no stress.

Table-2
Emotional Exhaustion and Stress to Special Educators

Items	No Stress	Moderate stress	Extreme stress
Integration of Students	17(53)	15(47)	0(0)
Effect of personal life cause	7(22)	21(66)	4(12)
Assessment of job from head teachers cause	21(66)	10(31)	1(3)
Continuous responsibility for students cause	7(22)	21(66)	4(12)
Salary of Special Educators cause	4(12)	8(25)	20(63)

The above table shows that more than 63% respondents have extreme stress due to low salary. Less than one third 25% respondents have moderate stress due to low salary and less than one tenth 12% respondents have no stress. More than 66% respondents have moderate stress in personal life. Less than one third 22% respondents have No stress in their personal life and less than one tenth 12% respondents have extreme stress. More than 66% respondents have No stress by head teacher. More than one third 31% respondents have Moderate stress by head teacher and less than one fifth 3% respondents have extreme stress. Less than 47% respondents have Moderate stress due to student integration. More than half 53% respondents have No stress due to student integration. More than half 66% respondents have moderate stress due to continuous responsibility .Less than one third 22 % respondents do not have stress due to continuous responsibility.were as less than one tenth 12%respondents have extreme stress in continuous responsibility.

Table-3
Personal accomplishment and Special Educators Stress

Items	No Stress	Moderate stress	Extreme stress
Marital Life	16(50)	8(25)	8(25)
Level of Education	14(44)	9(28)	9(28)
Respect from Society	17 (53)	5 (16)	10 (31)
Responsibility for pupils cause	14(44)	12(37)	6(19)

The above table shows that more than half 53% respondents have No stress in getting respect from society .Less than one third 31 % respondents have extreme stress in getting respect from society. Were as less than one tenth 16% respondents have moderate stress. Less than half 44% respondents have No stress in responsibility of pupils. More than one third 37 % respondents have moderate stress of pupils responsibility. Were as less than one tenth 19%respondents have extreme stress. Less than half 44% respondents have No stress in level of education. More than one fourth 28 % respondents have moderate stress in level of education. Were as more than one

fourth 28%respondents have extreme stress. More than half 50% respondents have No stress in marital life. More than one fourth 25% respondents have moderate stress in marital life. Were as more than one fourth 25%respondents have extreme stress.

Table-4
Degree of Disability and Special Educators

Items	No Stress	Moderate stress	Extreme stress
Severe disability can create problem for teacher	1(3)	11(34)	20(63)
Facing or confronting can cause	0(0)	23(72)	9(28)
Low degree of disability cause	15(47)	17(53)	0(0)
Special needs children with more than one disability cause	0(0)	13(41)	19(59)

The above table shows that More than half 59% respondents are extreme stress due to more than one disability of children. Less than half 41% respondents are moderate stress due to more than one disability of children. Majority of 63% respondents are extreme stress in handling severe disability. Less than one third 34% respondents are moderate stress in handling severe disability. Less than one fifth 3% respondents are not having stress .More than half 72% respondents are moderate stress in facing and confronting. More than one fourth 28% respondents are extreme stress in facing and confronting. More than half 53% respondents are not having stress in dealing with low degree of disability. Less than half 47% respondents are moderately stressed in dealing with low degree of disability.

Findings

The stress faced by the special educators in various ways. Less progress in academic cause extreme and moderate stress to the special educators, because they are answerable to the higher officials. The mentally challenged children have assessment every six months to see their improvement accordingly they will be place in different levels like early intervention , preprimary level ,Primary level, secondary level, then vocational training.

Heavy work load cause moderate stress to the special educators were in each classes they have to handle ten children .Due to this it take more time to finish their work in time.

More number of children in class creates extreme stress among special educators. Few educators having throat problem because of shouting in the class. There are more than ten children in classes. Controlling those children's is bit difficult for them, so they could not give good progress in academic wise.

Emotional exhaustion and stress to special educators create moderate stress and also extreme stress due to over strain in the class. The salary for the special educators are low for the job they are doing, they are putting more effort and strain in educating special children.

Personal acquiresments like respect from society, marital life, responsibility for pupils cause stress among special educators.

Degree of disability cause extreme stress among special educators. Severe retardation in children have lack of speech, less motor activity , the special educators have to put more effort on those childrens in teaching basic things.

Suggestions (Implications for Social Worker)

If social worker is appointed in the special schools they conduct various group activities like role play to relax and motivate special educators. If the social workers are there it might be helpful for the special educators to cope up with their stress by expressing their feeling and emotions so that they can show their progress in job.

Conclusion

It is a known fact that job satisfaction facilitates many needs of life. The teachers especially special educators should pay good salary for

their work they rendering, handling special children are not an easy task. The government may implement the policies for those special educators to reduce their job stress .Adequate measures must be put in place to reduce the level of stress confronting teachers of special needs children.

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