

A Study on Coping Style among Primary School Teachers



Dileep Kumar Gond

Research Scholar,
Deptt. of Psychology,
Buddha P.G. College,
Kushinagar



Amritanshu Kumar Shukla

Associate Professor,
Deptt. of Psychology,
Buddha P.G. College,
Kushinagar

Abstract

In the present study, an attempt was made to study the effect of organizational culture on coping style with work stress of primary school teachers of district Kushinagar and Gorakhpur. What type of coping style is more adopted for managing/ facing their work stress by different types of school teachers is a matter of investigation. A sample of 240 teachers was selected, 120 each from government and private schools. Cope Scale developed and standardized by Carver, Scheiver and Weintraub (1989) was administered. Coping style is measured under three categories of Active, Adaptive and Maladaptive style. For Analysis & data of variance and t value was calculated. It was found that private school teachers exercised less active coping than government school teachers. Results indicated that there is significant difference between Government and Private Primary School Teachers regarding active coping style.

Keywords: Coping Style, Work Stress, Type of School.

Introduction

Dealing with Problem or difficulties in a calm and appropriate manner is commonly referred to as coping (www.dictionary.com). How a teacher cope with stress in the school environment affects the impact of stress on their psychological well-being and on physiological response (Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999). Coping is considered as an important resource that may help individuals to maintain psychosocial adaptation during a stressful episode. Megrath (1970) has defined coping as "the covert and overt behavior by which the organism actively prevents, removes or circumvents stress inducing circumstances." Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping as, "a person's constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/ or internal demands that is appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person." According to Silver and Worthman (1980), coping refers to any and all responses made by an individual who encounters a potentially harmful situation. However, most theorists restrict the term coping to effects made by an individual in problem solving in order to master, control or overcome threatening situations.

Historically, coping has been viewed as fulfilling two basic functions and thus termed as problem-focused coping and emotion focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1982). Although there are many ways to classify the coping responses (Moos & Billings, 1982), most approaches distinguish between strategies that are active in nature and oriented toward confronting the problem, and strategies that entail an effort to reduce tension by avoiding dealing with the problem. Moos and Billings (1982) have organised the dimensions of appraisal and coping into three categories – Appraisal-focused coping, problem focused coping, and emotion focused coping. Carver, Weintraub and Schier (1989) have developed cope scale, which includes fifteen coping strategies. This scale determines the coping styles and strategies exercised by individuals to confront with stressful episodes.

Review of Literature

Common positive strategies teachers use to alleviate stress include exercise, social resources, avoidance, reading, hobbies, movement, and meditation (Gulwadi, 2006). These coping strategies used by teachers affect their outlook on the situation, thereby altering the perception of stress (Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999). Pandey and Srivastava (2000) studied coping with work stress in career oriented females. It was found from the result that teachers expressed significantly better active coping than bank employees.

Randeep and Ravindran (2005) attempted to explore the relationship between coping strategies and coping styles among 30 marketing executives in two private sector mobile phone companies. It

was concluded that in the use of coping styles such as task strategies, logics, home and work relationship, time management and involvement, executives differ considerably with respect to their cognitive styles.

Bhattacharya and Guha (2006) conducted a study on stress and coping: A study on lady criminal lawyers of Kolkata city. A group of 34 lady criminal lawyers were selected for the study. The significant coping mechanisms as preferred by them are reading books, traveling or outing, listening to music etc.

Chand (2006) studied to examine the psychological factors in the development of work stress. The respondents are 150 junior management scale-1 officers in various banking institutions. The findings of the study revealed that job related strain is positively related with escape coping and negatively related with life event stress, control coping and symptom management coping.

Although there are many common coping strategies available, most teachers rely on social support, active planning, restorative experiences, and suppression of competing behaviors. Social support can reduce the impact of stressors on teachers' well-being, job satisfaction, and physical illness risk. Teachers seek support from family, friends, and colleagues in order to receive advice, discuss feelings, get emotional support, get sympathy and understanding, and to talk about their feelings. Teachers who have more support within their personal lives tend to experience less stress in the workplace (Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999). Some people, either intentionally or unintentionally, employ negative coping strategies to deal with stress. Negative coping strategies are common responses to stress and feelings of being overwhelmed. Although these strategies can provide temporary stress relief, they can because more stress in the long run (Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre of British Columbia, 2010). Negative coping strategies can include unhealthy behaviors, distractions, violence, and withdrawal. Unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, excessively over/under eating, and drug abuse are sometimes used to relieve stress. Distractions such as television, computer, and filling up schedules to avoid facing problems are common ways to avoid stress. Violence such as angry outbursts, lashing out, and physical violence often come about if a situation becomes too stressful. Showing signs of withdrawal such as sleeping, procrastinating, and withdrawing from family, friends, and activities, and disengagement are ways in which people try to remove stress from their lives (Help guide, 2010).

Jennings and Greenberg (2009) proposed that a certain level of social and emotional competences supports teacher's capability to handle

with their responsibilities and to prevent burnout. According to a recent study, when teachers do not have enough the emotional competences, their well-being diminishes, and it leads to degraded quality of learning environments and to increased teacher stress (Jennings et al., 2017). These capabilities cover self-awareness and emotional regulation for psychological stability in order to avoid depleting emotional and physical burnout and to meet students' need effectively (Day & Leitch, 2001; O'Connor, 2008; Jennings et al., 2017)

This study recognized and investigates the stressors that affect primary school teachers, and identifies the coping styles that are used in response to these stressors.

Objective of the study

Present study aimed at investigating that what type of coping style are more adopted by different type of primary school teachers.(Government vs. Private school teachers).

Hypothesis

There will be significant difference between different group of primary school teachers(government vs. Private school teachers) for active, adaptive and maladaptive coping style.

Method

Sample

In the present study, data has been collected from government and private teachers of District-Kushinagar and Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh). There are many primary schools which are recognized by Uttar Pradesh government. But some of them are aided by government for salary, and for others, salary is provided by management of the schools. So a sample of 240 teachers (120 each from Private and government primary schools) is taken to study the effect of type of school on their coping style.

Tool

Cope Scale

This scale developed and standardized by carver, scheiver and Weintraub (1989) was applied to assess coping styles and strategies. The scale includes 15 dimensions to measure three types of coping styles and strategies i.e. active, adaptive and maladaptive coping. This cope scale consists of 15 dimensions concerning the coping styles and strategies. This scale consisted of 60 items, and participant had to answer each item on four point scale.

Result

Cope scale was administered to primary school teachers of different private and Government schools. On the basis of their responses, scoring was done. Data was analyzed using SPSS.t values were calculate.

Table:1 Summaries of Means, SDs and t. testscore for Private and Government Schools (N=240).

Variables		Mean	SD	df	t. Value	Sig.
Active Coping	Private School	61.74	7.39	238	-3.52	Sig. **
	Government school	64.86	6.29			
Adaptive Coping	Private School	32.05	5.19		-3.55	Sig. **
	Government school	34.22	4.23			
Maladaptive Coping	Private School	60.08	9.25		3.99	Sig. **
	Government school	55.75	7.42			
Total Coping	Private School	153.87	14.94	-5.74	Insig.	
	Government school	154.85	11.6			

Note *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table 1 indicates that type of school: Private vs. Government was significant on Active coping style (t=-.305; p,<.01). However, mean scores of private schools (M=61.74) was less than government schools (M=64.86).

Similarly, type of school was significant on Adaptive coping style (t= -3.55; p<.01).

For Maladaptive Coping style also (t= 3.99;p<.01), type of school was significant.

Total coping style was insignificant (t= -5.74;p>.01). However, mean score of Private schools (M=153.87) was less than Government School (M=154.85).

Results indicate that teachers of government primary schools exercised active and adaptive coping styles more than private primary school teachers. At the same time, primary teachers of private schools exercised more maladaptive coping than government school teachers.

Conclusion

There is a lot of difference between working conditions and payment between government and private schools. Getting a valuable salary with less work pressure is generally compared for lesser salary with more work pressure. So level and type of work stress exert a value upon way of coping. Lesser work stress in some manner enriches a person to cope with their problems in a better way.

To establish some concrete suggestions, more studies with broader spectrum is required.

References

1. Bhattacharya, S. and Guha, N., 2006, *Stress and Coping: A study on lady criminal lawyers of Kolkata city*. I. P. R., *Special Issue*, 67: 227-234.
2. Pandey, S. and Srivastava, S., 2000, *Coping with work stress in career oriented females*. J.Com. Gui. Res., 17 (3): 313-323.
3. Randeep, K. and Ravindran, A., 2005, *Organizational Stress and Coping as a Function of Cognitive Style*. J. Psychol. Res., 49 (1):14-17.
4. Chand, P., 2006, *Psychological factors in the development of work stress*. J.Com. Gui. Res., 23 (2): 178-186.
5. Day, C., & Leitch, R. (2001). *Teachers' and Teacher Educators' Lives: The Role of Emotion*.

Teaching and Teacher Education, 17(4), pp. 403-15.

6. Jennings, P. A., Brown, J. L., Frank, J. L., Doyle, S., Oh, Y., Davis, R., Rasheed, D., Deweese, A., Demauro, A. A., Cham, H., & Greenberg, M. T. (2017). *Impacts of the CARE for Teachers Program on Teachers' Social and Emotional Competence and Classroom Interactions*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 109(7), pp. 1010-1028.
7. Lazarus, R.S. & Folkman, S. (1984). *Coping and adaptation*. In W.D. Gentry(Ed.). *The Handbook of Behavioral Medicine*. New York: Guilford.
8. McGrath, J.E. (Ed.). (1970). *Social Psychological factors in stress*, New York: Holt, Reinchart and Winsten.
9. Griffith, J., Steptoe, A., & Cropley, M. (1999). *An investigation of coping strategies associated with job stress in teachers*. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 69, 73517-531.
10. Gulwadi, G. (2006). *Seeking restorative experiences: Elementary school teachers' choices for places that enable coping with stress*. *Environment and Behavior*, 38, 503-520.
11. Carver, C.S., Scheiver, M.F., & Weintraub, J.G. (1989). *Assessing coping strategies: A theoretical based approach*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 267-283
12. Lazarus, R.S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Coping and adaptation*. In W.D. Gentry (Ed.). *The Handbook of Behavioral Medicine*. New York: Guilford.
13. Moos, R.H. & Billings, A.G. (1982). *Conceptualizing and measuring coping resources and processes*. In L. Goldberger & S. Breznitz (Eds.). *Handbook of Stress: Theoretical and clinical aspects*, (pp. 212-230). New York: Free Press.
14. Silver, R.L., & Wortman, C.B. (1980). *Coping with undesirable life events*. In J. Garbes and M.E.I. Seligman (Eds.). *Human Helplessness*. New York: Academic Press.
15. *Stress Management* (2010). *Helpguide.org*. Retrieved April 10, 2010, from www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm