



“Stress and Burnout in In-Service Teachers: Identifying Causes and Preventive Measures in the NEP 2020 Era”

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Abstract

This paper delves into the phenomenon of stress and burnout among in-service teachers in India, with a specific focus on the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). It identifies the primary causes of stress and burnout, examines the impact of NEP 2020 on these factors, and proposes preventive measures. Through a thorough review of existing literature and policy documents, the paper provides insights and recommendations to enhance teacher well-being and effectiveness in the context of contemporary educational reforms.

Keywords

Stress, Burnout, In-service Teachers, National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), Teacher Well-being, Educational Reforms, Teacher Workload, Professional Development, Administrative Support, Technological Integration, Mental Health Resources, Teacher Support Networks, Teacher Recognition.

Introduction

In-service teachers are integral to the education system, bearing the responsibility of imparting knowledge and skills to future generations. However, the profession is increasingly plagued by stress and burnout, adversely affecting teachers' health, job satisfaction, and performance. The introduction of NEP 2020, while aiming to revitalize the education sector, presents additional challenges for teachers. This paper explores the causes of stress and burnout, the implications of NEP 2020, and strategies to mitigate these issues, ensuring a supportive environment for teachers.

Understanding Stress and Burnout

Stress in the teaching profession stems from various sources, including high workload, classroom management issues, lack of administrative support, and insufficient professional development. Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It results from chronic workplace stress and can lead to severe consequences for both teachers and students.

NEP 2020: An Overview

NEP 2020 introduces significant changes to the Indian education system, emphasizing holistic, learner-centred education, technological integration, and competency-based learning. Key reforms include restructuring the school curriculum, enhancing teacher training, and promoting digital literacy. While these changes aim to improve educational outcomes, they also impose new demands on teachers, requiring them to adapt quickly to new methodologies and technologies.

Causes of Stress and Burnout

- 1. Workload:** Teachers face an ever-increasing workload, including lesson planning, grading, administrative duties, and participation in extracurricular activities. NEP 2020's emphasis on comprehensive student assessments and personalized learning plans can further escalate these demands.
- 2. Student Behaviour:** Managing diverse classrooms with varying student needs and behavioral issues is a significant stressor. The shift towards inclusive education under NEP 2020 requires teachers to accommodate students with different learning abilities and backgrounds, adding to their challenges.
- 3. Administrative Support:** Lack of adequate support from school administration exacerbates stress. Teachers often feel undervalued and unsupported in their roles. NEP 2020's reforms necessitate strong administrative backing to provide necessary resources and guidance.
- 4. Professional Development:** Continuous professional development is crucial for teachers to stay updated with the latest educational practices. However, the availability and quality of such programs are often inadequate. NEP 2020 mandates extensive training for teachers, but the execution and effectiveness of these programs remain uncertain.
- 5. Technological Integration:** The push for digital literacy and technology integration in classrooms under NEP 2020 presents a learning curve for many teachers, especially those with limited technological proficiency. This can be a significant source of stress.

Preventive Measures

To address stress and burnout among in-service teachers, the following measures are recommended:

- 1. Enhanced Professional Development:** Providing continuous and comprehensive professional development programs is essential. These programs should focus on equipping teachers with the skills required to

implement NEP 2020 effectively, including technology use, innovative pedagogical methods, and classroom management strategies.

2. Administrative Support: Strengthening administrative support is crucial. School administrations should actively listen to teachers' concerns, provide necessary resources, and reduce non-teaching responsibilities. Creating a supportive work environment can significantly alleviate stress.

3. Mental Health Resources: Access to mental health resources, such as counseling services and stress management workshops, is vital. Schools should promote mental well-being by organizing regular wellness programs and encouraging a healthy work-life balance.

4. Collaborative Networks: Establishing peer support groups and professional learning communities can provide teachers with a platform to share experiences, seek advice, and collaborate on best practices. Such networks foster a sense of community and mutual support.

5. Recognition and Rewards: Recognizing and rewarding teachers' efforts and achievements can boost morale and job satisfaction. Implementing formal recognition programs and providing incentives for outstanding performance can motivate teachers and reduce feelings of burnout.

Conclusion

Stress and burnout among in-service teachers are pressing issues that need immediate attention, particularly in the context of NEP 2020. By identifying the primary causes and implementing effective preventive measures, stakeholders can create a more supportive and conducive environment for teachers. Ensuring teacher well-being is crucial for the successful implementation of NEP 2020 and the overall improvement of the educational system. Prioritizing the mental health and professional growth of teachers will ultimately lead to better educational outcomes for students and a more sustainable teaching profession.

References

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