Teacher Stress: A Literature Survey with a Few Surprises

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A review of 71 articles on teacher stress revealed little empirical support for the common claim that teaching is a stressful occupation. Seventy percent (70%) of the articles tabulated contained no data support; these papers were expressions of personal opinion and usually contained claims of a high incidence of teacher stress. Only 30% of the articles surveyed offered any empirical support for their claims. Most of these articles focused on identifying the sources of teacher stress. On the whole, the papers reviewed suggest that there is little empirical support for the widespread claim that teaching is a highly stressful job.

L'enseignement est généralement perçu comme une occupation qui suscite beaucoup de tension nerveuse, pourtant l'étude de 71 articles portant sur le stress des enseignants met en évidence le peu de données empiriques dont on dispose à l'appui de cette perception. Parmi les articles recensés, 70% ne présentaient pas de données mais consistaient en expressions d'opinion et le plus souvent prétendaient que le stress était très fréquent chez les enseignants. Seulement 30% des articles étudiés appuyaient leurs conclusions sur des données empiriques. La plupart de ces articles visaient alors à identifier les origines du stress des enseignants. Dans l'ensemble, les articles recensés montrent qu'il y a peu de données empiriques à l'appui de l'opinion répandue qui veut que l'enseignement soit un métier dont l'exercice suscite beaucoup de tension.

Reports of teacher stress abound. One need only pick up any provincial or state teacher bulletin or school-related journal to read about the ravages of stress (cf. Carter, 1979; Dillon, 1978; Gray, 1979; Truch, 1980; Weiskopf, 1980). Dramatic titles such as "The pain of teacher burnout," "Did we all let Barry die?" or "Is teaching hazardous to your health?" are common. However, other reports contain conflicting evidence. For example, in a recent survey of 3,300 Ohio public school teachers, Grades K–12, Feitler and Tokar (1982) found that only 16% of the sample reported their jobs to be "very stressful" or "extremely stressful." An earlier comparative study in Britain (Bentz, Hollister, and Edgerton, 1971) involving 379 elementary and secondary school teachers, 1,405 "general public" respondents, and 418 "community leaders," found that the percentage of teachers reporting *serious* mental health problems was quite low: Only one in three teachers reported even *mild to moderate* emotional symptoms, and the overall mental health of teachers was slightly better than that of the general public. In light of this evidence, it seemed necessary to determine the actual extent of teacher stress, *before*

initiating large-scale teacher stress programs and *before* labeling the teaching profession in a way that might not be appropriate.

It is true that the individual teacher suffering from stress-induced tension headaches (or another common stress-induced problem) experiences real pain, and the headache pain is not affected by the extent to which teaching *per se* is or is not a stressful occupation. Our concern was that the vast number of reports proclaiming teaching as stressful might well set up an "expectancy to be stressed" making teachers more vulnerable to stress-induced disorders. We were not interested primarily in determining whether or not some teachers reported stress-related symptoms. Our main question concerned the amount of empirical evidence that showed the teaching profession to possess a disproportionate number of individuals experiencing stress-related problems. Further, we were interested in possible factors inherent in teaching that might induce greater intensities of stress in teachers than in members of other occupations.

RESULTS

Initially, the publications index in the Educational Research Information Center (ERIC), the Psychological Abstracts, and the medical journals listed in Medlars II were subjected to computer searches, using the descriptor "Stress and Teach." Subsequently, a cross-reference check and personal search was conducted.

After we began reading the articles on teacher stress, four distinct categories of papers emerged which we called Type 1, 2, 3, and review articles. Type 1 articles had no data base and were primarily statements of opinion about stress and teaching. Both Type 2 and 3 articles offered data to support their claims. In Type 2 articles the data were derived from self-report questionnaires, whereas in Type 3 articles, the data came from third-party sources. Review articles were scholarly attempts to summarize data in the field and produce a "state of the art" synthesis.

In all, 71 papers were tabulated. Type 1 articles comprised 70.4% (n = 50) of the total, Type 2 articles comprised 21.1% (n = 15), Type 3 articles comprised 5.6% (n = 4) and review articles comprised 2.8% (n = 2). It is important to note that the percentage of Type 1 articles in this tabulation is artificially low. The numbers and sources of Type 1 articles proved to be so vast that we decided to stop our tabulation of Type 1 articles after a large number of these articles were encountered. It is also noteworthy that only 26.7% of the articles contained any data to support the claims made in the paper.

Type 1 Articles: Statements of Personal Opinion

Type 1 articles primarily expressed opinions concerning teachers and stress. They were often found in the popular press and in provincial or

state teacher magazines that were essentially nontechnical magazines available in most staff rooms and teacher centers; occasionally such articles were found in those sources labeled as "professional journals." For the most part these papers took the following general line: (1) establish that teaching is stressful, usually by giving some examples of stressed teachers; (2) indicate the working conditions creating the stress; and (3) identify some ways for coping with stress. In most of the articles, even the suggestions for relieving stress involved personal opinion. The author(s) seemed unaware of the extensive research in the area of stress control. In short, Type 1 articles were generally personal statements about the inherently stressful nature of teaching, found most frequently in the popular press and state and provincial teacher bulletins. And the most frequent message consisted of a personal statement that teaching was stressful.

Type 2: Self-Report Questionnaires

Type 2 articles appeared primarily in "professional journals," such as *The British Journal of Educational Psychology, Educational Administration Quarterly, Educational Research, Educational Review, Journal of Occupational Psychology*, and *Psychology in the Schools.* The content of Type 2 articles was based on data derived from self-report questionnaires. These studies were concerned mostly with reporting the perceived sources of teacher stress, the effects of stress on factors like absenteeism and job satisfaction, and the perceived intensity of teacher stress.

Sample size

Most of the studies reported in Type 2 articles had reasonably large sample sizes. There were 7,000 returns to the questionnaire published in the September, 1976 issue of the *Instructor.* The data reported (*Instructor*, 1977) come from an analysis of a random sampling of 10% of the responses. Feitler and Tokar (1982) used data from 3,300 Ohio teachers in Grades K–12. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) analysed 257 responses (80.3% return rate) from teachers in 16 medium-sized schools in England. Chandler (1976) sampled 20% of the teachers in his target population, reporting a return rate of 79.5% (n = 159). Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) sampled 794 members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association and obtained a 64% (n = 507) return rate. Such sampling procedures increase the generalizability of the findings. However, care must still be exercised when applying the results to other school jurisdictions with noticeably different working conditions and teacher selection factors.

Common stressors

Combining the results of these studies, several perceived stressors emerge. *Teacher-student conflict and discipline-related problems* are the most

commonly identified stressors (Carter, 1979; Chicon and Koff, 1978, 1980; Feshback and Campbell, 1978; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978, 1979; Parkay, 1979; Pratt, 1978). Other frequently identified sources of teacher stress include *staff interpersonal interactions* (Feshback and Campbell, 1978; Pratt, 1978), *working conditions*, including such things as inadequate resources, poor physical plant, and overcrowded classrooms (Chicon and Koff, 1978; Feshback and Campbell, 1978; Kyraciou and Sutcliffe, 1978; *Instructor*, 1977); *time pressures* including too much to do, and lack of preparation time (Carter, 1979; Feshback and Campbell, 1978; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978), *role ambiguity and perceived role conflict* (Bensky et al., 1980; Schwab and Iwanicki, 1982), and *inadequate teacher preparation*, including lack of skills, and poor problem solving and decision-making strategies (Carter, 1979; Pratt, 1978).

Elsewhere, the data are less consistent. For example, some studies reported that teacher demographic factors like age, sex, teaching experience, and length of training did not correlate significantly with perceived teacher stress (Chicon and Koff, 1978; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978). Feitler and Tokar (1982) found that stress levels did not covary with years of teaching experience, but that stress levels did vary with age, school location and grade level taught. Specifically, Feitler and Tokar (1982) found that teachers aged 31–44 reported higher levels of stress than teachers over 45 or under 30. Further, urban teachers reported higher stress levels than did rural teachers, and stress levels tended to increase with grade level taught. Pratt (1978) reported similar results, indicating that stress levels increased with grade level taught, but only in schools located in financially disadvantaged areas. Stress levels were lower and more consistent across grade level for teachers from schools located in nondisadvantaged areas. The findings with respect to stress and teacher absenteeism show a similar lack of consistency. For example, Pratt (1978) found that stress correlated positively with teacher illness, but Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) reported no significant correlation between stress and teacher absenteeism. Some "logical stressors" turned out to be not stressors at all. For example, Chandler (1975) found that mandatory busing to desegregate schools in Memphis did not alter the teacher's perceived levels of stress.

Extent of teacher stress

The pervasiveness of teacher stress also received mixed support from the data presented in Type 2 articles. For example, the *Instructor* (1977) reports that stress was the primary health concern of 60% of the sample. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978, 1979) report that 20% and 23.4% respectively of their sample, drawn from medium-sized comprehensive schools in England, reported that they found teaching very stressful or stressful. Sparks (1979) found that 75% of his sample, drawn from seven suburban school districts in the United States, found their jobs to be "to a large

extent, physically or emotionally stressful" (p. 488). However, this perception is not universally shared. Bensky et al. (1980) report that the median response to the question "Do you perceive your job to be stressful?" was "sometimes" for regular classroom teachers and resource room teachers, and "seldom" for special classroom teachers (sample drawn from Connecticut school teachers enrolled in summer school courses). Feitler and Tokar (1982), surveying 3,300 Ohio teachers from Grades K–12, found that "in general, teachers perceived their jobs to be less stressful than we anticipated" (p. 456). Seventy-six percent (76%) of their sample found teaching to be "moderately or mildly stressful," with only 16% indicating "very or extremely stressful," and 7% indicating "not at all stressful." Additionally, the findings of Bentz et al. (1977), reported earlier, must be remembered. They found that the incidence of teacher stress resembled that of other professional groups, being slightly lower than the stress of the public at large. Though teachers frequently report their jobs to be stressful, such reports may not differ from that of people in other segments of the work force. That is, many people in many different occupations find their jobs stressful.

In general, Type 2 articles paint a different picture of teacher stress than do Type 1 articles. Several specific sources of teacher stress are identified, but some "probable stressors" are absent from the list. Some studies indicate that teachers report feeling stressed, while other studies contradict this finding. Recent data comparing stress levels of teachers with that of other occupational groups are not available, and older comparative data (e.g., Bentz et al., 1971) suggest that stress is not necessarily more prevalent in teachers than in other occupational groups. At present the data are inconclusive. It is most reasonable to conclude that little *evidence* exists to support the claim that teaching is stressful or teachers unduly stressed. However, it is important to note that the data also do not establish that teaching is not stressful. Clearly, more research is needed before a stronger conclusion can be made.

Type 3 Articles: Third Party Observation

Type 3 articles were published in "professional journals" and contained arguments supported by data. Such data came from the observations of a third party, from sources like physician records or third party analysis of direct observation data. For example, Brodsky (1977) examined the medical records of 31 teachers and 21 prison guards chosen from a pool of 1200 people who had filed for industrial disability benefits. All 52 people had a good work record with no prior medical problems, and they felt that their disabilities resulted from job pressure. Subjects in both occupational groups reported similar complaints. First, potential danger in the job was perceived, as well as administrative changes fostering perceived growing tension. Ultimately, the worker developed the belief

that the job tension was neither a transient phenomenon nor the result of isolated incidents but was an inherent aspect of the job per se. At this point, chronic stress-related symptoms (both psychological and somatic) began to develop. Anxiety, worry, general unhappiness, insomnia, nightmares, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular symptoms, muscle tension, headaches, and hypochondrasis were among the most common symptoms reported. Both teachers and prison guards reported similar stress-related symptomatology with the development of long-term stress reactions.

In a later study, Bloch (1978) examined the medical records of 253 classroom teachers referred to him for psychiatric evaluation of varying degrees of psychological stress of job-related trauma. All subjects had been the targets for threatened assault or actual assault in central Los Angeles schools. Subjects ranged in age from 23 to 61 and had taught in their schools for periods varying from three months to 14 years. The most commonly reported symptoms were fatigue, irritability, neuromuscular disorders, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disorders, depression, and general malaise. Bloch (1978) concluded that these teachers demonstrated symptomatology similar to that of clinical patients suffering from "post traumatic combat neurosis."

In an earlier study, Simpson (1976) examined the absentee records of 2,386 teachers in a large British urban school district. Absentee rates were highest amongst beginning teachers in the 20–24 age range, progressively declined with teaching experience to a low level in the 35–49 age range, and then began to climb again. Simpson inferred that absenteeism was a common strategy used to cope with the stresses of beginning a new career. As males entered a "promotion zone," absenteeism declined. However, nonpromotion and approaching retirement led to increased utilization of absenteeism as a coping strategy in older teachers. However, Simpson offers no data to support this inference. Some indirect support for the hypothesis that stress levels are high amongst beginning teachers was provided earlier by Beach, Levine and Goldberg (1973). Sixty elementary teachers with two years or less of teaching experience volunteered to participate in discussion groups led by psychologists and social workers that were aimed at increasing the level of mental health in ghetto schools. The purpose of the group was to provide a forum for sharing problems and seeking solutions. Beach et al. (1973) reported that stress-related problems were the most frequent topic for discussion and that the support group seemed to produce positive results.

Generally speaking, Type 3 articles provided more definitive comments on teacher stress. However, in two of the studies (Beach et al., 1973; Simpson, 1976) the conclusions are highly inferential and receive no direct support from the data reported. Beach et al. (1973) inferred high levels of stress from the observation that stress-related problems were frequent topics in discussion groups, and Simpson (1976) concluded that

teacher absenteeism was the result of stress. In the other two studies (Bloch, 1978; Brodsky, 1977) the sample was drawn from a pool of long-term severely distressed patients.

Perhaps the safest conclusion to draw from these studies is that chronically stressed people from a variety of work settings display similar symptoms. Certainly, these studies say little about the nature or intensity of stress experienced by an "average" teacher, who continues to function on the job, but finds the job stress inducing. Furthermore, these studies contain little data comparing teacher stress with that of persons in other comparable occupations.

Review Articles

Coates and Thoresen (1976) reviewed the literature on teacher anxiety and concluded that the incidence of self-reported anxiety amongst teachers is high, that teacher anxiety is associated with a variety of personal, social, and environmental conditions, and that systematic desensitization and instruction in teaching methods are most successful in reducing teacher anxiety. In the only other review article, Keavney and Sinclair (1978) criticize previous research investigating teacher anxiety, suggesting that there has been little research that helps to explain why teachers are anxious about their jobs, the degree to which anxiety affects their effectiveness in the classroom, and the strategies that teachers use to cope with their anxiety. Further, they point out that the conclusions drawn from current studies are highly speculative, resulting in part from an inappropriate equating of anxiety with terms like concern, problem or reaction. Keavney and Sinclair suggest that researchers should clarify distinctions between conditions involving "concern" or "problems" (which typically elicit positive coping behaviour), and conditions involving "anxiety" (which is a negative affective state). They also recommend research with designs that permit the establishment of causal links between antecedent conditions (personal or environmental) and teacher anxiety, the use of more operational measures of teacher anxiety (also recommended by Coates and Thoresen, 1976), as well as the examination of the coping strategies used by teachers to control their anxiety.

Summary

From the growing number of articles on teacher stress, one common thread emerges, namely, that teachers perceive their job to be stressful. Certainly this is the common message in the large proportion of Type 1, opinion-based articles. However, exaggerated claims and unfounded conclusions abound. For example, Hunter (1977) claims that teacher stress is at the same level as that faced by air traffic controllers and surgeons. Although her statement is often cited as support for a claim of

high teacher stress (e.g., Dohemann and Gregory, 1979; Truch, 1980), no empirical support for the claim has been offered. At first glance, the Brodsky (1977) study might imply that teaching is as stressful as being a prison guard, or the Bloch (1978) study might suggest that teachers are suffering from battle fatigue. However, both Brodsky (1977) and Bloch (1978) prompt another conclusion, namely, that people who are chronically and severely stressed demonstrate common characteristics regardless of their occupational affiliation. To date, there are no comparative data to support the claim that teachers are more stressed than any other occupational group, or that teaching is an inherently stressful job.

Although there is little empirical support for the common perception that teaching is stressful, there is little likelihood that that perception will change. Research reports continue to be only a small proportion of all that is published on teacher stress. Thus the kind of article most likely to be read is a Type 1 article proclaiming the stresses of teaching. This situation creates the potential for a large self-fulfilling prophecy; that is, teachers read frequent reports that teaching is stressful and start to believe it. As a result, perhaps, normal upsets that are part of most jobs become mislabeled as chronic, inherent stressors, and a vicious circle begins that results in a higher incidence of self-reported stress. Future research may provide a more definitive picture of teacher stress and the means for interrupting this vicious circle.

DISCUSSION

In Type 2 and Type 3 articles, the evidence is equivocal concerning whether teachers perceive teaching to be a stressful job. This lack of consensus no doubt derives in part from the varied nature of questionnaires and the research designs employed. For example, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) used a multiple-choice questionnaire to assess sources, levels and symptoms of stress. Their conclusions regarding the level of teacher stress came from responses to only one item, namely, "In general, how stressful do you find being a teacher?" Based on the responses to this one question, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe conclude that teachers find teaching to be a stressful job. Fifty-one items on the Kyriacou and Sutcliffe questionnaire ask teachers to indicate stress levels in various classroom situations, e.g., "poorly motivated students," "too much work to do," "different classes." The average responses to these items is not high (1.96 or less on a scale of 0 = no stress to 4 = extreme stress), however, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe still consider that the results support their claim that teaching is stressful. Finally, 17 questions ask teachers how frequently they experience such symptoms as exhaustion, frustration, extreme anger, nervousness, headaches, etc. Only one item had a mean greater than 2 on a scale from 0 = never, to 2 = once a week, to 4 = several times a day. Most of the items had mean scores of less than 1 (= rarely). Again,

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe report that the data support their claim of teacher stress as measured by the one item, "In general, how stressful do you find being a teacher?" This type of questionnaire demonstrates the criticism raised by Keavney and Sinclair (1978) that researchers are highly speculative and often do not distinguish between conditions that cause "concern" or "problems" and conditions that produce "anxiety." It is possible that teachers could find conditions like the above to be problematic, but, because of their coping skills or the infrequency of the event, the impact could be small and the stress minimal.

The study reported by Pratt (1978) addressed some of the problems left unanswered by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978). Pratt developed a 43-item questionnaire to assess the sources of teacher stress. The questionnaire was developed from teacher interviews and piloted in two schools prior to use in the study. Pratt also used a standardized test to assess teacher's health (Goldberg, 1972). The results indicate that about 20% of the sample (124 full-time primary teachers in Northern England) displayed some symptoms of illness. All of the sources-of-stress items had mean values of less than 3, on a scale ranging from 0 = no stress, to 6 = extremely stressful. Pratt is careful to point out that "no proof of cause and effect" exists in his data (p. 10), thus avoiding our extension of his findings. However, the items in the questionnaire do not distinguish between conditions resulting in "problems" or "concern" and those producing "anxiety," nor does the questionnaire assess the coping levels of the teachers. Presumably, teachers with large repertoires of coping skills will still encounter problems, but will avoid being unduly stressed by them.

Generally speaking, the studies reported in Type 2 articles attempted to determine what teachers found stressful, rather than address directly the question "Is teaching stressful?" Most of the studies utilize homemade questionnaires and few studies report any psychometric data. In most cases, the procedure for developing the questionnaire is not discussed, nor are any reliability or validity estimates reported. In most of the articles the questionnaire is not listed and many do not even list any sample items. (Pratt (1978) is an exception.)

One further problem in all the Type 2 articles surveyed is the failure to distinguish between pressure and stress in the item stems. It is assumed that all situations producing pressure will result in a stressful reaction. As many recent authors point out (e.g., Albrecht, 1979; Hiebert, 1983) it is possible for a person (teachers included) to encounter a pressure situation, react by coping with the situation, and experience very little stress in the process.

Research on teacher stress must undergo a change in focus if we are to obtain the kind of knowledge that will enable teachers to control their stress and be more effective in the classroom. On this point, some suggestions for future research by Keavney and Sinclair (1978) bear

repeating. First, future research should assess the stress-coping repertoires of teachers. Presumably, teachers with a large repertoire of coping skills will react to pressure very differently from teachers with minimal coping ability. Moreover, it is important to ascertain the strategies teachers use to cope with the stressors they face and how effectively these strategies are working. Second, there should be a move to more comparative research using standardized assessment instruments in order to determine the stress levels of teachers as compared to other occupational groups. Such research should also attempt to control for nonjob-related factors that may be influencing stress levels. Third, future researchers should take more care to explicate their own particular definition of stress. The meaning attached to the term "stress" varies considerably from one person to another. Some people equate stress with arousal and therefore "feel stressed" whenever they get "worked up." Other people reserve the label to describe situations where increased arousal is accompanied by unsuccessful coping attempts and negative affect (cf. Hiebert, 1983). These contrasting connotations of stress result in confounded data. Care should be taken in the wording of item stems, or in providing a mental set for the subjects, in order to reduce this type of confusion. Finally, when discussing a stressful experience, care should be taken to distinguish between stimulus elements (stressors) and response elements (stress itself). Questionnaire items also should distinguish between situations provoking concern, or presenting a problem, and those resulting in an anxious experience. One way of incorporating the above suggestions would be to ask teachers to respond to school situations with respect to the amount of pressure the situation contained, the success of the teacher's coping attempt, the coping skill used, and their emotional reaction. Undoubtedly, other ways of incorporating the above suggestions could also be found. The important point is that research on teacher stress must become more rigorous in order to obtain useful results for individual teachers.

In academic circles, the notion that certain jobs or situations are by nature inherently stressful is starting to lose ground to a more interaction-based perspective (cf. Albrecht, 1979; Cox, 1978; Coyne and Lazarus, 1980; Hiebert, 1983). This interactive model emphasizes both environmental and personal factors involved in a stressful experience. The environmental factors are typically referred to as stressors or pressures and are not seen to precipitate ipso facto a stressful response. Stress is typically viewed as a personal response that occurs when the person's ability to cope effectively with the situation is exceeded (or more precisely, when a person perceives his or her coping ability to be exceeded). As the amount of pressure increases, or as the frequency of pressures increase, it becomes more likely that a person's coping ability will be exceeded. However, the reasons for stress, and for differing personal reactions to stress, lie in the person's coping ability. Stress develops from inside

people, not from the outside environment. As long as the person's coping ability is not exceeded, no stress will be experienced. On the other hand, when the pressure increases to dramatic intensity most people's coping abilities will probably be exceeded. Similarly, if reduction in personal stress is desired, two alternatives emerge: (1) either the situation may be changed in order to reduce pressure, thus bringing it within most people's ability to cope; or (2), alternatively, the person's ability to handle pressure situations may be addressed directly through a program aimed at increasing the ability to cope. Ideally, in a stress reduction program, both factors would be addressed.

This interaction-based model has important implications for teacher stress. First it becomes inappropriate to discuss teaching (or any other occupation) as inherently stressful. Stress results when the demands of the situation exceed the person's ability to cope (Hiebert, 1983). If the demands in teaching are high, teachers will need greater ability to cope if they wish to achieve lower levels of stress. Alternatively, it may be preferable to reduce the demands so that they fall within the teacher's current coping ability. The important point is that stress results from the interaction between the environmental demand and the individual's ability to cope with the demand, not from the demand *per se.* Second, there are many stressor management procedures that can be initiated by teachers and administrators in order to reduce the pressure associated by teaching. Coates and Thoresen (1976) report that instruction in teaching techniques has demonstrated sources in reducing teacher anxiety. Bensky et al. (1980) and Schwab and Iwanicki (1982) suggest that by more clearly defining the role expectations for teachers some of the pressure associated with teaching will be reduced. Other areas for improvement include classroom management procedures, time management, reducing intercom interruptions, etc. Ostensibly, teachers who have mastered a variety of teaching strategies will find their jobs less stressful. Teachers with a good repertoire of classroom management and discipline procedures are less likely to find student misbehaviour stressful. Teachers who manage their time effectively will likely experience less time pressure; schools with intercom interruptions *only* at 8:55 a.m. pose one less difficulty for teachers; and so on. In future, it might be appropriate to assess the effects of these stressor management strategies on teacher's stress levels. At present, the data collected in studies such as those involving classroom management training usually permit explicit comments concerning the amount of student misbehaviour. However, accompanying changes in teacher stress are not usually assessed. Third, there is a vast store of stress management strategies, each with a solid data base composed of controlled outcome studies. These strategies can be used by an individual to replace a stressful reaction with a more relaxed or a more facilitative coping response. Relaxation procedures like progressive relaxation (Jacobson, 1938; Mason, 1980), autogenic training (Luthe, 1977), self-

hypnosis (Lamott, 1975; Le Cron, 1964), mediation (Benson, 1975), or biofeedback training (see Blanchard and Epstein, 1978), are easily obtained and have well-documented success rates (for reviews see Barrios and Shigetomi, 1979). Cognitive based interventions, such as those advocated by Meichenbaum and colleagues (Meichenbaum, 1975; Meichenbaum and Turk, 1976), also have a well-documented success record in teaching a wide variety of people to cope more effectively with a vast range of stressors. We have restricted our discussion to those stress management strategies in which a strong data base exists. This data base is composed of studies that would fit into the Type 2 or Type 3 categories. We have chosen to employ sources that provide some self-training guidelines, rather than using the original sources for the training procedure, or the empirical studies *per se*. We recognize that some individuals may have developed idiosyncratic strategies that help them cope with stress, and encourage such people to continue using their strategies. However, we do not wish to suggest that because one strategy (say, smiling a lot) works for one person, it will work for most people. We therefore recommend treatment procedures that are supported by empirical evidence for the strategy in question.

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Eine Begutachtung von 71 Aufsätzen über Lehrerstreß hat nur wenig empirische Bestätigung für die allgemeine Vorstellung, daß die Lehrerarbeit streßvoll ist, ergeben. Siebzig Prozent (70%) der tabellarisierten Referate enthielten keine Datenbestätigung. Diese Aufsätze waren Ausdrücke persönlicher Meinung und behaupteten meistens ein hohes Vorkommen von Lehrerstreß. Nur 30% dieser geprüften Aufsätze boten überhaupt eine empirische Bestätigung für ihre Behauptungen. Die meisten dieser Aufsätze konzentrierten sich auf die Identifizierung der Lehrerstreßquellen. Im ganzen weisen die Aufsätze darauf hin, daß es wenig empirische Bestätigung gibt, für die weitverbreitete Behauptung, daß das Unterrichten eine streßvolle Arbeit sei.

A pesar de que generalmente la enseñanza se percibe como una ocupación que produce gran tensión nerviosa, un examen de 71 artículos sobre el stress de los docentes pone de relieve la escasez de datos empíricos que respaldan tal percepción. Entre los artículos estudiados, 70% no ofrecían datos sino que consistían de opiniones y frecuentemente pretendían que el stress era muy frecuente entre los enseñantes. Sólo 30% de los artículos basaban sus conclusiones sobre datos empíricos. En tales casos, la mayoría de ellos trataban de identificar las causas de la tensión de los enseñantes. En conjunto, los estudios examinados indican que hay pocos datos empíricos que respalden la opinión generalizada de que la docencia es una profesión que causa mucha tensión.

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