

# *Job Stress and Coping Styles among Novice Teachers in Higher Vocational College*

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**Abstract:** With the development of higher vocational education, society's concern about the work pressure of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges has increased significantly. As novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities, their sources of work pressure have their distinctive characteristics, mainly focusing on multiple role transitions, strict school management, and difficulty in paying salaries to meet the needs of life. Based on the reality, this paper will analyze the different ways of coping with pressure, and explore the paths to enhance novice teachers' adoption of positive ways of coping and reduce the paths of adopting negative coping, so as to reduce the work pressure of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities.

The high quality development of vocational education can not be separated from the construction of the faculty, and China's higher vocational colleges and universities original faculty can not meet the needs of the high-speed development of the modern higher vocational education, young novice teachers will become the backbone of higher vocational colleges and universities of education and teaching, scientific research, and management. Compared with undergraduate colleges and universities, the source of students in higher vocational colleges and universities presents the remarkable characteristics of low scores and multiple sources. Facing the complex new situation, novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities not only have to undertake education teaching and student management, but also have to face the heavy task of scientific research and the great pressure of transitioning to academic practice teachers. Novice teachers are faced with new challenges of high work intensity, high work difficulty and high work complexity, which leads to the problems of high turnover rate, low sense of professional fulfillment, and year-on-year increase in the departure rate of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities. If they suffer from work pressure for a long time and can't find a reasonable way to cope with it, it will inevitably affect the subjective well-being of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and even jeopardize their physical and mental health. Therefore, it is of great significance to study the relationship between work pressure and coping styles of novice teachers' groups in higher vocational colleges and universities, and to promote the research on the alleviation of work pressure of young teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities.

## 1. The source of pressure of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities

Scholar Chen Xiaogang believes that the work pressure of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities mainly comes from two aspects: firstly, in higher vocational colleges and universities, the heavy teaching task is difficult for novice teachers to bear. Secondly, with the popularization of higher education the academic requirements for novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities are increasing year by year. At the present stage, most of the teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities have a master's degree, so they will face a greater pressure to improve their academic qualifications. When higher education flourishes in the future, the academic requirements for young teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities will only get higher and higher. Combined with the form of higher vocational colleges and school requirements, the author believes that the pressure of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities mainly stems from the following aspects<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1.1 Multiple Role Transition

The vast majority of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities are students who have just graduated from graduate schools, which means that novice teachers need to carry out the conversion from student to teacher status, in the process, novice teachers need to summarize the teaching methodology in the teaching practice, learn to get lessons from the classroom teaching and the students' feedback after class, so as to improve their own teaching ability<sup>[2]</sup>.

In the classroom, teachers assume the role of knowledge and skills transmitters, while outside the classroom they also assume the role of student managers, and in order to successfully complete their work, they have to switch back and forth between these two roles. Therefore, while improving their teaching skills, novice teachers also need to learn how to properly communicate with students, understand their physical and mental health, and guide them to develop in a positive direction, which puts new demands on their verbal communication skills and classroom management abilities.

It is difficult to harmonize the contradiction between work roles and family roles. Novice teachers assume the role of educators at school, while at home they may be wives, husbands, daughters, sons and other multiple roles. Therefore in the family they need to take up the responsibilities in their family roles, such as taking care of the children, taking care of the parents, and undertaking household labor. These tasks take up a lot of non-work time and consume a lot of novice teachers' energy, making them unable to separate their work roles from their family roles.

Novice teachers are faced with contradictions and conflicts between multiple roles, and they need to spend a lot of time and energy to maintain the balance between multiple roles.

### 1.2 Harsh school management system

In 2021, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Promoting the High-Quality Development of Modern Vocational Education, which put forward two goals: By 2025, the type of vocational education will be more distinctive, the modern vocational education system will be basically built, and the construction of a skill-based society will be comprehensively promoted. By 2035, the overall level of vocational education will be among the top in the world, and a skill-based society will be basically built. China's reform of higher vocational education is in a period of rapid development, and in order to meet the needs of national development, schools are bound to raise the requirements for teachers in the school management system. Novice teachers are required to undertake a large number of teaching tasks and at the same time need to carry out uninterrupted educational research and complete the writing and publication of a fixed number of academic

papers every semester. Every semester, they also need to regularly accept the leadership assessment and student evaluation in teaching ability, management ability and other aspects, and the evaluation scores will directly affect the year-end performance of novice teachers. Even some higher vocational colleges and universities have adopted the final elimination system, in which teachers who get poor grades in the assessment may lose their jobs and face the problem of unemployment, which leads to the intense competition among novice teachers drifting up, and the teachers' work pressure further increases.

### **1.3 Salary is difficult to support living needs**

In higher vocational colleges and universities, salaries are greatly related to teachers' academic achievements, teaching ability, years of teaching experience and also titles. Novice teachers must go through a long period of accumulation of teaching achievements and teaching ability before they can gradually improve their salary. The salary of novice teachers with graduate degrees is generally lower than that of employees with the same degree in enterprises, but the intensity of work and working hours are not much different, so it is difficult for them to afford the living expenses with too low an income, which greatly improves the pressure of novice teachers, and becomes one of the main reasons for the departure of novice teachers from higher vocational colleges and universities.

## **2. The way to cope with the stress of novice teachers in higher vocational colleges and universities**

Selye, the father of stress psychology, categorized teachers' work stress into two types: positive and negative, and the actual impact of the negative impact has a greater impact. In this paper, the researcher also categorizes teachers' coping styles into two categories: positive and negative. Positive coping means that teachers deal with all kinds of problems in a positive way, and they can choose reasonable and healthy ways to relieve their work pressure, such as relaxing through sports, expressing their true feelings with friends to relieve negative emotions, and consulting experienced seniors to get solutions to reduce or eliminate work pressure. Negative coping means that teachers face difficulties at work in a negative way, by avoiding, suppressing emotions or even self-harming. For example, they lose their temper with their colleagues, turn a blind eye to difficulties and expect them to disappear naturally, repress their negative emotions and vent them in bad ways such as drinking or smoking heavily. According to the two different ways of coping with pressure, the following strategies are proposed to help young teachers reduce work pressure, adopt as many positive ways of coping with work pressure as possible, and at the same time reduce the frequency of negative coping.

### **2.1 Higher vocational colleges and universities establish scientific and reasonable management mechanism**

The cultivation goal of higher vocational colleges and universities is different from that of traditional research universities, so higher vocational colleges and universities can't simply apply the management mechanism of traditional universities, but should be modified and adjusted according to the actual situation. Most of the graduates of higher vocational colleges need to be directly oriented to employment, based on the fact that the management mechanism of higher vocational colleges and universities should focus on how to let teachers cultivate students who can adapt to the employment position faster and meet the requirements of enterprises. The leadership of higher vocational colleges and universities need to make some choices when formulating the management mechanism, and should also lower the requirements for teachers' scientific research

ability and research tasks while making higher demands on teachers' practical ability. In the evaluation of teachers should have a clear evaluation requirements, and to do fair and impartial, in the end of the evaluation should also be published in a timely manner after the evaluation results, to give teachers the right to challenge the results of the evaluation, for some hard conditions can not be the only conditions of the evaluation. The idea is to reduce stress for teachers who are just starting out.

## **2.2 Implementing the model of bringing the old to the new to give positive guidance to novice teachers**

Through the form of one-on-one support between veteran teachers and new teachers, an experienced veteran teacher is arranged for each novice teacher to provide all-round guidance. When novice teachers face difficulties that are difficult to solve on their own, they can ask for advice from veteran teachers in time to get the right guidance and reduce the risk of going in a wrong direction. Under the premise of having seniors to guide them, novice teachers can also improve their comprehensive strength and confidence more quickly, and take a more positive approach to work pressure.

## **2.3 Enhancement of welfare policies for novice teachers**

In the context of burgeoning educators, it is commonly observed that they contend with a confluence of factors such as modest remuneration and exacerbated economic strain. Given the inherent constraint of directly amending the remuneration structure for novice instructors, educational institutions possess the capacity to ameliorate the financial burden they shoulder. This can be effectively achieved through the provisioning of cost-effective faculty housing options and subsidizing their sustenance expenses through discounted access to on-campus dining facilities, among other potential initiatives. By enacting these measures, institutions not only extend tangible relief to novice educators in light of their fiscal exigencies, but also foster an environment conducive to their holistic well-being. Such interventions generate a high level of personal satisfaction that promotes the cultivation of adaptive and positive coping mechanisms - a shift that aligns with the overall desire to promote constructive responses to adversity.

## **3. Conclusion**

In the realm of every vocation, the presence of concomitant stress is an inescapable phenomenon, and stress, as a veritable reality, permeates each professional domain. The inexorable surge of pressures characterizing our contemporary world, marked by its rapid evolution, has rendered stress an ubiquitous companion across occupational spectra. Specifically within the milieu of burgeoning educators in institutions of higher learning, it becomes imperative for neophyte pedagogues to diligently enhance their occupational prowess. In this pursuit, they ought to earnestly embark upon the enhancement of their professional competencies, judiciously explore efficacious avenues to surmount an array of workplace challenges, and thereby, culminate in the attainment of more sanguine and promising career trajectories.

## **References**

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