

Occupational stress in the university environment: a challenge or threat for students and professors

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Abstract

Occupational stress is a significant problem in the professional lives of many people, including university students and professors. It has profound implications for both the physical and psychological health of those involved, as well as for academic and professional performance. There is a strong emotional demand in the educational process at any level, which needs deep attention for professional discovery and research. Depending on the emotions with which the activities of professors and students' learning process are associated, a certain dynamic state with a negative or positive emotional charge is produced, called occupational stress. The main scope of this pilot research study is to discover the existing level of occupational stress among the professors and students enrolled in the Administration and Public Management Faculty at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania. There are a few main specific research objectives, such as: to identify the main factors and variables influencing occupational stress for both categories of respondents; to find out the main causes of occupational stress; and to propose several changes at the faculty management level to reduce or prevent occupational stress for both students and professors by lowering the most relevant stressors. The research sample contains 347 students and 18 full-time and associate professors. The main instrument prepared by the American Society for Stress, named the Workplace Stress Scale, has been used to collect the data. Then the results were processed and discussed using Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program. Research findings illustrate the different levels of occupational stress in the target groups and the correlations between occupational stress and other variables. The research results are useful for university management in adapting the content of the university curriculum, teaching methods, key performance indicators, and other characteristics to reduce and prevent occupational stress and increase the performance of students and professors.

Keywords: occupational stress, professors, students.