

The Sources and Countermeasures of Kindergarten Teachers' Occupational Stress

—Taking Shenyang Youte International Kindergarten as an Example

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Abstract—With the rapid development of society and education, the occupational stress on preschool teachers is increasing day by day. In order to help teachers ease the physical, mental and behavioral discomfort caused by occupational stress, and thus improve teachers' education, teaching and management ability, this paper took Shenyang Youte International Kindergarten as an example to study the sources and countermeasures of kindergarten teachers' stress. On the basis of relevant literature and questionnaires, we can understand the pressure status and pressure sources of the kindergarten teachers, and propose targeted solutions from kindergarten, family and society perspectives. These solutions include improving the treatment of kindergarten teachers and strengthen teachers' education and training, carrying out professional publicity activities, and raising parents' educational awareness to effectively relieve the kindergarten teachers' stress and promote the sound development of preschool education.

Keywords—*kindergarten teachers; source of stress; countermeasures*

I. KINDERGARTEN TEACHER OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Kindergarten teacher pressure appears in the preschool education work. The society, children's families, kindergartens, children and teachers themselves all affect the physical and mental health of preschool teachers, and thus cause a series of changes in their work and life [1].

II. INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS QUO OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

This paper takes Shenyang Youte International Kindergarten as an example to understand the pressure status and main sources of stress of its kindergarten teachers through the self-made questionnaire on "Preschool Teachers' Stress". A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed with 50 questionnaires collected. The number of valid questionnaires is 48, and the effective recovery rate was 96%.

A. Investigation on the occupational stress of preschool teachers

Fig. 1 shows the results of the survey on the status quo of preschool teachers' stress. It can be seen that 50% preschool teachers are under great stress, and 37.5% preschool teachers have some pressure; only 12.6% preschool teachers said there

was slight or even no pressure. It can be concluded that most teachers in this kindergarten are under great pressure.

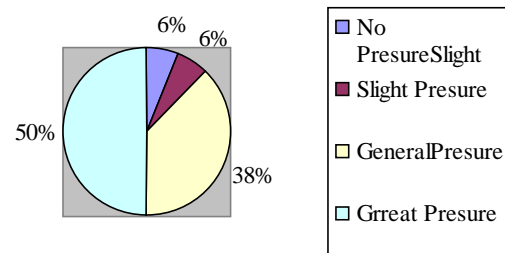


Fig. 1. Survey of preschool teachers' occupational stress

B. Investigation on the source of occupational stress of preschool teachers

Fig. 2 shows the results of the survey on the sources of stress for preschool teachers. 14 people believe that social factors are the main source of stress, accounting for 29.2% of the total number of respondents; 20 people deem that the kindergarten work is the main source of stress, accounting for 41.7% of the total number; 11 people think the family is the main source of stress, accounting for 22.9%; only 3 people hold that other factors are the main source of stress, accounting for 6.3% of the total.

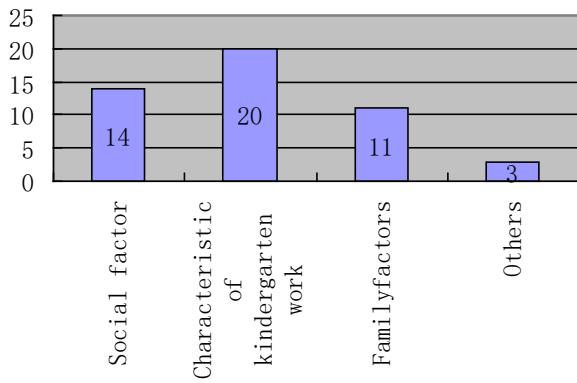


Fig. 2. Preschool teachers' occupational stress sources

1) The Source of Preschool Teacher Stress--A Survey of Job Characteristics

Kindergarten work is the primary source of preschool teachers' stress. This paper conducts a detailed investigation from three aspects: salary and working hour of preschool teachers, understanding and support from children's parents, professional capability of preschool teachers and teacher's training organized by kindergarten.

a) Survey of salary and working hours of preschool teachers

The results of the survey on the salary and working hours of kindergarten teachers are shown in Table I. It can be seen that the teachers' salary mostly fall in the range from 3000 to 4000 Yuan which is a relatively low level, accounting for 62.5% of the total number; 10.4% of the preschool teachers' salary is 2000-3000 Yuan, which is far lower than the income level of teachers in other education stages; the number of kindergarten teachers that earn 4000-6000 Yuan and 6000 Yuan is relatively small, accounting for 18.8% and 8.3% of the total number respectively. Judging from the working hours of preschool teachers, the teachers have seriously worked overtime. There are 17 teachers working for 8-10 hours, accounting for 35.4% of the total number of respondents; 25 teachers work for 10-12 hours, accounting for the 52.4%; 5 teachers have worked even beyond 12 hours.

TABLE I. THE RESULTS OF SALARY LEVEL AND THE WORK HOURS SURVEY OF THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Item	Options	Number of people	Proportion (%)
Kindergarten teachers' salary level	2000-3000yuan	5	10.4
	3000-4000yuan	30	62.5
	4000-6000yuan	9	18.8
	>6000yuan	4	8.3
Kindergarten teachers' working hours	<8 hours	2	4.2
	8-10 hours	17	35.4
	10-12 hours	25	52.1
	>12 hours	5	10.4

It can be seen from the above survey that teachers are inevitable under pressure as the salary level is relatively low, and the working time is generally long.

b) Survey of the understanding and support of parents of young children

The results of the survey of children's parents' understanding and support of teachers' work are shown in Fig. 3. Only 11 preschool teachers feel the understand and support from parents, accounting for 22.9% of the total number; 24 teachers say they cannot be understood and supported by parents, accounting for 50.0% of the total number. In addition, there are 13 preschool teachers who say that parents do not understand and support, and even make troubles without reasons, hindering teachers' normal work. It can be seen that the current bad situation where parents don't understand and support teachers' work is also one of the reasons for the pressure on kindergarten teachers.

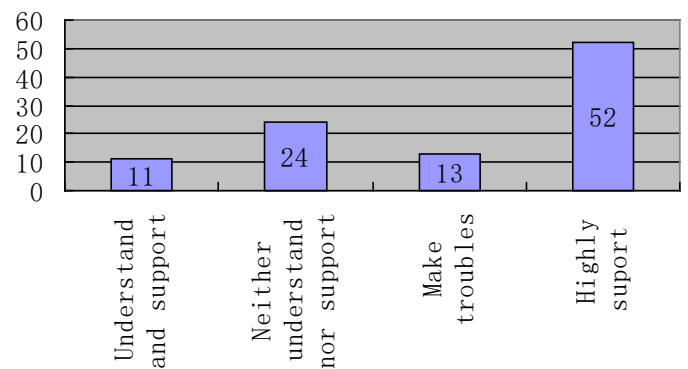


Fig. 3. Parents' understanding and support for teachers' work

c) Investigation on the professional capability of preschool teachers and the education and training of kindergartens

The survey results of the professional competence of kindergarten teachers and the education and training organized by kindergarten are shown in Table II. It can be seen that there are 9 preschool teachers who think that they are seriously lacking of professional ability, and 18 people who are lacking of some capability, and 14 people feel ordinary about the deficiency, accounting for 18.8%, 37.5% and 29.2% of the total number respectively. Only 7 people think they have enough professional knowledge, accounting for 14.6% of the total number. In addition, 14 kindergarten teachers indicated that they have not ever received training, and 29 teachers have occasionally received, accounting for 29.2% and 60.4% of the total number. Only 5 teachers have access to education and training regularly, accounting for 10.4% of the total number.

TABLE II. SURVEY OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

Item	Options	Number of people	Proportion (%)
Professional competence of preschool teachers	Enough	7	14.6
	Not sure	14	29.2
	deficient	18	37.5
	Severely deficient	9	18.8
kindergarten education and training for preschool teachers	never	14	29.2
	occasionally	29	60.4
	regularly	5	10.4

Through these two analyses, it can be seen that the professional knowledge of kindergarten teachers is generally insufficient, and the kindergartens have relatively few education and training for teachers, which makes the kindergarten teachers may face professional pressure caused by lack of competency.

In conclusion, the characteristics of kindergarten work have a great impact on the pressure of kindergarten teachers. And the factors like the low salary level, long working hours, and lack of understanding and support from the parents of the children, short of professional knowledge and effective training have all caused the work pressure of the kindergarten teachers.

2) The source of preschool teacher stress--Investigation on social factors

For the investigation of social factors of preschool teachers' stress sources, this paper mainly investigates the social status of preschool teachers and the expectations of children's parents and the society for preschool teachers. The results are shown in Table III. Almost 90% of preschool teachers believe that the social status of this occupation is generally low; only five preschool teachers believe that the occupation has a higher social status, accounting for 10.4% of the total number. in terms of the parents and society expectations, 30 preschool teachers, accounting for 62.5% of the total number, said that the expectations of parents and society were too high; the number of people who are under general expectations and lower expectations was 12 and 1 respectively, accounting for 25.0% and 2.1% of the total number.

TABLE III. SURVEY OF SOCIAL SOURCES OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' STRESS

Item	Option	Number of people	Proportion (%)
Social status of preschool teachers	Very high	0	0.00%
	high	5	10.4%
	ordinary	22	45.8%
	low	21	43.8%
Children's parents and social expectations	Overly high	30	62.5%
	ordinary	12	25.0%
	Relatively low	1	2.1%

To sum up, the current social status of preschool teachers is generally low; however, the expectations of the parents and the society for the preschool teachers are too high, which have increased the work pressure for the preschool teachers.

3) The source of preschool teacher stress--A survey of family factors

The family factors of the preschool teachers' stress sources are mainly investigated by the support of the teachers' families, and the results are shown in Fig. 4. 10.4% families are strongly support and 16.7% more support the teachers' work. However, most of the preschool teachers said that the family members do not care about their work, and the figure accounts for 47.9% of the total number. 25.0% of preschool teachers said that their family members have always opposed their occupation. The lack of support from family members will inevitably increase the pressure on preschool teachers.

Moreover, the survey results of preschool teachers' salary levels and working hours can also reflect the influence of family factors on preschool teachers' stress. Lower salary income and longer working hours will inevitably lead to a relatively small contribution of preschool teachers in the family, such as lack of companionship with family members, inability to provide better material life for children and the elderly at home, etc.

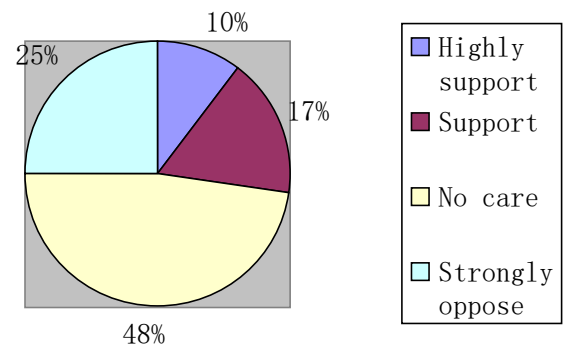


Fig. 4. Results of family support for teachers

III. MEASURES TO RELIEVE THE OCCUPATIONAL PRESSURE OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

A. Countermeasures against the source of pressure on kindergarten work characteristics

1) Improve the teachers' treatment

First of all, the kindergarten should raise teachers' wage, ensuring that their basic income are above the average in the industry. Then, recruit more teachers to reduce teachers' working time and workload.

2) Improve parental understanding and support

First of all, kindergartens should strengthen the propaganda of the work of preschool teachers to make parents can understand teacher' pains. Secondly, kindergartens can carry out a series of home-school activities to enhance the relationship between parents and teachers, so as to win parents' understanding and support of teacher work.

3) *Strengthen the education and training of preschool teachers*

Kindergartens can establish a systematic preschool teacher training system and conduct professional training and skill lectures for kindergarten teachers at different stages in a reasonable and scientific manner to improve the professional knowledge of kindergarten teachers.

B. *Countermeasures against the social sources of pressure*

Social factors are the secondary source of preschool teachers' stress. The social status can largely reflect how the society recognizes preschool teachers. A good social status indicates higher professional value, which will make teachers work more positively and optimistically [2]. In the face of the current low social status of preschool teachers, relevant work should be carried out from the following two aspects:

1) *Launch profession promotion activities*

First, the society can publicize the importance and value of the preschool teachers through the news media and online channels, and strengthen the understanding of this occupation in various groups, thus improving the social status of preschool teachers [3]. Then, kindergartens, communities, and Education Bureau should work together to carry out publicity activities and selection activities to improve the status and recognition of preschool teachers in the entire education system, so that the social status of preschool teachers can be effectively improved, and the preschool teachers' satisfaction with the profession can be promoted.

2) *Improve parents' awareness of education*

Communities and kindergartens establish parent schools and preschool education lectures to help parents set proper expectation, understand preschool education, objectively treat preschool teachers, and realize the efforts of preschool teachers, thus reducing the teachers' stress brought by parents [4].

C. *Countermeasures against family factors pressure sources*

In the light of the fact that families do not understand and support these teachers' work, kindergartens and other

educational institutions should carry out a series of activities to improve the situation. In addition, bestowing higher income and more time to the teachers to enable them accompany their families is also an important means to promote family understanding and support for preschool teachers. Family support and family harmony can effectively improve the self-recognition of preschool teachers and thus reduce their stress.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through the investigation and analysis of the stress of the kindergarten teachers of Shenyang Youte International Kindergarten, this paper finds that teachers generally face with great pressure. The main sources of pressure are, in order, the characteristics of kindergarten work, social factors and family factors. According to the three factors, the countermeasures and suggestions for relieving teachers' occupational stress are put forward, namely, improving the treatment of kindergarten teachers, strengthening teachers' education and training, carrying out occupation publicity activities, and raising parents' education awareness. It is expected that this research will enrich the theoretical system of stress-related research on kindergarten teachers, effectively promote the professional identity and happiness of kindergarten teachers, and promote the sound development of pre-school education.

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