

# *Stress Relief among Teachers Responsible for College Student Affairs Management*

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**Abstract:** In China's colleges, there is a group of people who are the core force in carrying out students' ideological education and guidance and managing students' affairs. In recent years, this group has received the attention and focus of China's education authorities, which has led to more work, higher requirements, and increased work pressure. The pressure of teachers responsible for college student affairs management has the characteristics of multi-source, complexity and continuity and so on. This thesis analyses main sources of work pressure of this group of teachers from the three aspects of organization, individual and environment, and tries to put forward suggestions on how to relieve work stresses from external and internal factors, namely, improving work environment and teacher evaluation system on the college's side, and a) self-awareness, b) self-improvement, c) interpersonal relationship, d) innovative working methods on teachers' side, which is great significance to improve the professional identity and happiness of this team, and to build up a specialized and professionalized student management and service team. It is of great significance.

## **1. Introduction**

In the college, teachers responsible for college student affairs management are part of the faculty of the college, but are distinguished from teachers engaged in teaching by the fact that their main work is not teaching, but that they are organizers, implementers, and mentors in student affairs, providing services and assistance to college students. These matters include but are not limited to, attending to the mental and psychological well-being of students, assisting new students in adapting to environment, guiding graduates in their employment and termination of student status, and directing the practical activities of classes and student organizations. According to statistics from China's Ministry of Education, as of March 2022, there were 240,800 teachers engaged in student affairs management in Chinese colleges, with a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:171, and the overall staffing of teachers engaged in student affairs management in 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) was up to standard. In the working practice of teachers responsible for college student affairs management, students are the main of work, and services and help are provided to the college students, but the assessment of work performance is not students who are the object of work, is the administrators of the college, so from the point of view of the work object, teachers responsible for college student affairs management have to satisfy students' requirements for service

and help, but from the point of performance assessment view, teachers responsible for college student affairs management from the point of view of performance appraisal, teachers working in student affairs have to meet the subjective requirements of educational administrators, therefore, this team has pressure from many aspects. Academic research on the stress of student affairs teachers in colleges is characterized by a variety of perspectives and research results. Some scholars have conducted theoretical studies with breadth and depth, and some experts have analyzed the working practices of this group. Some experts regard "teachers responsible for college student affairs management" as ordinary employees from the perspective of psychology and conduct research on the basis of the theory of the source of occupational stress of employees, while some researchers study the work stress management of teachers engaged in student affairs in colleges from the perspective of management, and there are also theses focusing on the sociological point of view, and the objective status of teachers' occupational stress is examined empirically and in-depth by means of questionnaires, researches and interviews. The objective status of teachers' professional stress is empirically studied[1]. There are also research results from experts and scholars on the suggestions of stress adjustment for teachers responsible for college student affairs management, through literature comparison, which are found to focus on three dimensions - the state, colleges and teachers. On this basis, researchers have combined the perspectives of different disciplines, such as organizational behaviour, positive psychology, and human resource theory, to combine rationality and realism, and to put forward suggestions for the relief and management of occupational stress for teachers working in student affairs. Based on the research results of experts and scholars, this thesis focuses on analyzing the main sources of work stress of teachers engaged in student affairs from the perspective of educational management, and then puts forward suggestions for stress adjustment according to the sources of stress.

## **2. Main Sources of Stress for College Teachers Working in Student Affairs**

### **2.1. Stress from the Organization**

Young teachers' identity before joining the college is that of university students, and the important thing is to focus on learning, and when they graduate from university and enter the college to work, they have to adapt quickly to the change of identity from students to teachers, and the important thing is to change from study to work, and they have a strong sense of enterprise and competition, and have to understand and get familiar with the new work unit faster in order to stimulate the potentials of the young workers, and from they join the college and become employees, young teachers are asked to engage in different jobs in different positions to get exercise and enhance abilities in all aspects, which is why young teachers have become the main force in the college's student affairs workforce. Since the help and services needed by students are diversified and the time is uncertain, young teachers in the adaptation stage have to put in a lot of time and energy in their work every day and even giving up their off-duty and weekend breaks, college administrators also require teachers responsible for college student affairs management to keep their Phone open 24 hours and live in student dormitory to provide students with all-around and full-time services[2], to cope and deal with emergencies and potential risks that may arise. In addition, in the critical period of physical and mental development and maturity, many college students need proper guidance and management, and there are also individual students in poor psychological condition, needing special care and attention. However, the target of teachers' work is often a class or a grade, with the number of students around 200, and since each student has different character, strength, experience, achievement, need and so on, the work of teachers responsible for college student affairs management is varied and complicated. The work of teachers responsible for college student affairs management is varied and complex, and according to the survey, among the positions in

colleges and universities that feel overloaded with work, 89.4% of them are in the category of teaching support (including student management), 86.3% in the category of teaching and 71.5% in the category of leadership and management[3]. The high intensity of the work and the overload of work bring pressure to the teachers engaged in student affairs work.

## **2.2. Stress from Individuals**

In the college, teachers responsible for college student affairs management are mainly young teachers, some of them have more than five years' working experience, and more of them are novices who have just joined the workforce. On the one hand, they would like to play to their own strengths in their work, improve their own abilities, realize their own values, have a better future, and expect to have excellent work performance, academic achievements, higher titles, higher incomes, higher status and so on, so they take the initiative to undertake more work in the college, which brings more stresses on themselves in terms of transitional work. On the other hand, teaching and scientific research are the most important and core work of the college. Teachers engaging in teaching and research scholars are valued in the college, but teachers engaging in other work, such as in student affairs management, are not valued and recognized in the college, because, in their view, student management and service is a job with no difficulty and value, and it is even a lowly job in the college, which causes young staff engaged in the role of "teachers responsible for college student affairs management" more or less there is a lack of understanding and confusion, some teachers are often self-denial in their work, no motivation, no goals, no plans, no sense of achievement, stresses of this conflict of roles so that teachers responsible for college student affairs management to produce depression, anxiety, resistance, and even physical and mental health. The pressure of this role conflict causes teachers working in student affairs to suffer from depression, anxiety, resistance, and even physical and mental illness.

## **2.3. Stress from the Environment**

The popularity of the Internet is changing people's way of working and living. According to the 51st Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet Network, released by the China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC), as of December 2022, the number of Internet users in China had reached 6.7 billion, with an Internet penetration rate of 75.6%, and the number of mobile phone users had reached 6.5 billion, with 99.8% of the users using mobile phones to go online [4]. The universal use of the Internet, the acquisition of big data and the transmission and processing of big data make the work of teachers responsible for college student affairs management more convenient and efficient, but there are also disadvantages. As mastering the application of Internet technology and becoming skilled in the operation of different network systems takes time and effort, and teachers engaged in student affairs need to operate more than one system, and some of them have to manage multiple system accounts, more common use include: college integrated office OA system, student teaching system, new student enrolment and graduation management system, student merit assessment system, teacher continuing education system, teacher research management system and so on, which requires teachers to learn new skills, try and practice constantly, and adapt to the changing office style so that the teachers have to withstand the great pressure from the working environment.

## **3. Suggestions for Stress Relief**

In the theory of work stress management, appropriate work stress can stimulate the potential of workers and improve their work efficiency, but sustained and excessive work stress can negatively

affect their psychology, emotions and behaviors. As a teacher of student affairs management, his role is set to be a mentor and guide for students, which requires teachers to maintain a positive, optimistic, and healthy state of mind at all times in their work, especially in their dealings with students. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to and adapt to the work pressure of teachers of student affairs management, so that teachers can have a reasonable goal, motivation to move forward, significant efficiency, and a happy mood in their work, and thus be able to make excellent achievements and achieve twice the result with half the effort. External factors and self-adjustment are equally important in adjusting teachers' professional stress. This thesis puts forward suggestions on the adjustment of work pressure from both the school and the teacher.

### **3.1. College: Create a Relaxed Working Atmosphere and Establish a Incentive System**

Organizational culture will directly affect the working status and performance of organizational members. An excellent and harmonious organizational culture will help to improve the internal cohesion and external competitiveness of the organization, and a relaxing working atmosphere can lead to high confidence, reduced stress, higher efficiency and a greater sense of well-being, and this is no exception for teachers responsible for college student affairs management. College administrators should value, respect and understand teachers, and the idea of supporting teachers' development should not just remain in words, "Doing is more important than saying". In terms of specific recommendations, colleges should recruit more excellent teachers to join the teaching staff according to the suitable ratio of teachers and students, especially encourage and support more young teachers to join the team of student affairs management, equip them in strict accordance with the requirements of the teacher-student ratios of the education authorities, reduce the teacher-student ratios, make a clear distinction between the duties and divisions of labour of different teaching posts, reduce the workload of each post, and reduce the number of students for teachers of student affairs management of students to alleviate the pressure of work overload. Colleges should support teachers' career development, implement induction training for new teachers to help them adapt more quickly and effectively to their roles and responsibilities, guide teachers in developing a lifelong learning mindset throughout their careers, and provide platforms and opportunities for skills training, learning exchanges, and continuing education necessary for their work. This will enhance teachers' working abilities and reduce job-related pressure. Colleges should pay attention to teachers' work-related stress and invite experts from psychological counseling institutions to conduct regular work relief programs. They should also provide systematic and targeted counseling in various ways to address the individual differences among teachers. According to the requirements of education authorities and the reality of teachers' work, colleges should comprehensively consider three aspects: educators, administrators, and service providers. They should establish different sequences of performance assessment indicators and formulate a detailed, fair, objective, and scientific performance evaluation system[5]. This will help reduce the work role conflict of teachers responsible for college student affairs management, minimize the blindness and subjectivity of evaluation, ensure the achievement of student management service objectives, and motivate teachers while familiarizing them with career development prospects. Colleges should also increase the salary income of teachers, especially young teachers, through various channels and methods. This will enhance material incentives for young teachers and stimulate their work motivation while reducing their economic pressure. Colleges should create an open, inclusive, and relaxed working atmosphere through a series of ways to help alleviate teachers' work stress.

### 3.2. Teachers: Relief Working Mentality and Innovate Working Methods

Teachers are the core force of the college work, students are the main object of the college work, teaching is inseparable from teachers, student management and services are equally inseparable from teachers. Firstly, as teachers responsible for college student affairs management, they should correctly understand and evaluate themselves, correctly view the necessity and importance of their roles and positions, proactively participate in the work, comprehensively and accurately understand the nature of the work of the position, the ability standard, the duty requirements, professionalism, etc., and work in accordance with the standards and requirements of the position to avoid futile efforts and to enhance the identity of the sense of identity and sense of belonging; secondly, enhance the comprehensive ability of the individual to Adapt to the mainstream of development. Teachers engaged in student affairs management should constantly adapt to the trend of teaching reform and development, especially "Internet+" has gradually become the mainstream of contemporary working methods due to its high efficiency, and no other methods can replace or take precedence over it. Teachers can only take the initiative to adapt to and learn from the trend, supplement their own knowledge reserves, practice their computer skills, make up for the lack of ability, and learn from various experiences. Insufficient ability, learn from all aspects of experience, so that the comprehensive ability to be improved, to become a composite talent suitable for the post, and enhance the self-confidence of the work. Again, teachers should establish good interpersonal relationships. Everyone makes development and progress in different social relationships. Into the stage of higher education students are ideas, innovative and good to practice the group, engaged in student affairs teachers in the process of student management and services encountered difficulties and problems is inevitable, work overload will often exist, good interpersonal relationships can make the work of the difficulties and problems encountered in a timely manner to solve the process of work to get the encouragement and support of others, the results of the work to get the others of the affirmation and praise, in the face of greater pressure, the work of the teachers to establish good interpersonal relationships, in the face of greater pressure to develop and progress. In the face of greater pressure, teachers can also relieve pressure through open communication with colleagues, friends, family members and other ways to communicate, and in the process of communication and interaction, teachers can also get more social support, in the psychological sense of identity, security and sense of belonging, so as to maximize the release of physical and mental pressure, which is also engaged in the work of student affairs teachers to adapt to the pressure of a way. Finally, engaged in the work of student affairs teachers to adapt to the pressure of a way [6]. Finally, teachers engaged in student affairs management should innovate their working methods and organize their work effectively. On the one hand, it takes a long process for an employee engaged in a certain job to go from a novice to a skilled to an expert, and it also takes a process for a teacher engaged in the management of student affairs to go from a new teacher to a superb businessman. Teachers should pay attention to accumulating and summing up experience in the course of their personal work, and carry out their work in a purposeful and well-planned manner by grasping the rules of students' growth and familiarizing themselves with the focuses and difficulties of the work in each phase, which can alleviate blindness and anxiety in the course of their work, and anxiety. On the other hand, selecting outstanding students as student cadres in the classes or grades managed by teachers, forming student teams, strengthening the guidance of student teams, and sharing part of the work can not only exercise the students' ability of self-management and self-service, but also reduce the work pressure of teachers.

### 4. Conclusion

The special nature of the work determines that teachers' work stresses will continue to exist in

the future. Both college administrators and teachers, have to be aware of the problems and take the initiative to pay attention to and try to solve these stresses in the light of the college's high-quality development and personal career development, the suggestions provided in this thesis can be a reference to alleviate teachers' work stresses.

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