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Mental fatigue and coping strategies among teachers and parents of differently abled children

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Abstract

Mental fatigue is a complex multi-faceted state difficult to define but which is a common phenomenon in daily life, for example as a syndrome due to a hard day's work, which involves several changes in mood, information processing, behavior and psychological- physiological state Coping strategies are defined as the person's constantly changing cognitive & behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the person's resources. Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioral and psychological, that people employ to master, reduce tolerate or minimize stressful events. Stress is not only happens at workplace but students are subjected to different kind of stressors such as the presence of the academic performance. As a result, it is important that individuals develop different strategies in order to manage stressful situations Coping strategies are defined as the person's constantly changing cognitive & behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the person's resources. Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioral and psychological, that people employ to master, reduce tolerate or minimize stressful events. Stress is not only happens at workplace but students are subjected to different kind of stressors such as the presence of the academic performance.

Keywords: Mental fatigue, coping strategies

Introduction

Teachers play a vital role in the life of students. A great deal is known about what students need from teachers and how big a difference high quality teaching makes to student learning, achievement, development, and success in school. Teaching is a stressful profession, and those stressors may eventually erode teachers' enthusiasm and engagement in teaching, undermining their capacity to meet students' needs and eventually leading to burnout. In order to help students reach their full potential, it is imperative to understand how teachers become more effective at dealing with the everyday demands and challenges associated with the teaching profession over time, not only to protect teachers from burnout, but also as a way to promote their engagement, learning, and mastery.

The teaching profession is considered one of the most stressful occupations. Teacher burnout, a common problem that is especially likely during the first three years of a teacher's career, is expensive to all those involved, including students, the teachers themselves, and the institutions that hire and train them. Small adjustments early in a teacher's career may have the potential to set them on a positive course towards greater resilience and more constructive engagement with their students and colleagues. This, in turn, might lead students to become more engaged in the curriculum, thereby increasing their ability and motivation to learn. The purpose of this study is to analyse mental fatigue and coping strategies among teachers and parents of differently abled children, including those potentially linked to the development of resilience. Such information would be useful in order to begin to identify the points in the coping process that can be targeted for interventions designed to promote teacher effectiveness and engagement, thereby increasing the likelihood that teachers would remain in the profession and realize their full potential to mentor, nurture, and teach students.

Mental stress is a very familiar condition faced by the students when they are unable to bear the risks involved in higher education. The main sources of stress are academic and time concerns, fear to failure, classroom interaction, and economic issues. Apart from this, the parental system also affects a lot of these students. The parents have unlimited expectation

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from their children and therefore they impose their own desires on them, the impact of these influences results in number of students reporting emotional problems, anxiety, stress and other neurotic problems. They are often found in frightening, abusive, depressing, threatening, competitive, unpredictable and confusing situation. The percentage of students is more among the college students compared to the other ones and these suicides is more among the college students compared to the other ones and these and these suicides under ache are mostly associated with academic failure or under achievement Academic stress among students have long been researched on, the researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competition with other students, failures, lack of pocket money, poor relationships with other students or lectures, family or problems at home institutional (University) level stressors are overcrowded lecture halls semester system, and inadequate recourses to perform academic work.

Mental fatigue is a complex multi-faceted state difficult to define but which is a common phenomenon in daily life, for example as a syndrome due to a hard day's work, which involves several changes in mood, information processing, behavior and psychological- physiological state Fatigue is associated with impairments comparable to chronic medical conditions, and may affect the individual performance and functioning in the occupational as well as home setting Mental fatigue is defined and operationalised in various ways for example in terms of increased sleepiness, reduced alertness, reduction in motivation, reduction in activity, and reduction in concentration According to the theoretical background of the effort- recovery (ER) model stress is the change in the psycho- physiological control mechanism that regulates task behavior resulting from proceeding mental and / or physical efforts which have become burdensome to such an extent that the individual is not able to adequately meet the demands the job requires; or the individual is able to meet this demands only at the cost of increasing mental effort and mental resistance. This definition principally implies that figure in itself is not an adverse effect but rather a physiological adaptation or safety mechanism of the individual confronted with the risk of overstrain or exaction.

Stress among parents and other primary caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and other related conditions) is pervasive and linked to a variety of adverse physical and mental health outcomes For example, parents of children with down syndrome parents of children with asperser's disorder have worse physical of children without developmental disorders finally parents of children.

Mental fatigue among parents and teachers of differently abled

“Mental fatigue and the control of cognitive processes: effects on preservation and planning” they tested behavioral manifestations of mental fatigue may be linked to compromised executive control, which refers to the ability to regulate perceptual and motor processes for goal- directed behavior. In complex tasks, compromised executive control may become manifest as decreased flexibility and sub-optimal planning. In this study they use the Wisconsin card sorting test (WCST) and the tower of London (TOL), which respectively measure flexibility (preservative errors) and planning. A simple memory task was used as a control measure. Fatigue was induced through working for 2 h on

cognitively demanding tasks. The result showed that compared to a non-fatigued group, fatigued participants displayed more preservation on the WCST and showed prolonged planning time on the TOL. Fatigue did not affect performance of the simple memory task. These findings indicate compromised executive control under fatigue, which may explain the typical errors and sub- optimal performance that are often found in fatigued people.

“sustainability of teachers implementation of school based mental health programmed” evidence-based prevention and intervention programs are increasingly being implemented in schools and if therefore is becoming increasingly important to understand the complexities of programme implementation under real world conditions much research has focused on the contextual factors that influence programme implementation under real- world conditions. Much research has focused on the contextual factors that influence programme implementation but less work has attempted to provide an integrated understanding of mechanism s (e.g. teacher-training processes) that affect teachers program implementation. In this research the review literature on factors related to teachers implementation of school based prevention and intervention programs, then from this research they believe are four basic ingredients that characterize potentially sustainable teacher- implemented classroom programs. Finally, they present a sequential model, based on these ingredients of the naturalistic processes underlying sustainability of teacher's program implementation and describe how this sustainability can be enhanced through program implementation and describe how this sustainability can be enhanced through provision of teachers training and performance feedback from a classroom consultant.

“Working overtime hours: relations with fatigue, work motivation, and the quality of work” The purpose of this study was to find out to better understand the relationship between overtime and mental fatigue by taking into account work motivation and the quality of overtime work and studying theoretically derived subgroups. This study conducted a survey study among a representative sample of the Dutch full- time work force (n=1807). The prevalence of overtime and the associations between overtime and job demands, job variety, decision latitude, fatigue, and work motivation was studied through descriptive statistics. They used ANCOVA (covariates: age, gender, salary level) to compare six overtime- fatigue subgroups with respect to work motivation and job characteristics. Result showed of 67% of the respondents worked overtime (mean 3.5 hours). Overtime workers appeared to be no fatigued, motivated workers with favorable work characteristics. ANCOVA revealed no significant overtime- fatigue interaction. The researcher opined from the study that will moderate overtime is common among Dutch workers, who seen to be happy workers with attractive jobs rather than fatigued employees.

“parents and child personality traits and children's externalizing problem behavior from age 4 to 9 years: A cohort- sequential latent growth curve analysis to analyze longitudinal data for children's externalizing behavior from four overlapping age cohorts (4, 5, 6, and 7 years at first assessment) measured at three annual time points. The data included mother and father ratings on the child behavior checklist and the five- factor personality inventory for children of 674 children of a proportional stratified general population sample. Results indicated a significant nonlinear decline in problem behavior from ages 4 to 9 child benevolence was negatively related to initial levels of

problem behavior. Higher scores on emotional stability were negatively related to initial levels of externalizing problem behavior. At the age of 4 years, boys had higher initial scores than girls, but boys and girls followed a similar developmental trajectory with cerebral palsy report poorer levels of both mental and physical health. Coping may be an important resource to teachers in dealing with the multiple demands of their profession. Teachers with more access to coping resources reported less burnout than those with less access to coping resources. There is even evidence to suggest that learning effective coping strategies may contribute to mastering orientation toward teaching, which significantly predicts enjoyment of work, participation, and positive career aspirations. Coping likely mitigates the effects of stressors by changing one's emotional state during the encounter or by eliminating the source of the stressor all together. In fact, coping is viewed as one of the most important aspects of interventions designed to buffer the negative effects associated with stress caused by the many demands teachers face daily.

Rationale of the study

Mental fatigue is a common phenomenon in our daily life, and is defined as a state of cortical deactivation, which reduces mental performance and decreases alertness. The major symptom of mental fatigue is a general sensation of weariness, feelings of inhibition, and impaired activity. Mental fatigue is a main cause of some serious operating errors. And disabled places a set of extra demands or challenges on the family system. Friends, neighbors, and peoples in the community may react negatively to the disability by avoidance, disappearing remarks or looks or overt effort to exclude people with disabilities and their families overall, stress from these added demands of disability in families overall, stress from these added demand of disability in family life can negatively affect the health and functioning of family members in addition to type of impairment, there is impairment, there is variability in the severity of important. The degree to which a person with disability is limited in doing activities or functions no daily living can be assessed and is called functional status. The lower the persons functional status, the more assistance. Providing this assistance providing this assistance can create a burden for family caregivers, who may result in physical or psychological symptoms of health children with disabilities more into school environmental where they interact with teachers and peers, they may experience difficulties mastering task and developing social skills and competencies. Although school are mandated to provide special education programmers for children in the least restrictive environment and to maximize integration, there is still considerable variability in how effectively schools do this. Barriers include inadequate financing for special education, inadequately trained school personnel, and very often, attitudinal varies of other children and staff that compromise full inclusion for

students with disabilities. Parents of children with disabilities may experience a whole set of added challenges in assuring their children's educational right. In some instances, conflict with schools and other services provides can become a major source of strain for families

Objective

To assess and compare the mental fatigue among parents and teachers of various categories of differently abled.

Hypothesis

There will be no significant difference in mental fatigue and their associated factors between teachers and parents of the differently abled.

Methodology

The study sample: The present research was carried out by following systematic procedures under the following sections.

Selection of respondents

Stage 1: Schools catering to differently abled children located at Lucknow were identified and listed. Two institutions were selected randomly using random sample technique

Stage 2: Selection of parents: Children belonging to various categories (VI, HI, OI, MI) of disability were identified and 10 children from each category were selected randomly. Addresses of their sample were collected and the parents (Mother and father of the identified children were taken as sample.

Note: The children who had both the parents only were selected for the study

Selection of teachers: Five teachers, teaching each category of students were selected randomly as sample

A total of 40 mothers, 40 fathers and twenty teachers were selected to conduct the study

Variables of the study: Variables are characteristics or conditions that are manipulated controlled and observed by the researcher. The variables were selected according to the objectives of the study. The selected variables were categorized into two categories namely Independent variables and dependent variables. The present study was conducted to study the relationship between identified Independent and dependent variables.

Tools and techniques: To carry out the present study following tools were used

Mental fatigue scale: To study the mental fatigue Scale developed by Rodham (2001) was used.

Results and Discussion

H01: No significant difference exist in the mental fatigue of parents and teachers of differently abled children

Table 1: Comparison of mental fatigue among teachers and parents of differently abled children

| S. No. | Mental fatigue | Parents | Teachers | 't' | 'p' |
|--------|--|------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Fatigue | 1.75±.588 | 1.63±.490 | .011 | .917 |
| 2 | Lack of initiative | 1.53±.679 | 1.53±.679 | .000 | 1.000 |
| 3 | Mental fatigue | 1.65±.662 | 1.50±.679 | .182 | .671 |
| 4 | Mental recovery | 1.90±.841 | 1.60±.545 | 4.377 | .040* |
| 5 | Concentration difficulties | 1.65±.893 | 1.53±.751 | 1.735 | .192 |
| 6 | Memory problems | 1.63±.925 | 1.48±.716 | 2.289 | .134 |
| 7 | Slowness of thinking | 1.80±.911 | 1.83±.813 | 1.036 | .312 |
| 8 | Sensitivity to stress | 1.68±.764 | 1.83±.712 | 1.476 | .228 |
| 9 | Increased tendency to become emotional | 1.73±.960 | 1.58±.747 | 1.979 | .164 |
| 10 | Irritability or "a short fuse" | 2.10±.841 | 1.98±.920 | .076 | .783 |
| 11 | Sensitivity to light | 2.08±.888 | 2.13±.791 | .493 | .485 |
| 12 | Sensitivity to noise | 2.68±.4.50 | 1.73±.751 | 1.879 | .174 |
| 13 | Decreased sleep at night | 1.93±.829 | 1.90±.871 | .360 | .551 |

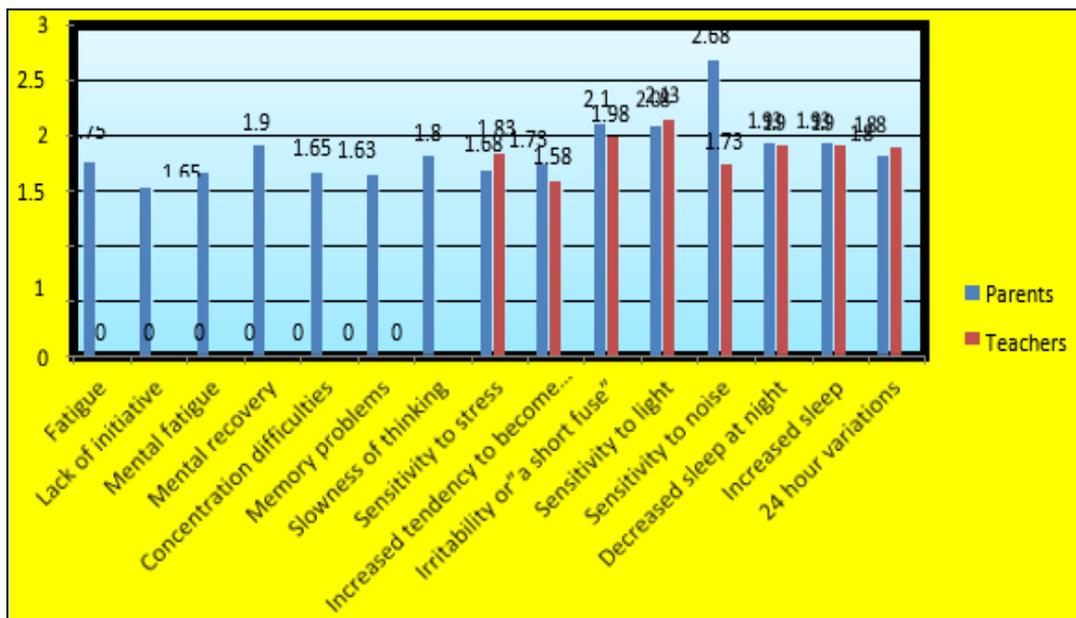


Fig 1: Comparison among parents and teachers of differently abled children

Data clearly indicates that no significant differences exists in mental fatigue among teachers and parents, but it may be noted that mental recovery is faster among parents in comparison to teachers. It can also be noted that fatigue, concentration difficulties, memory problems, increased tendency to become emotional, irritability, sensitivity to light and sound, decreased sleep is more among parents indicating more mental fatigue among parents in comparison to teachers

of the differently abled. The reason may be that the parents has to face physical, social and financial consequences whereas the teachers fatigue is only due to the extra effort they have to put in while teaching them.

H02: There exist no significant differences in mental fatigue among parents across ages

Table 2: Mental fatigue among parents of differently abled children according to age.

| S. No. | statement | 30-40 years | 41-50 years | 51-60years | "f" | "p" |
|--------|--|-------------|-------------|------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Fatigue | 1.71±.463 | 1.71±.513 | 1.62±.669 | .223 | .801 |
| 2 | Lack of initiative | 1.52±.680 | 1.55±.686 | 1.48±.680 | .085 | .919 |
| 3 | Mental fatigue | 1.56±.676 | 1.66±.627 | 1.43±.746 | .786 | .459 |
| 4 | Mental recovery | 1.95±.590 | 1.66±.745 | 1.71±.784 | 1.170 | .316 |
| 5 | Concentration difficulties | 1.19±.680 | 1.66±.815 | 1.86±.85 | 4.001 | .022* |
| 6 | Memory problems | 1.48±.750 | 1.71±.835 | 1.33±.856 | 1.548 | .219 |
| 7 | Slowness of thinking | 1.33±.913 | 1.89±.764 | 2.14±.793 | 5.584 | .005* |
| 8 | Sensitivity to stress | 1.76±.700 | 1.61±.679 | 2.00±.837 | 1.988 | .144 |
| 9 | Increased tendency to become emotional | 1.52±.750 | 1.61±.887 | 1.86±.910 | .888 | .416 |
| 10 | Irritability or "a short fuse" | 1.90±.831 | 1.97±.972 | 2.29±.717 | 1.185 | .311 |
| 11 | Sensitivity to light | 2.14±.854 | 2.11±.832 | 2.05±.865 | .068 | .934 |
| 12 | Sensitivity to noise | 1.81±.814 | 1.97±.753 | 3.00±.623 | .881 | .418 |
| 13 | Decreased sleep at night | 2.19±.814 | 1.71±.893 | 2.00±.707 | 2.419 | .096 |

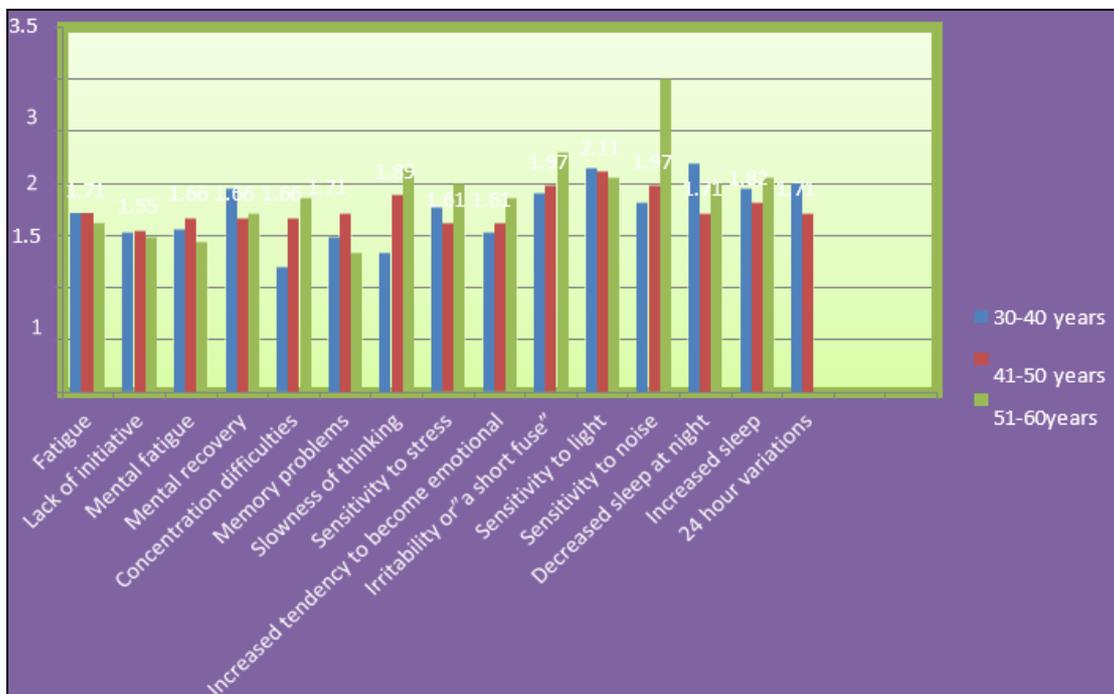


Fig 2: Mental fatigue among parents of differently abled children according to age

From the various parameters of fatigue scale, data clearly indicates that no significant differences exists in mental fatigue among teachers and parents, but it may be noted that mental recovery is faster among parents in comparison to teachers. It can also be noted that fatigue, concentration difficulties, memory problems, increased tendency to become emotional, irritability, sensitivity to light and sound, decreased sleep is more among parents indicating more mental fatigue among parents in comparison to teachers of the

differently abled. The reason may be that the parents has to face physical, social and financial consequences where as the teachers fatigue is only due to the extra effort they have to put in while teaching them.

H03: There exists no significant difference in mental fatigue among parents of differently abled children due to type of family

Table 3: Mental fatigue among teachers and parents of differently abled children of nuclear and joint family

| S. No. | Statement | Nuclear family | Joint family | "t" | "p" |
|--------|--|----------------|--------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | Fatigue | 1.90±.436 | 1.44±.673 | 16.98 | .000** |
| 2 | Lack of initiative | 1.43±.555 | 1.62±.681 | .002 | .966 |
| 3 | Mental fatigue | 1.61±.703 | 1.49±.607 | .538 | .466 |
| 4 | Mental recovery | 1.85±.760 | 1.59±.798 | .017 | .895 |
| 5 | Concentration difficulties | 1.59±.774 | 1.57±.899 | 1.145 | .288 |
| 6 | Memory problems | 1.56±.838 | 1.59±.789 | .117 | .733 |
| 7 | Slowness of thinking | 1.80±.954 | 1.84±.764 | 2.700 | .104 |
| 8 | Sensitivity to stress | 1.78±.759 | 1.73±.732 | .021 | .885 |
| 9 | Increased tendency to become emotional | 1.66±.794 | 1.65±.889 | .280 | .598 |
| 10 | Irritability or "a short fuse" | 1.88±.872 | 2.22±.886 | .170 | .681 |
| 11 | Sensitivity to light | 2.12±.842 | 2.05±.848 | .360 | .550 |
| 12 | Sensitivity to noise | 1.68±.820 | 2.78±4.65 | 1.708 | .195 |
| 13 | Decreased sleep at night | 2.00±.866 | 1.81±.845 | .195 | .660 |

The family structure will have a great impact on the mental fatigue of parents, as joint families will be able to provide efficient support system in comparison to nuclear families. It is evident from the data that significantly high differences were found among parents belonging to nuclear and joint families. The parents living in nuclear families do indicated more fatigue in comparison to the parents of joint family which clearly indicates that the support system of joint

families is much better than nuclear families. It can also be noted that other parameters denoting more mental fatigue are found to be high among parents belonging to nuclear families. Concentration difficulties, memory problems, slowness of thinking, sensitivity to stress, increased tendency to become emotional, irritability and decreased sleep were found to be more among the parents in nuclear system as they are the only ones who have to take care of the children dependent on them.

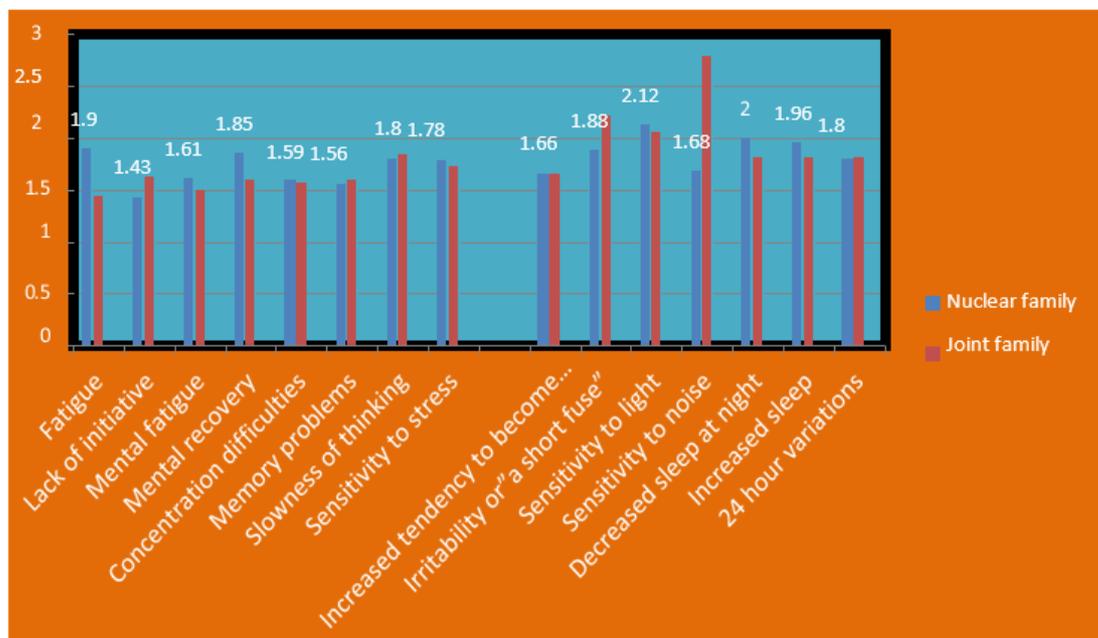


Fig 3: Mental fatigue among parents of differently abled children according to Types of family

Summary and Conclusion

The present study was conducted to mental fatigue and coping strategies among teachers and parents of differently abled children mental fatigue is a temporary inability to maintain optimal cognitive performance. The onset of mental fatigue during any cognitive activity is gradual, and depends upon an individual's cognitive ability, and also upon other factors, such as sleep deprivation and overall health. Mental fatigue has also been shown to decrease physical performance. It can manifest as somnolence, lethargy, or directed attention fatigue. Decreased attention is known as ego depletion and occurs when the limited 'self-regulatory capacity' is depleted. It may also be described as a more or less decreased level of consciousness. In any case, this can be dangerous when performing tasks that require constant concentration, such as operating large vehicles. For instance, a person who is sufficiently somnolent may experience micro sleep. However, objective cognitive testing can be used to differentiate the neuro cognitive deficits of brain disease from those attributable to tiredness.

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Mental fatigue is a complex multi-faceted state difficult to define but which is a common phenomenon in daily life, for example as a syndrome due to a hard day's work, which involves several changes in mood, information processing, behavior and psychological- physiological state.

Fatigue is associated with impairments comparable to chronic medical conditions, and may affect the individual performance and functioning in the occupational as well as home setting Mental fatigue is defined and operationalised in

various ways for example in terms of increased sleepiness, reduced alertness, reduction in motivation, reduction in activity, and reduction in concentration.

According to the theoretical background of the effort-recovery (ER) model stress is the change in the psychophysiological control mechanism that regulates task behavior resulting from proceeding mental and / or physical efforts which have become burdensome to such an extent that the individual is not able to adequately meet the demands the job requires; or the individual is able to meet this demands only at the cost of increasing mental effort and mental resistance. This definition principally implies that figure in itself is not an adverse effect but rather a physiological adaptation or safety mechanism of the individual confronted with the risk of overstrain or exertion.

Coping strategies are defined as the person's constantly changing cognitive & behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the person's resources. Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioral and psychological, that people employ to master, reduce tolerate or minimize stressful events. Stress is not only happens at workplace but students are subjected to different kind of stressors such as the presence of the academic performance.

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