

SEMESTER – II, PM&IR

COURSE CODE CC -7 ,UNIT –IV

COURSE - ORGANISATION BEHAVIOUR

STRESS AND MANAGEMENT

Most of us are aware that employee stress is an increasing problem in organization . We hear postal workers killing co-workers and supervisors and then we learn job-related tension were a major cause .

1. Meaning and concept of stress - Stress is an Inevitable part of today's fast life . It is a condition of strain on one's emotions, thought processes and physical condition . When it is excessive , it can threaten one's ability to cope with environment . The word stress is derived from the Latin term 'Stringers' which means to draw tight ."Stress" is the general term applied to the pressures people feel in life . As a results f these pressures ,employees develop various symptoms of stress that can harm their job performance .

Stress is different from anxiety which is state of uncertainly . It is also different from agitation which is physical part of anxiety . It also differs from frustration which is blocked goal attainment . In other words , stress is a pressure condition causing hardship .It is an internal

phenomenon and a mental attitude . Stress is generally believed to have a deleterious effect on health and performance. But a minimum level of stress is necessary for effective functioning and peak performance. It is the individual's reaction to stress which makes all difference .

As we know that 'Hans Selye' the father of stress, believes that stress is spice of life and absence of stress is death. Stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself while stress is typically discussed in a negative context, it also has a positive value. It is an opportunity when it offers potential gain.

Thus, stress is a mental ,emotional or physical reaction resulting from an individual's response to environmental pressure and similar stimuli. Different persons respond to stressful situations in different ways.

2. Causes of stress – The source of stress way be classified into two broad categories as follows :

A) Organizational Stressors : There are several potential stressors in organizations. These are summarized as follows :

- I. Roles in organization –**
 - i. Role ambiguity

- ii. Role conflict
- iii. Too little management support
- iv. Holding a middle management position

II. Relationships :-

- i. With superiors
- ii. With subordinates
- iii. With equal or colleagues
- iv. Inability to delegate

III. Physical environment : Working conditions like temperature ,lighting, noise spatial arrangements , crowding , privacy , etc.

IV. Job Qualities:

- i. Quantitative overload/under load
- ii. Qualitative overload/ under load
- iii. Time pressures
- iv. Responsibility for people
- v. Work pace

V. Oraganisational structure :

- i. Lack of participation
- ii. No sense of belonging
- iii. Poor communication
- iv. Restriction on behavior
- v. Lack of opportunity

VI. Career Development :

- i. Status incongruity

- ii. Under –promotion
- iii. Over promotion
- iv. Mid - career
- v. Obsolescence

VII. **Change** : It may be classified into two:

- i. Organizational
- ii. Individual

B) **Individual Stressors** : Such as , Personality , motivation , ability , experience , status , life style , beliefs and values .

The individual stressors may be classified into following categories :

- I. Biographical Variables
- II. Needs and values
- III. Life stages
- IV. Locus of control
- V. Introversion
- VI. Rigidity,etc.

3. **Consequences of stress** :-

A) **On the Individual** – It describe the physical ailments, mental and behavioral .

- a. Physical ailments – Headache , indigestion , insomnia , heart trouble .
- b. Mental – Anxiety , irritability , lack of clear thinking, inability to relax , frustration, helplessness , loneliness , etc.

- c. Behavioral – excessive smoking or drinking , withdrawal from relationships , speech disturbances .

B) **On the organization** : such as ,low productivity , poor quality, higher costs , increased absenteeism , low job satisfaction , accident proneness , poor interpersonal communication , etc.

4. **Coping strategies for stress** : organizations and individuals cannot remain in a continuous state of stress . Few action becomes necessary . Coping with stress involves an adaptive response to stress so as to eliminate or reduce the stress producing factors .The following are the common methods of managing stress :

- i. **Exercises** – Physical and mental exercises help to reduce emotional imbalance . Physicians advice walking and other exercises in the morning. Timely and regular eating and regular sleeping habits and yoga are very helpful .
- ii. **Forecasting and preparing** – Advance thinking and foresight helps a manager to reduce risk involved in decision making . Proper allocation of resources is also helpful.
- iii. **Organise work and Time** – We need to separate work from home . Break the routine in the form of a small

vacation or picnic . Share problems with spouse , friends and nearest or close relation .

- iv. **Develop positive attitude** – A positive attitude to both life and work does reduce stress . Make positive use of stress .
- v. **Have Faith** – Faith in one's deity can reduce stress. The reciting of any mantra for those who follow this faith can reduce stress .
- vi. **Rational Emotive Therapy Technique** – This is a dynamic action oriented learning process where individuals are made to recognise the futility or irrationality of their firm beliefs and viewpoints and develop rational beliefs and viewpoints.

BURNOUT

The end result of stress which is an individual is not able to cope with is burnout. Burnout is a syndrome wherein a person breaks down physically and emotionally due to continuous overwork over a long period of time . Work addicts or workaholics are susceptible to burnout . There are 5 stages of Burnout. The only good thing about a burnout is that it proceeds gradually .

Stage – 1 → The stage of Job Contentment

Symptoms : Enthusiasm to work , High Energy Levels , Positive attitude , Good outlook .

Stage – 2 → The stage of Fuel shortage

Symptoms : Physical and mental fatigue , Frustration and disillusionment , Low morale , Low confidence level .

Stage – 3 → The stage of withdrawal and isolation

Symptoms : Avoiding contact with co-workers , Subordinate , Anger , Negativism , Emotional distress .

Stage – 4 → The stage of crisis

Symptoms : Very low self esteem , Absenteeism , Cynicism , Terminally negative feelings or thinking

Stage – 5 → The Final Breakdown

Symptoms: Drug addiction or Alcoholism, Suicidal tendencies, Heart attacks, Abnormal behavior, etc.

A) Causes of Burnout :- The following are the causes of burnout :

- (1) **Type of stress** – Stress can be functional, contributing to glow up, or dysfunctional, contributing to burnout. The first has been ‘eustress’, and the second ‘distress’. Eustress is the stress of achievement, triumph, and exhilaration. Distress is the stress of disappointment, inadequacy, defeat and helplessness.

- (2) **Level of stress** – An optimum level of stress is necessary for executive glow up. An executive is like a stringed instrument. If there is less tension in the strings, the instrument will not produce the required notes. If the strings are tensed too much (hyper-stress) they may break.
- (3) **Personality** – There are certain personality dimensions which make a person resist the dysfunctional effects of stress, and certain others which are the characteristics of a stress-prone personality. The following personality dimensions have been found to contribute to stress-proneness and executive burnout : external locus of control , low inter-personal trust ,rigidity and suspiciousness , withdrawal and alienation , etc.
- (4) **Nature of the Job** – If the employment or job highly routinised, does not allow any diversity of freedom, and does not provide opportunities for creativity and growth, it can lead to burnout.
- (5) **Non- work Life** – The executive's social or economic conditions , family life and relationships , family and other obligations , health conditions , etc., also contribute for his burnout.
- (6) **Life Style** – The pattern of structuring one's time may be called the style. It is the major cause of burn

out . A stress-dissipating life style, contributing to executive glow up, is characterized by a relaxed life . On other hand, a stress absorbing life style is characterized by narrow interests, limiting oneself to work and leading a tense and structured life.

- (7) **Role Style** – The role style was found to make the most significant contribution to role stress. Role styles were broadly classified into approach and avoidance.
- (8) **Coping Style** – In order to study modes or styles of coping, an instrument was prepared to assess coping modes or styles for organizational stress. The responses are scored to give eight different styles of coping with organizational stress, four dysfunctional and four functional.
- (9) **Organisational Climate** – It is also effective cause of burnout. A supportive organizational climate can as much contribute to executive glow up as a hostile climate to executive burnout. An organizational climate perceived as developing excellence in people was significantly associated with low role stress, and one perceived as characterized by strong control over people with high role stress.

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QUESTIONS:

1. What is stress ? Explain its causes and consequences .
2. What is burnout ? What are its causes?

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