A STUDY OF STRESS ROLE ON FACULTY: AN ANALYSIS OF PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN HARYANA

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ABSTRACT

The study on "A Study of Stress Role on Faculty: An Analysis of Professional Institutions in Haryana" was conducted on a random sample of 200 (100 each of male and female) faculty members of professional institutions of Haryana. Questionnaire for Demographic characteristic and Coping Strategies was used along with Employment Organization Sources of Stressors scale (Telaprolu and George, 2005). Frequency, percentage, t-test, correlation and step wise regression were used for analysis. Main Objective of this study was to find out the factors which are responsible for stress in faculty members of professional institutions. The factors that caused stress always were mainly due to the interference of the employment organizational responsibilities with their family organizational role, lack of their involvement in decision making that reduced their responsibilities and the participatory model in their organizational set up which enhanced their responsibilities to the point of exhaustion. Majority of the faculty members revealed that stress was basically due to their laziness and also they were happy with fewer responsibilities. The overall results of stress level revealed that, higher percentage of faculty members were in low stress category.

***Keywords:** stress, faculty members.*

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INTRODUCTION

Modern living has brought with it, not only innumerable means of comfort, but also a plethora of demands that tax human body and mind. Now-a-days everyone talks about stress. Not only just high pressure executives are its key victims but it also includes labourers, slum dwellers, working women, businessmen, professionals and even children. In the fast changing world of today, no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress, whether it is within the family, business, organization, study, work, or any other social or economical activity. Stress is an inevitable and unavoidable component of life due to increasing complexities and competitiveness in living standards. Teaching is one of the most significant and visible profession in the world. All other professions in the society have their bases in the profession of teaching. As a profession it is the basis of the development of any country. Faculties are essential for the effective functioning of education system and for improving the quality of learning processes. Faculties play an important role in constructing the personality of their students. Professional colleges are as important institutions as any other organization of the society. It can be reviewed as an interface, a platform where significant socialization of children takes place and where a sizable number of adolescent members of a society follow careers and meanings in their lives. Importance of profession is obvious however; the social and psychological conditions exert a strong influence on the levels of performance, job satisfaction and even on the mental health of Faculty.

CONCEPT OF STRESS

Stress is experienced by all in their everyday lives, in a wide variety of situations and settings. It is a natural and unavoidable feature of life experienced at one time or another by the vast majority of those engaged in professional work. Generally we agreed that stress is not just a uni-dimensional phenomenon. From whatever perspective we may view stress, is not limited to any particular sphere of an individual's life as it ranges from stressors present in his personal to his work life. Sanders (1983) concluded that although stress has become a part of our daily vocabulary but there exist considerable divergence among the various fields in which the concept is used with regard to its definitions and connotation.

Stress is basically, a word derived from the Latin word "Stringer" meaning to draw tight. The definitions of stress are many and varied, ranging from simple one word statement such as tension or pressure to medical explanations for the physiological response of the human body to certain stimuli. Ivancevich and Matteson (1996) found that stress has different meanings to

different people.

From a lay person's perspective, stress can variously be described as feeling tense, anxious, worried, or having the blues. Scientifically these feelings are manifestations of the stress experienced an intriguingly complex programmed response to the perceived threat that can have both positive and negative results. There is general consensus however, that stress is a physical, mental or emotional reaction resulting from an individual's response to environmental tensions, conflicts, pressures and similar stimuli.

As commonly understood, stress is a pattern of disruptive, physiological and psychological reactions to events that threaten a person's ability to cope.

Wolf and Goodell (1968) defined stress as a dynamic state with in an organism in response to a demand for adaptation.

Selye (1956) stress is "any external event or internal drive which threatens to upset the organismic equilibrium"

McGrath (1970) defined stress as a perceived imbalance between demand and response capacity under conditions where failure to meet demand has important consequences.

Cofer and Appley (1964) defined stress as a state of an organism where he perceives that his wellbeing is endangered and that he must direct all his energies to its protection.

Cox (1978) has described three classes of definitions. Stress can be variously thought of as a response, i.e. the stress response to an extreme stimulus; as a stimulus i.e. as the stressor itself as an intervening variable.

Spielberger (1979) defined stress in two different ways. According to him, it is a dangerous potentiality, harmful/unpleasant external situation/conditions (stressors) that produce stress reaction; and secondly to the internal thought, judgment, emotional state and physiological process that are evoked by stressful stimuli.

Ryhal and Singh (1996) stated that stress is the state of an organism it perceived that its well-being is endangered and that it must direct all its energies to its protection.

TYPES OF STRESS

There are different types of stress, good and bad. Most people think that stress is always bad. Nothing can be far from truth! A little stress is absolutely necessary for our survival in this highly competitive world! Thus, we can classify stress into two groups the good stress or 'eustress' or the bad stress or 'distress'

Eustress is the good stress which helps us to improve our performance. For example, if there is no stress of performing well in the exams or athletic events, students will not study harder

or the athletes will not sweat it out on the tracks. A certain amount of positive stress keeps us pepped up to meet all challenges and is necessary for our survival and progress in life.

When stress gets out of hand, it becomes bad stress or distress, which will bring out the weakness within us and make us vulnerable to fatigue and illness. If distress is continued unchecked, this will lead to all the ill effects of stress.

The research literature acknowledges difficulty in pinpointing a single definition of the term stress. A frequently cited definition of stress has been provided by Selye (1974): "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it". The term has been further defined by Gold and Roth (1993): "a condition of disequilibrium within the intellectual, emotional and physical state of the individual; it is generated by one's perceptions of a situation, which result in physical and emotional reactions. It can be either positive or negative, depending upon one's interpretations"

Faculty stress is defined by Kyriacou (1987) as "the experience by a faculty of unpleasant emotions, such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger, and depression, resulting from aspects of work as a faculty" .Faculty burnout is defined by Kyriacou (1987) as "the syndrome resulting from prolonged faculty stress, primarily characterized by physical, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion". While there are many different occupations in the education sector, teaching is identified as a particularly stressful job (Smith et al, 2000). Stress among teachers is a contributor to illness as well as a cause for some leaving the profession (Aitken 2002, cited in Verdugo and Vere). A German study ranked the teaching professions as the

occupations at highest risk of poor mental health, with teachers in schools for pupils with disabilities and those engaged in the complementary education of apprentices most at risk (Hasselhorn and Nübling 2004).

In the education sector, work-related stress should be tackled at source, with a comprehensive strategy that: identifies possible sources of work-related stress, and their underlying causes (whether the work environment, how the work is organized, or the behavior of colleagues, students, or parents); examines the potential impact of work-related stress; works with the employees to identify and develop targeted solutions; works with the staff to implement those solutions and monitor their effectiveness.

THEORETICAL MODELS OF WORKPLACE STRESS

Karasek 's Demands-Control Model

A second, equally popular model to evaluate occupational stress is Demands-Control model presented by Karasek (1979). This approach posits that the most stressful situation in the workplace are those in which employee face heavy job demand but at the same time, are given little control over their work. This model gauges strain (stress) by the interaction of work pressures and demands and the decision latitude (control) of the worker. Thus, a job with very high demands and little to no control in decision making would be stressful-this happening is called the 'strain hypothesis'.

Demands refer to pressures to work hard or fast, excessive workloads, and conflicting priorities or responsibilities, and decision latitude, or control, concerns the worker's ability to control his or her work activities, including the authority to make decisions on the job (decision authority) and to select appropriate strategies to accomplish the job (skill discretion). Conversely, an individual presented with high demands and high control does not experience occupational stress; the pressure of high demands is negated or buffered by the element of control-this happening is called the 'buffering hypothesis.' Finally, research based on Karasek's Demand-Control model has found the lowest level of psychological well-being (i.e., the most stressed employees) exists among those workers experiencing high demands, low control, and low support (Schaubroeck & Ganster, 1991).

The Person-Environment Fit Model

One of the earlier and most well cited models is the Person-Environment fit model. This approach can be traced back to Kurt Lewin and his notion of interactional Psychology. Lewin (1947) believed that human behavior is a function of an interaction between characteristics of the person and characteristics of the situation. One aspect of this interaction relevant to

occupational stress is the degree to which there is a fit between the person and the situation. According to this theory, an employee perceives the work environment as stressful when there is a lack of fit between the person and his work environment. Occupational stress or strain results from interaction of an employee and his or her workplace; in other words, the degree of fit between a worker and his or her job determines the existence of job stress. Two types of interaction, or degrees of fit, are explored when assessing occupational stress: 1) the relationship between outcomes provided by the job and the needs, motives, or preferences of the individual, and 2) the relationship between the demands and requirements of the job and the skills and abilities of the worker. Application of the Person-Environment fit theory to the study of

occupational stress has spurred the creation of numerous, related measures of job characteristics, individual traits, and job satisfaction (Schaubroeck & Ganster, 1991).

Siegrist's Effort-Reward Imbalance Model

Another approach. to work stress, known as the Siegrist's Effort-Reward Imbalance model, suggests that occupational stress occurs when there is no reciprocation between the effort the worker puts in the job and the rewards he or she

receives (Vagg & Spielberger, as cited in Rittmayer, 2001). Hence, in accordance with this model employee who are dissatisfied or under-appreciated are more likely to feel stressed. Application of this model requires exploration of both management style and individual personality characteristics {e.g., affectivity).

Lazarus's Transaction model

This model proposed that stress is a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as relevant to his or her well-being and in which the person's resources are taxed or exceeded (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984),

Whereas the other theories generalize to groups of employees, Lazarus's

This model identifies stressful conditions and how the stressors are cognitively appraised by the individual (i.e., Are the stressors viewed as threatening? Do the stressors produce negative responses?). It also takes into account individuals' coping resources. For example, workers differ in the number of duties and deadlines they can successfully juggle at one time- some might be overwhelmed by four concurrent tasks whereas others can balance ten. The capabilities and resources an individual draws from determine the perceived amount of stress.

Beehr and Newman's Facet model

Beer and Newman (1978) proposed a model of the work stress process, According to this

approach, occupational stress can be broken down into a number of "facets" that represent categories of variables to be studied. The first facet is personal facet, it refers to stable characteristics that employees bring with them to the workplace e.g., demographic characteristics and personality etc. the other facet, environmental facet refers to those stimuli which are present in the environment and employees must confront with them e.g., characteristics of work performed (such as complexity) and nature of job related interpersonal relations. Next is process facet that refers to the interaction of characteristics of person and characteristics of the situation. This is the point where a person perceive work environment as stressful or not. After the environment is perceived as stressful, there may be a variety of consequences for both the individual and the organization as well.

The final facet is time facet, which exhibit that the process of individuals' perception of stressor in the environment are embedded with temporal context

CONCLUSION

From the above discussions we can say that the factors that caused stress always were mainly due to the interference of the employment organizational responsibilities with their family organizational role, lack of their involvement in decision making that reduced their responsibilities and the participatory model in their organizational set up which enhanced their responsibilities to the point of exhaustion. Majority of the faculty members revealed that stress was basically due to their laziness and also they were happy with fewer responsibilities. The overall results of stress level revealed that, higher percentage of faculty members were in low stress category.

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