MODEL OF BURNOUT

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ABSTRACT:

Stress has its genesis since the existence of mankind on earth but researches on the causes and consequences of stress has gained popularity in recent few years especially in the area of origin stress concerning. Researches investigating organizational stress have noted a number of dysfunctional outcomes resulting physiologically as well as psychologically and ultimately affect the functioning and effectiveness of the organization and its employees. Stress and burnout are important concerned for those involved in human service. Over the last few years burnout has become a 'buzzword' used to convey an almost unlimited variety of social and personal problems. Burnout refers to those losses of enthusiasm, excitement and essence of mission in one's work. It also causes feeling of helplessness, negative self-concept and attitude toward work life and other people.
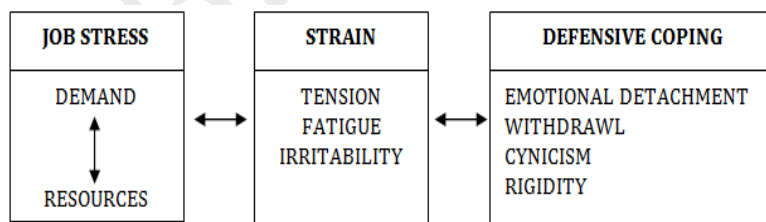
There is considerable evidence that burnout is directly associated with adverse health and well being of the people (Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

Burnout leads to emotional stress (often manifest as esteem) physiological problems (ulcers, headache, backaches, fatigue and high blood pressure and increased marital and family conflicts where as stress has been defined as a state where in expected functioning of the employees get disturb (Machanic, 1962).

KEYWORDS*: Burke Model, Stress and Burnout*

BURNOUT AS A TRANSACTIONAL PROCESS

Burnout is not an event, but a process, a transactional process consisting of stages. Cherniss (1980b) proposed a three stage Transactional model of Burnout as shown in Fig. 1

Fig. 1: Transactional model of Burnout [Cherniss 1980(b)]

The first stage involves an imbalance between resources and demands (STRESS). The second stage is an immediate, short-term emotional response to this imbalance. This stage is characterized by feelings of anxiety, tension, fatigue and exhaustion (STRAIN). The third stage consists of a number of changes in attitude and behaviour, such as, tendency to treat clients in a detached and mechanical fashion or a cynical pre-occupation with gratification of one's own needs (DEFENSIVE COPING).

Thus, Burnout is a transactional process consisting of 'Job stress, Worker strain and psychological accommodation'.

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Specifically, it may be defined as a process in which previously committed professional, disengages from his or her work in response to stress and strain experienced in the job.

The Transactional definition of Burnout is the most accepted and appealing one, as it subsumes all the most common definitions that have been used in the literature and that, it also provides a frame work for thinking about causes and solutions to the problems.

Psychologically, burnout represents a response to an intolerable work situation. When a professional experiences stress and strain that can not be reduced through ACTIVE - PROBLEM SOLVING, he then undergoes an attitudinal and behavioral change, which provides the individual, a psychological escape and ensures that further stress will not be added to the strain already being experienced.

For instance, a loss of concern for the clients reduces the helper's awareness of responsibility. In a work situation, if the helper is unable to solve a client's problem, when the administration tends to interfere with the process, when the clients are abusive or ungrateful, the helper is likely to be hurt. If the helper-client relationship has become mechanical and distant, the helper is less likely to be hurt. In other words, maintaining a detached relationship with the clients serves as DEFENSIVE MECHANISM, reducing the stress that might occur.

Maslach (1978) in her work focussed on the various mechanisms used by the Burned-out helpers, to detach themselves from clients in a psychologically demanding profession. Empathy and caring require a considerable expenditure of psychological energy.

Coping with stress also depletes psychological energy. Thus, the more stress, the helper experiences from any source, the less energy is available for empathy and caring. Psychological detachment helps to conserve one's energy for the coping process.

If professional remains committed in a situation where failure and disappointment are frequent, the strain would be great. By becoming pessimistic and cynical, the helper reduces the guilt and frustration associated with the work. Detachment from work, like detachment from clients helps the professional psychologically.

Blaming the clients or the system also serves as a defensive function. As the professional begins to withdraw psychologically from the clients and from the job, as the original goals and ideals abandoned, there can be considerable guilt. An effective way to avoid the burden of guilt is to externalize it and blame the clients or the system.

Thus it becomes evident that Burnout is a process that is self-reinforcing. Discouragement and withdrawal leads to more failure in the profession as enthusiasm, optimism and involvement are often necessary in work performance and success. Detachment from work environment leads to failure, which further leads to discouragement, which then leads to further failure. Thus, once the cycle begins it is difficult to break.
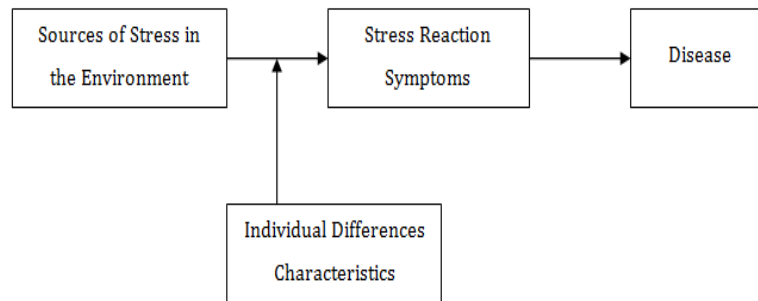
Some researchers feel that detachment and realization of limitations in any profession, to some extent is good for the professionals. Such an approach helps to reduce stress and so, the idealism and commitment may persist longer. However, when detachment and realism become dominant, the professional-client relationship is likely to suffer, even if the professional himself does not.

BURKE MODEL OF UNDERSTANDING STRESS AND BURNOUT

Burke (1987) presents a simple model of understanding stress and burnout, presented in fig. 2. This model suggest that to understand stress and burnout in organisations one must consider the environment (both organisational and intra organisational in which individuals functions and individual then self (What individuals) bring with them as they interact with events in their environment).

The environment is a source of stressors or demands on the individual. An individual differs (e.g., past experience, personality behavioural repertoire and social support) in what they bring to the challenges, opportunities and demands in their environments. The concept of stress, then is an interactional or transactional one; Individual with particular characteristics interacts with work and

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home environments with certain characteristics, which results in varying amounts of experienced stress.
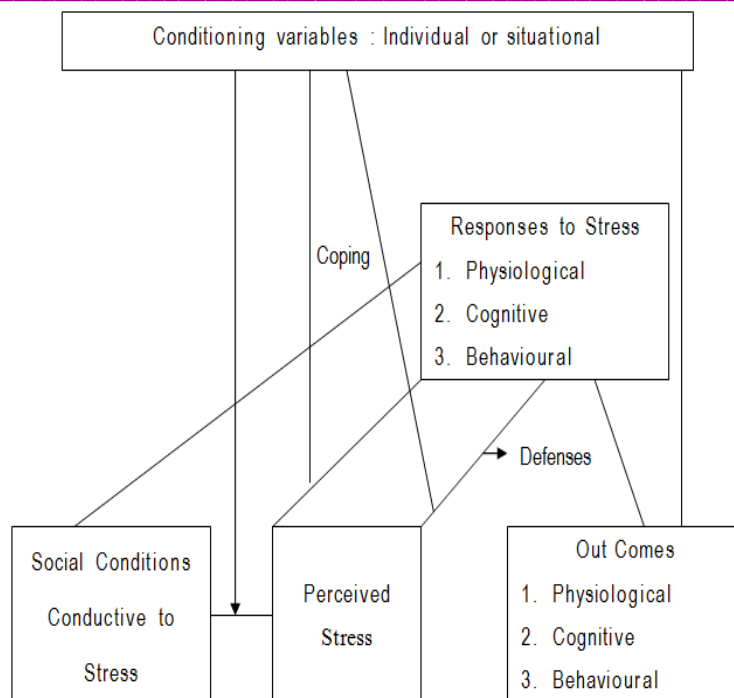

Fig. 2 Burkes Model of Stress

        Burke illustrates the model by providing concrete examples with in each of the panel starting with stress reactions or symptoms. Individuals react to stressors with response of various kinds. Stress reaction can be emotional (depression, resentments, psychological, rapid heartbeats rate, heavy breathing and behavioural smoking, eating drinking more). These responses then describe an individual immediate (short-term) response to experienced stress. These responses are typically exhibited by all individuals and are in some senses involuntary Cannon, 1929). The model in fig. 2 proposes that the experience of long term re-chronic stress is likely to result in the individual developing emotional and / or physical health problem. Individual predisposition to illness or health, health practices, coping responses, personal ambition, perfectionalism impatience, inability to say no, fear of failure linking of tension, lack of confidence, chronic, anxiety shyness and timidity.

        Sources of stress in the environment include diverse work and life stressors, work stress. Work stress might includes: financial difficulties, life crisis, family problem as well as daily hassles. Most models of burnout and stress pay only feeling attention to extra work and satisfaction. However the research that is available (Burke & Bradshaw, 1981; Bhagat, 1983) shows clearly that work experiences influence the nature of stress and burnout experiences in the organisation. Fig. 3 present a common work stress research paradigm.

        Individual perceives stress in response to certain objectives social conditions. These conditions are usually perceived as stressful when the demands on the individual exceed their abilities or when individual are unable to fulfil strong needs or values.

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Fig. 3 Work Paradigm model

In other words, the individual needs are abilities do not matched or fit with their environment. No negative (objectives) work situation will produce the same perception of stress or results are physiological, psychological or behavioural response or health in all individuals exposed to these conditions. Thus how individuals perceive a given condition will depend upon other personal and situational factors.
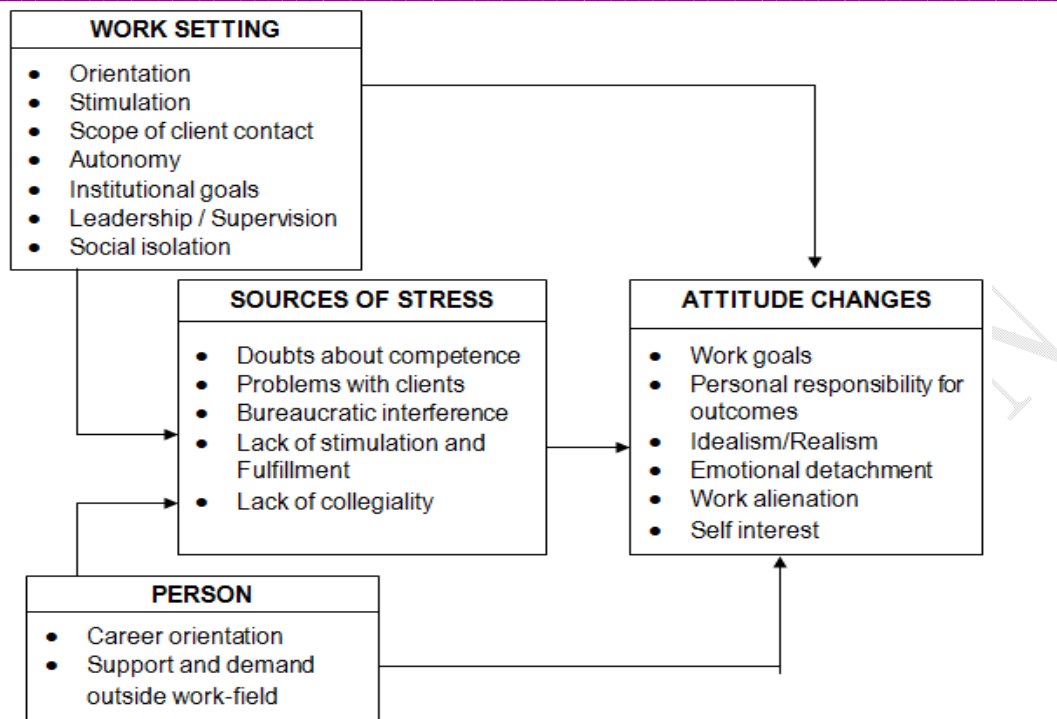
CHERNISS MODEL OF BURNOUT

A comprehensive model of Burnout has been proposed by Cherniss (1980) as illustrated in Fig. 4.

This model proposes that particular work-setting characteristics interact with individuals entering a job with certain career orientation. These individuals also bring with them, their unique extra-work demands and supports. These factors result in particular sources of stress being experienced to varying degrees by the job incumbents. Individuals cope with these stresses in different ways. Some enjoy employ techniques and strategies, which might be termed as Active – Problem solving, while others cope by exhibiting the Negative–attitude changes.

Cherniss Model of Burnout was based on his studies on beginning professional in four fields (mental health, Law, Public health, Nursing and Teachers) who were interviewed several times over a period of one to two years.

The variables in the model were distilled from interviews with, an observation of, these new professionals.

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Fig. 4 Cherniss model of Burnout.

Cherniss thus concluded, "Burnout represents response to an intolerable work situation. The process begins with the experience of stress and strain that can not be alleviated through active-problem solving. These changes in attitude and behavior are associated with burnout, they provides a psychological escape and ensures that further stress will not be added to the strain already being experienced".

Burnout is attributed to such causes as personal, lack of positive feedback and social relations with superiors, colleagues and clients. While stress and burnout are similar in many respects, stress does not necessarily have a negative effect on the individuals, while burnout always has.

CONCLUSIONS

Stress has its genesis since the existence of mankind on earth but researches on the causes and consequences of stress has gained popularity in recent few years especially in the area of origin stress concerning.

Researches investigating organizational stress have noted a number of dysfunctional outcomes resulting physiologically as well as psychologically and ultimately affect the functioning and effectiveness of the organization and its employees.

When a professional experiences stress and strain that can not be reduced through ACTIVE - PROBLEM SOLVING, he then undergoes an attitudinal and behavioral change, which provides the individual, a psychological escape and ensures that further stress will not be added to the strain already being experienced.

The concept of stress, then is an interactional or transactional one; Individual with particular characteristics interacts with work and home environments with certain characteristics, which results in varying amounts of experienced stress.

Sources of stress in the environment include diverse work and life stressors, work stress.

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