

Course Name: Organizational Behaviour: Individual Dynamics in Organization

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Week – 04

Lecture – 17

Lecture 17: Affective events theory

Hello students. Welcome back to the course on Organizational Behavior, Individual Dynamics in Organization. So, we move to the second lecture of module four where we look into effects and emotions and very specifically Affective events theory.

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So in the previous lecture, module four was initiated. We looked into what specifically is emotion, what specifically is mood and what do you mean by affect.

So today we look into effect and emotions in greater detail. This will be a very exhaustive class in terms of understanding. So, I would request as in any other class an undivided attention of all of you. Straightaway moving into today's theme.

Research shows that acts of coworkers and management cause more negative emotions for employees than do acts of customers. So, the functional word or the words that have to be underlined here are coworkers as well as management. So, this is something that will trigger a foot for thought in your mind.

What causes emotion or what causes emotional arousal. So that's the whole theme of today's lecture. We'll look into that in greater detail. So, let's start from affective events theory. Now what is effective events theory? How do emotions specifically and moods in general influence our job performance and satisfaction? Take a pause and just think about it that how do emotions and moods influence our job performance and satisfaction.

We might have you know there might be episodes of mood swings coming into our mind. There might be episodes of emotional outbursts coming into our mind in workplace situations specifically. So, I want you to introspect within yourself and have an understanding of those situations or at least think of those situations which had certain

level of emotional outbursts or emotional response that you gave or situations which warranted such a response etc. So, one explanation for all such emotional episodes that happen in an organization is specifically the affective events theory.

Now affective events theory demonstrates that employees react emotionally to things that happen to them at work. Now this is not new this is something which we all have seen at least those who have some level of work experience they might acknowledge and appreciate this fact. So, this particular reaction influences the job performance and satisfaction. So needless to say, the moment you had emotional response of emotional arousal it could be in terms of anger, in terms of frustration, in terms of happiness. Let's not all dig into negative aspects. Let's look into the positive phenomena as well.

So whatever be the case let's take a happy situation where you were happy with some of the results that your team delivered or you were happy because of an OCB an organizational citizenship behavior displayed by one of your co-worker or you might be happy because you got a recognition from your boss, evaluation a positive evaluation from your co-worker. So, all these situations will definitely have a say in those activities which you undertake after the event. So, this is something which has a contagion effect when you are working in an organization or in an organizational setting. Similarly, if you look into situations where you had an outburst of an anger or there was an emotional negative approach towards something or there was some frustration, there was some venting out of the pent-up feelings all those aspects may affect the further activities of you in the organization in a detrimental way. So, this understanding is what we require when we look into emotions specifically.

So let's understand this effectiveness theory and I will take the help of the paper by Ashkanasy and C.S. Dous which is entitled Emotion in Workplace a New Challenge for Managers. So, when we look into the effective events theory specifically, they take care of the work environment first when you are looking about or talking about the work environment you have the characteristics of the job as a prime important characteristics or important aspect. When you look into job characteristics specifically you have the job demands as well as requirement for emotional labor.

So emotional labor we had a detailed discussion in our previous lecture so you can refer back if you have lost some connect there. So, when you are looking into the job characteristics specifically that acts as a work environment this work environment specifically leads to two aspects one is daily hassles and second is daily uplifts. Now daily hassles is something which is more often having a negative connotation. Let's look into a situation where your coworker or coworkers were supposed to do a particular activity and they should have completed it so that you can continue and you can finish it off according to the deadline. But unfortunately, they didn't do it as a result it has caused

a bit of emotional discontent or emotional outburst in you. Now this is daily hassle this is an example of daily hassle.

Similarly, your boss is not appreciating the work which you have done the work which otherwise could not have been done by anybody else in the organization with that level of precision and perfection or there might be situation where you are a coworker is not trying to help you when he is equipped or he is trained and he is designated for that. So, all these situations render into what is known as the daily hassles. Now the diametrically opposite aspect of this is daily uplift. You look into situations where your colleague goes out of the way to help you, they might come and you know guide you, handhold you train you that there might be situations when the boss is encouraging you, you might be you know pampered within the organization all these aspects are situations of daily uplifts.

Just looking into both the negative and positive sides. So, when you are looking into the work event specifically you have to understand that it is not only negative but also positive it is not only the daily hassles that are relevant here but also the daily uplifts. When you look into this work situations or work events, they lead to what is called as emotional reactions. It could be either positive it could be either negative. Mainly daily hassles will lead you to have a negative emotional reaction quite common and what is not uncommon is that a daily uplift will lead essentially you to have a positive emotional reaction.

Now that said factors like personality and mood have a certain impact or acting as moderators in those particular relationship between work events and emotional reactions. When you have emotional reactions essentially categorized as positive and negative you have either job satisfaction or your job performance is affected. Now it could be affected in terms of a positive way if the emotional reaction is positive and you are upbeat about the event but it could also be negative largely and your job performance would be affected detrimentally when the emotional reaction is negative. So, there is no scope for satisfaction there is no scope for job satisfaction people tend to be dissatisfied with the particular job and your job performance ultimately suffers. So, this is basically affective events theory when you look into affective events theory you have to also look into the different tests of affective events theory and the first one would be an emotional episode is actually a series of emotional experiences precipitated by a single event and containing elements of both emotions and mood cycle.

Please recollect the previous class we discussed about the difference between emotions and mood cycle. So, when you are having an emotional episode, you have to understand that emotional episode is not a standalone event it is actually a series of emotional experiences precipitated by a single event and containing elements of both emotions and mood cycles that event has occurred and that event ultimately triggers a lot of elements

which is having which are having emotions and mood cycles and as a result an emotional episode is formed. It could be a single event like a supervisor ill-treating you belittling you or it might be a situation where a supervisor is encouraging you for what you have achieved in that particular deadline or within that particular short span of time. So those events essentially lead to an emotional episode. Now current emotions influence job satisfaction at any given time along with the history of emotions surrounding the event.

So basically it is again not the current emotion is not a standalone event it happens or it is impacted or influenced rather by the history of emotions surrounding the event because moods and emotions fluctuate over time it is dependent on time the effect on performance also fluctuates. So, it is hardly difficult to say that the moods are consistent and it will carry on for a larger period of time. It does not happen like that moods and emotions are essentially fluctuating over time and their effect on performance also fluctuates and as a result they are not constant. In fact, they keep on changing they keep on evolving or they keep on changing the tone and tenor.

When you are looking into emotion driven behaviors, they are typically short in duration and high variability. In other words, emotion driven behaviors are happening may be for or may just happen for a few seconds that's it and it also be such a case that it does not happen on a day-to-day basis. You have a particular emotional outburst or emotion driven behavior today. You might be having a different emotion driven behavior tomorrow or the day after that. So, it essentially is not consistent across the day that person X is there so he is going to emotionally behave in such a way it is very difficult to generalize because it depends it largely depends on a lot of factors. That said emotions specifically because emotions even positive ones tend to be incompatible with behaviors required to do a job, they typically have a negative influence on job performance.

So this is what the main constraint or the main problem of emotion is. When you are looking into recent researchers I have already in just mentioned that in the previous lecture that there are some cases of emotions or there are certain studies which say that emotions can be utilized for the benefit of the particular individual within the organization but many a time we ascribe or we relate emotion to a negative aspect and the reason behind that is this particular point which categorically states that emotion generally is being considered as a negative phenomenon which is not true but again if that is the fact that is what it is as assumed then it negatively affects the job performance.

Let's look at a case in perspective to understand the emotion, the working of emotion, the dimensions of emotion, how emotion is experienced, how things are seen in a real-world scenario because this course I would like to relate it with the real time industry perspective. So, this will ascertain or underscore the relevance of the theoretical footings or theoretical hooks which we will develop in the coming slides. So, let's look into the

case first.

We know there is a considerable spillover from personal unhappiness to negative emotions at work. Moreover, those who experience negative emotions in life and at work are more likely to engage in counterproductive organization behaviors with customers, clients or fellow employees. Increasingly organizations such as American Express, UBS and KPMG are turning to happiness coaches. Now happiness coaches is something which is happening in a greater way, happening in a very established way to address this spillover from personal unhappiness to work emotions and behavior.

Srikumar Rao is a former college professor who has the nickname the “happiness guru”. Rao teaches people to analyze negative emotions to prevent them from becoming overwhelming. If your job is restructured for example Rao suggests avoiding negative thoughts and feelings about it. Instead, he advises tell yourself if you could turn out well in the long run and there is no way to know at present. Beyond reframing the emotional impact of work situations some happiness coaches attack the negative emotional spillover from life to work and from work to life. A working mother found that a happiness talk by Shawn Achor helped her stop focusing on her stressed out life and instead look for chances to smile, laugh and be grateful.

In some cases the claims made by happiness coaches seem a bit trite. Jim Smith, who labels himself the executive happiness coach asks what if I told you that there are secrets nobody told you as a kid or as an adult for that matter that can unlock for you all the sorts of positive emotional experiences what if only thing that gets in the way of you feeling more happiness is you.

Now this should be the takeaway from the whole study. What practicing them until they become the second nature. And again, if employees leave their experiences with a happiness coach feeling happier about their jobs and their lives is that not better for everyone says one individual Ivelisse Rivera who felt she benefited from happiness coach. “If I assume a negative attitude and complain all the time whoever is working with me is going to feel the same way”.

So, this particular case has been taken from Robbins, Judge and Vohra.

So, when you look into the case in perspective some argue that happiness coaches are inevitably a way for organizations to avoid solving real problems. It is being used as a diversion.

Now that should not be the case. To be frank happiness coaches have their own specific job profile and they are required in such organizations there is no doubt about it there is no denying the fact but that said it should not be a tactic it should not be a diversion

strategy a diversion from the real-world problems of the organization. It is important that happiness coaching when done well would have a positive impact on employee engagement, mental health specifically and overall productivity. However, it should not and it should never be a substitute for addressing genuine organizational issues. If your organization is having let us take this and understand this if your organization is having a crunch in terms of manpower if your organization is having crunch in terms of the financial resources if your organization is struggling to meet the deadlines in terms of the resources available other than manpower and financial resources, all these situations are structural problems and they need to be analyzed tackled and mitigated effectively.

Happiness coaches cannot do anything. It should not be a diversion strategy I refer back to the previous word it should not be a diversion strategy. If the organization is solely specifically focusing on happiness coaching without addressing the root problems the main issues it may be more of a diversion or superficial solution to a much much deeper problem.

So let us look into happiness coaching as something which is very important but that said it should not be secondary factor and a tactic to actually hide or mask the real time issues of the organization specifically.

Now let us look into the theories of emotion. I will strongly suggest that you tend to understand this rather than just mugging it up though basically what happens in all the OB classes is that to score marks to get good grades students generally tend to by heart these theories but I would rather suggest that you try to understand the nuts and bolts of these theories try to understand what is the perspective behind the theory what is that has driven the people who have put forward the theory and that will ensure that you get a better grip over the theory.

So the first one which we look today at is the James Lange theory. So, James Lange theory is all about activation of visceral bodily changes. Brain interprets visceral changes as emotional experience. So, James Lange theory of emotion is nothing but the belief that emotional experience is a reaction to bodily events occurring as a result of an external situation.

Let me put it very simply. He has given this example that I feel sad because I am crying. So, if there is a visceral change there is a visceral change that is happening or a visceral activity that is happening like crying because of the crying you are sad. Let us say there is some tremor you are trembling you are showing some signs of fear because of those visceral changes you are actually frightened. So, this is basically the gist of the whole entire theory. When you are having a bodily change that bodily change is triggering your emotion.

Now this is little bit difficult to digest mainly because there are certain exceptions which we can think of. Just take 10 seconds and think of some situations which can actually be an exception to such situation. I again clarify because of the bodily changes you are displaying some emotion. This is in crux what the theory is all about.

So you cry because of you crying you are sad. So, this is the entire summary of the theory. Now the problem with this theory is that there are situations when let us say you are walking down an aisle and you are seeing a stranger at a night time or when the whole situation is dark then you are not able to figure out the person's face and but there is some stranger and somewhere you are getting frightened and nowhere there is a tremor or there is a fear reaction that has already come. But the emotion has already happened you are feeling the fear that is already there. This is in contention with what Jain Lange theory is all about. So that could be one exception.

Another aspect could be the timing. It could be such that it might not occur as one happening and the next happening after that. So, there are such situations there are again another aspect could be that there are a range of emotions which you cannot always relate to a visceral change. So, change could be let us say you are crying you can relate it to being that fact that you are sad or maybe you are worried something like that. But there are options very much constrained with respect to your visceral changes.

But when you look into the whole bucket of emotions those are plenty. So, when you are looking into the Jain Lange theory the critics will say that you cannot obviously relate all your emotions to any particular visceral change.

Now this is where other theories have come up like the Cannon-Bard theory. Cannon-Bard theory is more biological in nature. It talks about the activation of thalamus, activation of bodily changes in response to brain. So, they do not undermine the bodily change but they change the whole sequence of that. So, what happens is that when there is an issue when the Cannon-Bard theory says that the belief that both physiological arousal and emotional experience are produced simultaneously by the same nerve stimulus. The timing is important. In the previous theory, in the Jain Lange theory the timing was that initially you had let us say the visceral change occurring because of that there was an emotion. But the Cannon-Bard theory is something which talks in a reverse way.

That is that there is some reaction that is happening, a stimulus is coming in. Because of the stimulus your thalamus sends a particular message to your ANS, autonomic nervous system that ANS triggers the visceral change. But it also sends a message to your cerebral cortex which actually gives that particular impression or the emotion away. So, it happens

simultaneously rather than one occurring after another it is more of a simultaneous process.

Again I repeat the hypothalamus is more critical here. It sends a message to the ANS because when you see a stimulus and it also sends a message simultaneously to the cerebral cortex and there is obviously an emotion that is displayed and the other end there is a visceral change that is occurring. So, it happens quite in the same time frame so there is no sequence of events as in case of Jain Lange theory. So that's the big difference between Jain Lange theory and the Cannon-Bard theory.

If you look into the third theory is the Schachter-Singer theory. Activation of general physiological arousal leads to observation of environmental cues. So, determination of label to place on arousal identifying emotional experience. So, the difference is that it does not again undermine the physiological arousal. There is activation of general physiological arousal taken into consideration. But they say that the environmental cues are important. Now what does that mean? The belief that emotions are determined jointly by non-specific kind of physiological arousal and its interpretation based on environmental cues.

When you see people who are sad there is an emotion of sad or being depressed or being sorrowful or being sad that is being triggered. You see you are amongst people who are very happy, elated, delighted. The emotion that comes within you is happiness. So, this is what specifically is all about this theory where it talks about environmental cues which are also relevant. So, these are some of the basic theories that have looked into emotion specifically and this gives us a bit of understanding about emotion in a greater detailed way.

Now let us also look into some contemporary findings because that is also interesting. Why do people across cultures express emotions similarly? We had slightly glanced through this topic in our previous lecture.

We have the facial affect program. It is like your mind works like a computer. It is universally present at the birth. What happens is that the moment there is a particular emotion, it activates a set of nerve impulse that makes the face display an appropriate expression. So, each primary emotion produces a unique set of muscular moments forming the kinds of expressions. So facial affect program is nothing but the moment you feel joyful, you feel happy, there is a computer program that is running which directs your face or facial muscles to smile this is facial affect program.

The other side of the coin is facial feedback hypothesis. Facial expressions not only reflect emotional experience rather they also help determine how people experience and label emotions. Wearing an emotional expression provides muscular feedback to the brain

that helps produce an emotional congruent with that expression. If you are smiling it gives a response, a feedback to the brain and that will emanate or that will elicit the particular emotion. This is what facial feedback hypothesis talks about. So apart from the conventional theories the contemporary findings are also critical and it talks about the facial affect program as well as the facial feedback hypothesis.

Now what are the key takeaways? The key takeaways about this theory both conventional as well as the contemporary theories are there. There are numerous theories of emotions partly because emotions are complex and intertwined with various aspects of psychology including motivation, cognition and neuroscience. So, you are looking at situations, you are looking at concepts which are not so simple, you are looking at concepts which are having multidisciplinary background. You are looking at concepts which are highly complex in nature. Such concepts basically Warrant a lot of theories and that's what has happened in emotions, theories in different range, in terms of different explanations, in terms of different understandings. Emotions are not simple phenomena as I already mentioned they encompass both biological as well as cognitive aspects.

If you look into the conventional theories, it gives a primary importance, a predominant importance to the biological aspects not discounting the cognitive aspects as well. So, they are closely related to decision making and can influence even seemingly rational non-emotional choices. When you look into the complexity of emotions the interplay of various factors, no single theory has fully explained all the facets of emotional experience. This is critical. There are theories which have tried to address the gap but still there are no theories which have understood and explained all facets of emotional experience.

Each theory has its own strengths and limitations and contradictory evidence challenges them. So that makes it all the more difficult for these theories to actually represent as one stop solution for all the different complexities associated with emotions.

Let's conclude, let's look into a case where we understand is it okay to cry at work or not. Emotions are an inevitable part of people's behavior at work. At the same time, it's not entirely clear that we have reached a point where people feel comfortable expressing all emotions at work.

The reason might be that business culture and etiquette remain poorly suited to handling overt emotional displays. The question is can organizations become more intelligent about emotional management? Is it ever appropriate to yell, laugh or cry at work? Some people are skeptical about the virtues of more emotional displays at the workplace. As discussed, emotions are automatic physiological responses to the environment and as such they can be difficult to control appropriately. One 22-year-old customer service

representative named Laura who was the subject of a case study noted that fear and anger were routinely used as methods to control employees and employees deeply resented this use of emotions to manipulate them.

In another case the chairman of a major television network made a practice of screaming at employees whenever anything went wrong leading to badly hurt feelings and a lack of loyalty to the organization. Like Laura workers at this organization were hesitant to show their true reactions to these emotional outbursts for fear of being branded as weak or ineffectual. It might seem like these individuals worked in a heavily emotional workplace but in fact only a narrow range of emotions was deemed acceptable. Anger appears to be more acceptable than sadness in many organizations and an anger have serious maladaptive consequences. Others believe organizations that recognize and work with emotions effectively are more creative, satisfying and productive. For example, Laura noted that if she could express her hurt feelings without fear she would be much more satisfied with her work.

In other words the problem with Laura's organization is not that emotions are displayed but that emotional displays are handled poorly. Others note that use of emotional knowledge like being able to read and understand the reactions of others is crucial for workers ranging from sales people and customer service agents all the way to managers and executives.

One survey even found that 88% of workers feel being sensitive to emotions of others is an asset. Management consultant Erika Anderson notes, crying at work is transformative and can open the door to change. The question then is can organizations take specific steps to become better at allowing emotional displays without opening a Pandora's box of outbursts.

Now this is the question that is pertinent. What factors do you think make some organizations ineffective at managing emotions? So, it shows that acts of coworkers, this is what we started with, 37% is the act of coworkers, 22% is the act of management and more than that the customers act is a mere contribution of 7%. So, what can Laura's companies do to change its emotional climate? So, we have understood emotion in a greater detail. We have seen emotion in terms of different theoretical perspective, different theoretical hooks both conventional as well as contemporary theories we have scanned through.

We have also seen the relevance of these theories in terms of their biological context as well as their cognitive context.

That said I would like to conclude this lecture by stating two points. If you have gone through the case study in a religious way you would have understood that the problem is

not about emotions at workplace. The problem is how the emotion is handled at the workplace. Now this is quite relevant in every single organization which we see today. The emotions might be there, the organizations might have opened up. There might be policies designed where they can release their pent-up feelings or there could be situations where they could be happy, jovial, they could have a relaxed, peaceful coexistence and exchange of fun, words, etc.

Or there might be situations where there might be counselors who are helping them to release their pent-up feelings. All those aspects are there in workplaces now. But that said, how the outbursts, emotional outbursts are handled within the organization, is it still seen as a stigma? Is it still seen as something which is unacceptable? That is what becomes all the more relevant.

The second important aspect is not only with respect to the emotion, how the biological aspect has to be taken together with the cognitive aspect is more critical. Now we cannot simply say that a person is qualified, a person might have a lot of experience, he might have worked or she might have worked in multicultural context and why he or she is struggling here.

There might be questions like this, but that said, the context is different, the situations are different, every now and then the biological context also keeps on changing. So, it could be the emotion, it could be mood swings, it could be the problem with the effect that is actually making the individual to behave in a certain way. Sensitivity towards those things, sensitization towards those aspects and being a sensitive person in workplace is the only solution for this. Thank you for listening to me patiently.

We will see you in the next class with the third lecture of module 4. Till then take care, good bye.