The Management University of Africa

Sponsored by the Kenya Institute of Management

UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

SWK 400 : HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IN SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 2ND DECEMBER 2024

DURATION: 2 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **SIX (6)** questions.
4. Question **ONE** is compulsory.
5. Answer any other **THREE** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **25 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided.**

QUESTION ONE

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow

STRESS AND HEALTH

Studies have demonstrated relationships between psychosocial stressors and disease. Observational studies reveal provocative associations between psychosocial stressors and disease.

Animal models provide an important tool for helping to understand the specific influences of stressors on disease processes. In a study done, the major findings were that (*a*) socially dominant animals living in unstable groups had significantly more atherosclerosis (a condition where the arteries become narrowed and hardened due to buildup of fats in the artery wall) than did less dominant animals living in unstable groups; and (*b*) socially dominant male animals living in unstable groups had significantly more atherosclerosis than did socially dominant animals living in stable groups. Studies in monkeys indicate that emotionally stressful behavior can accelerate the progression of atherosclerosis. There is evidence that affiliative social behavior can slow the progression of atherosclerosis in rabbits. The hypothesis that stress predicts susceptibility to the common cold received support from observational studies. Those individuals with the most stressful life events and highest levels of perceived stress and negative affect had the greatest probability of developing cold symptoms. In a subsequent study of volunteers inoculated with a cold virus, it was found that people enduring chronic, stressful life events (i.e., events lasting a month or longer including unemployment, chronic underemployment, or continued interpersonal difficulties) had a high likelihood of catching cold, whereas people subjected to stressful events lasting less than a month did not.

Sickness behavior has been suggested to be a highly organized strategy that mammals use to combat infection. Symptoms of illness, as previously thought, are not inconsequential or even maladaptive. On the contrary, sickness behavior is thought to promote resistance and facilitate recovery. For example, an overall decrease in activity allows the sick individual to preserve energy resources that can be redirected toward enhancing immune activity. Similarly, limiting exploration, mating, and foraging further preserves energy resources and reduces the likelihood of risky encounters (e.g., fighting over a mate). Furthermore, decreasing food intake

also decreases the level of iron in the blood, thereby decreasing bacterial replication. Thus, for a limited period, sickness behavior may be looked upon as an adaptive response to the stress of illness.

Patients dealing with chronic, life-threatening diseases must often confront daily stressors that can threaten to undermine even the most resilient coping strategies and overwhelm the most abundant interpersonal resources. Psychosocial interventions, have a positive effect on the quality of life of patients with chronic disease. Such interventions decrease perceived stress and negative mood (e.g., depression), improve perceived social support, facilitate problem-focused coping, and change cognitive appraisals, as well as decrease SNS arousal and the release of cortisol from the adrenal cortex. Psychosocial interventions also appear to help chronic pain patients reduce their distress and perceived pain as well as increase their physical activity and ability to return to work. These psychosocial interventions can also decrease patients' overuse of medications and utilization of the health care system. There is also some evidence that psychosocial interventions may have a favorable influence on disease progression).

Stress is a central concept for understanding both life and evolution. All creatures face threats to homeostasis, which must be met with adaptive responses. Our future as individuals and as a species depends on our ability to adapt to potent stressors. At a societal level, we face a lack of institutional resources (e.g., inadequate health insurance), pestilence (e.g., HIV/AIDS), war, and international terrorism that has reached our shores. At an individual level, we live with the insecurities of our daily existence including job stress, marital stress, and unsafe schools and neighborhoods. These are not an entirely new condition as, in the last century alone, the world suffered from instances of mass starvation, genocide, revolutions, civil wars, major infectious disease epidemics, two world wars, and a pernicious cold war that threatened the world order.

A widely used definition of stressful situations is one in which the demands of the situation threaten to exceed the resources of the individual. It is clear that all of us are exposed to stressful situations at the societal, community, and interpersonal level. How we meet these challenges will tell us about the health of our society and

ourselves. Acute stress responses in young, healthy individuals may be adaptive and typically do not impose a health burden. Indeed, individuals who are optimistic and have good coping responses may benefit from such experiences and do well dealing with chronic stressors. In contrast, if stressors are too strong and too persistent in individuals who are biologically vulnerable because of age, genetic, or constitutional factors, stressors may lead to disease. This is particularly the case if the person has few psychosocial resources and poor coping skills.

Required:

a) Assess how Biopsychosocial theory can explain stress. **(10 Marks)**

b) Analyze how sickness behaviour serves as a method of coping and adapting to stress **(6 Marks)**

c) Propose ways in which psychosocial support assists in relieving stress. **(5 Marks)**

d) Justify the reasons why individuals cope differently to stress. **(4 Marks)**

QUESTION TWO

Assess the elements of culture **(15 Marks)**

QUESTION THREE

a) Analyze the importance of the study of Human Behaviour in social environment. **(5 Marks)**

b) Suggest any five social competencies. **(10 Marks)**

QUESTION FOUR

a) Assess the views of functionalism in its description of society. **(6 Marks)**

b) Discuss the Paradigms in social science. **(9 Marks)**

QUESTION FIVE

a) Discuss Piadgets theory of personality Development. **(8 Marks)**

b) Suggest methods of overcoming Stereotyping and prejudice. **(7 Marks)**

QUESTION SIX

a) Discuss the ecological theory as brought out by Bronfenbrenner. **(10 Marks)**

b) Demonstrate the negative side of social categorization. **(5 Marks)**