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Effects of Role Stress on Employee Job Satisfaction and Turnover

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ABSTRACT

Researchers have long shown a significant interest in the factors that influence how employees respond to stressors on the job. This study provides data about the number of different role stresses experienced by the service sector employees. This paper explains the relationship between organizational role stress, job satisfaction and turnover. It brings out that each role stressor is the result of specific problems faced by the occupant and the identification of prominent role stressors and its implications for the individuals in relation to job satisfaction. It was identified from the study that among the ten role stressors role ambiguity, role overload and inter role distance has the highest negative influence on the job satisfaction. There exists a significant relationship between the role stress and job satisfaction. Similarly there exists a significant relationship between the role stress and employee turnover. This study helps the managers to take appropriate action plan to manage and reduce those role stresses and it would also help the organization to improve its progress in all aspects.

Keywords : Role stress, Job satisfaction and employee turnover

1. Introduction

At workplace, stress related to the role performed by the employee in the organization is one of the important determinants of successful adjustment and subsequent performance of an employee. The stress induced due to roles performed by individuals as employees has been a potent organizational stressor (Kahn et al., 1964, Srivastava 2007) the outcomes of which have been found to be costly to the organization (Fisher and Gitelson, 1983). One of the pioneers of research on organizational role stress, Pareek (1993) has reiterated that the performance of a role in an organization has built in potential for conflict due to which stress may start rearing its head. Such stress can contribute to various dysfunctional outcomes for the organization like job related tensions, job dissatisfaction, lower performance, etc. (Behrman and Perreault, 1984; Singh, 1992; Shahu & Gole, 2008). In such circumstances, efforts to sustain a high level of work performance over time can be a tedious task for organizations as well as employees. Considering role stress as a debilitating syndrome, this study has been undertaken with an aim to systematically investigate the factors causing role stress amongst service sector employees.

Management problems have become more and more complex with the gradual disappearance of traditional systems operated by authoritarian or paternalistic leadership. Human psychology and organizational behaviour are the areas, which are generally ignored in Indian organizations. Unfortunately, in India, organizational behaviour, interpersonal processes, human relations and applied psychology have been given a back seat in comparison with the areas like, finance, accounting, quantitative techniques etc. But with introduction of the concepts like liberalisation and privatisation, these psychological problems are not easy to ignore in Indian organizations also. Even the better facilities provided by MNCs are not able to control the increasing level of stress among the executives. So, an effort is needed for analysing and removing these issues on humanitarian grounds. This research work is an attempt in this direction. Increasing the level of job satisfaction among managers and developing a stress free climate to work may well be the areas where we can hope, significantly, to raise the level of executive performance, achievement and

satisfaction. The two factors taken for study purpose have their own impact and influence on the psychology of human beings. The importance, need and indeed, even relevance of creating a stress free climate for managerial personnel are often overlooked. It is perhaps for this reason that little has so far been done specifically to study and explore the human factor in relation to job satisfaction. Many of the research efforts, so far have been directed towards problems related to policies and programmes, training and development of employees etc., for improving the productivity of an organisation. Although many studies have been conducted individually either on ORS or on JS, this study is an effort to understand the two concepts jointly along with their relationship.

Stress is an adoptive response. It's the body's reaction to an event that is seen as emotionally disturbing, disquieting or threatening. The stress has been defined as both the dependent and independent variable. In the stress as the independent variable or response based model of stress, the stress depends upon various stressor agents whereas in the stress as the independent variable or stimulus-based model of stress, the stress creates the strain and health problems. (Tom Cox and Colin Mackey, 1981).

Stress can emanate from a variety of sources. Pestonjee (1992) has identified three important sectors of life from which stress may originate.

- i) Jobs and organization: These refers to the totality of the work environment, such as job description, work culture, inter personal relationships and compensation offered.
- ii) Social Sector: Denotes the socio cultural milieu of a person. It may include religion, caste, language, attitude and beliefs of others, the political and legal environment, etc.
- iii) Intrapsychic Sector: This encompasses those aspects which are intimate and personal such as an individual's values, abilities, temperament, personality, needs, expectations and health.

The effects of stress will be considered in terms of costs to the individual, the work environment and society. The effects

of individual include cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, metabolism malfunction, cancer, mental illness and psychosomatic disease. This is followed by a discussion of the behavioural response to stress, including smoking, alcohol consumption and accident involvement. And finally organizational costs including absenteeism, poor industrial relations and labour turnover are considered.

2. Organizational Role Stress:

Any organization may be perceived as a system of roles. These roles are different from positions or offices in the organization. According to Katz and Kahn (1996), office is a relational or power related concept while role is an obligation concept. Office is concerned with the hierarchical positions and privileges, whereas role refers to obligations attached to the office. Pareek (1994) has defined role as a set of functions which an individual performs in response to the expectations of others and his own expectations about the role.

Udai Pareek's (1983) contribution to the organizational role research lies in identifying as many as ten different types of Organizational Role Stress (ORS). They are:

1. Inter-Role Distance Stress – Conflict between Organisational and Non- organizational roles.
2. Role Stagnation Stress – Feeling of being stuck up in the same role.
3. Role Expectation Stress – Conflicting demands originating from colleagues.
4. Role Erosion Stress – Role has become less important or somebody else gets the credit.
5. Role Overload Stress – Too much work or doing things of considerable importance.
6. Role Isolation Stress – Absence of strong linkages of one's role with other roles.
7. Personal Inadequacy Stress – Absence of adequate skills, competence and training format the demands of one's role.
8. Self Role Distance Stress – Gap between one's concept of self and demands of role.
9. Role Ambiguity Stress – Lack of clarity about the demand of the role.
10. Resource Inadequacy Stress – Human or material resources allocated are inadequate to meet demand of the role.

3. Objectives of the Study:

- To analyze on the level of role stress among service sector employees
- To analyze the impact of role stress on job satisfaction
- To analyze the impact of role stress on employee turnover

4. Methodology

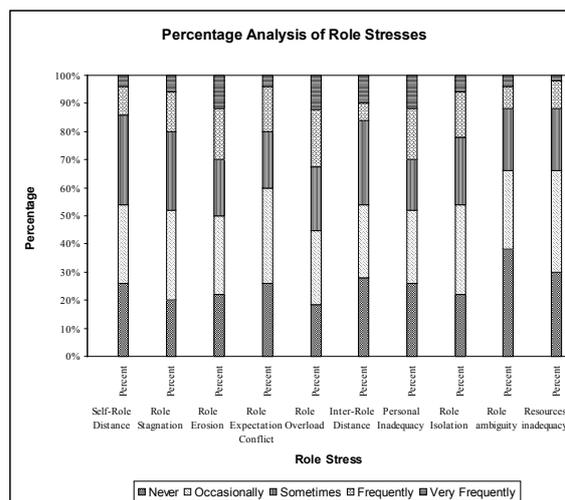
For this study 102 employees from various service sectors were selected. The questionnaire assessed two main indices, and the sources of scales dimensions are role stress (ORS) which consisted of 50 question with scale ranging from 1- 5 "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", job satisfaction and turnover which consisted of 2 questions with scale ranging from 1- 5 "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The items on ORS were based on the Organizational Role Stress scale constructed by Udai Pareek in 1983, who divided role stress into ten dimensions, namely Inter-role distance, Role stagnation, Role expectation conflict, Role erosion, Role overload, Role isolation, Personal inadequacy, Self-role distance, Role ambiguity and Resource inadequacy. The items on job satisfaction and turnover were self administered using questions from various other research works, the items were tested for its reliability which represented the alpha value of 86%.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics on the variables of the study is furnished in Table 1. The demographic variable denotes that the average number of years of experience is 5.3 years with total average income being 2.25 lakhs/year. The average age group of the employee is 37 year.

Variables	N	Mean	SD
Demographic variable			
No.of years of Experience	102	5.30	3.576
Total experience	102	2.25	7.459
Age	102	37.5	2.891

Chart 1: level of role stress experienced by the employees in terms of percentage



Inference:

From the above chart it is inferred that,

- 32% of employees feel that self-role distance creates stress at sometimes and 28% of the employees have this stress occasionally.
- Because of role stagnation 32% of the employees express stress occasionally and 28% of the employees face this stress at sometimes.
- 28% of the employees occasionally feel stress due to role erosion and 20% of the employees face this stress at sometimes.
- 34% of the employees receive stress occasionally and 26% of the employees say that they never face stress due to role expectation conflict factor.
- The role overload factor causes stress among 26% of the employees occasionally and 22% of employees at sometimes.
- Due to inter-role distance 30% of the employees face stress at sometimes and 26% of the employees face stress occasionally.
- 26% of the employees feel stress occasionally and 18% of the employees feel stress at sometimes due to personal inadequacy.
- Due to role stagnation 32% of the employees face stress occasionally and 24% of the employees face at sometimes.
- Because of role ambiguity 38% of the employees say that they never feel stress and 28% of the employees face stress occasionally.
- 36% of the employees face stress occasionally 30% of the employees says that they never face stress due to resources inadequacy factor.

Table 2: Representing the factor loading of the role stressors

S.No	Dimensions Of Role Stress	Eigen value
1	Self role distance	2.965
2	Inter role distance	5.879
3	Role stagnation	3.321
4	Role isolation	3.608
5	Role ambiguity	4.611
6	Role expectation conflict	4.802
7	Role overload	5.501
8	Role erosion	4.700
9	Resource inadequacy	3.608
10	Personal inadequacy	2.213

Inference:

The job stress among the employees have been discussed with ten important job stress factor namely, self role distance, inter role distance, role stagnation, role erosion, role overload, role isolation, role ambiguity, role expectation conflict, resources inadequacy and personal inadequacy. From the above table 2 it is concluded that, role overload and inter role distance are most important stress causing factor with the Eigen values 5.501 & 5.879. Role expectation conflict, Role erosion and Role ambiguity are the moderately important factors with Eigen value 4.802, 4.700 & 4.611. Role isolation, Resources inadequacy and Role stagnation are the less important factors in causing stress with Eigen values of 3.608, 3.608 & 3.321 respectively. Self role distance and personal adequacy are identified as the last less important job stress factor with Eigen value of 3.321, 2.965 & 2.213 respectively.

The important variables included in the role overload factor are 'Interference of the amount of work with the quality of the work' as it carries the highest factor loading of 0.951. In the case of personal inadequacy, 'Inadequate Knowledge', 'Inadequate Training' and 'Lack of insight into motivation and stress' are the most influencing variable with the highest factor loading of 0.953, 0.950 & 0.940.

The most influencing variable among the role expectation conflict are 'Conflicting demands of clients and others', 'Contradictory expectations' and 'Conflicting demands of peers and juniors', since it has highest factor loading of 0.951, 0.950 & 0.948 whereas the most influencing variable of role erosion factor are 'No right responsibility' and 'Improper placement' since it carries the highest factor loading of 0.953 & 0.950.

The most influencing variable of role ambiguity are 'No clearance about the scope and responsibilities of the role' and 'Vague and unclear aspects'. The factor loading of these two variables are 0.958 & 0.946, whereas among the role isolation factor, the most influencing factors are found to be, 'Absence of freedom' and 'conflicts between values and the role' with the factor loading of 0.9953 & 0.948.

Table 3: representing the t-statistics for role stress and job satisfaction

S.No	Dimensions Of Role Stress	t-value	P significance
1	Self role distance	-1.124	.05
2	Inter role distance	-2.657	.05
3	Role stagnation	-0.552	NS

4	Role isolation	-0.224	NS
5	Role ambiguity	-8.978	.05
6	Role expectation conflict	-6.243	.05
7	Role overload	-9.431	.05
8	Role erosion	-0.534	NS
9	Resource inadequacy	-2.435	.05
10	Personal inadequacy	-1.432	NS

From the above table 3, it could be inferred that there is a significant relationship among most of the role stress and job satisfaction. Almost all the t-values are resulted with a negative symbol representing that the decrease in role stress would increase in the level of job satisfaction among the service sector employees. Among the ten role stress discussed the role ambiguity, role overload, role expectation conflict, inter role distance and recourse inadequacy has the highest impact on the job satisfaction having t- value greater than 2 and with significance $p < .05$.

Table 4: representing the t-statistics for role stress and turnover

S.No	Dimensions Of Role Stress	t-value	P significance
1	Self role distance	1.794	.05
2	Inter role distance	2.542	.05
3	Role stagnation	2.233	.05
4	Role isolation	0.362	NS
5	Role ambiguity	4.407	.05
6	Role expectation conflict	5.021	.05
7	Role overload	6.212	.05
8	Role erosion	0.458	NS
9	Resource inadequacy	0.739	NS
10	Personal inadequacy	1.948	.05

From the above table 4, it could be inferred that there is a significant relationship among most of the role stress and turnover. Almost all the t-values are resulted with a positive symbol representing that the increase in role stress would increase the employee turnover among the service sector employees. Among the ten role stress discussed the role ambiguity, role overload, role expectation conflict, inter role distance and role stagnation has the highest impact on employee turnover having t- value greater than 2 and with significance $p < .05$.

6. Suggestions to reduce stress

The following actions have been suggested to improve the efficiency and to reduce the role stress among the service sector employees.

Appoint right number of people to carry out a role and delegate right job to the right person based upon his effectiveness and efficiency. So that the stress due to Role overload can be minimized or eliminated. To reduce the stress caused by Personal Inadequacy, the employee's skills and abilities can be studied and his strength and weakness can also be analyzed. Based on that employee may be provided with counseling. Promotions and performance appraisal can be done with certain intervals of time. In the case of Role Ambiguity, in order to reduce or eliminate the stress the scope and responsibilities of the job along with the established proce-

dure might be clearly explained to the employee at the time of induction program. Periodic stress audit programme may be conducted by the management, which may help the management to identify the dominant job stressors. The management may encourage stress management programme, through which the management may reveal information about the fundamentals of stress and its managing tactics like meditation, exercises, etc. Flexible working hours may be provided to the employees. The employees are facing stress mainly because of Self-Role distance. In order to overcome those stresses, social supports like support from supervisor, support from co-workers, support from administration, support from family and personal accomplishment can be provided to them. The

employees are facing stress mainly because of Inter-Role distance. So in order to overcome those stress the employees may be provided with greater involvement and participation of the employees in problem solving and decision making. A separate tour can be arranged for the family members at certain duration of time. So that the gap between the family and the role can be reduced and the support from the family member can also be increased. A separate counselor can also be appointed. If these points could be incorporated in companies, it is expected that they will get enhanced in their morale, satisfaction and efficiency and will help to reduce or eliminate role stresses among the employees.

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