



AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF STRESS MANAGEMENT IN PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS IN AHMEDABAD CITY

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ABSTRACT

Banking industry is the backbone and most important constituent of the country's economy. The banking sector in India has undergone tremendous changes with increased competition and increased levels of deregulation. In this era of high-technology speed, global competition and consumerism, the problem of coping with demands creates stress, and is compounding day by day. This research aims at identifying major stressors and their resulting effects in a comprehensive manner, on banking sector employees and also examines what individuals and banks do for managing the problem. The study can be extended from its pilot form to cover wide bases to collect big data, which can be analyzed for future improvements in the industry.

KEYWORDS

Occupational Stress, Stress Management, Private Banking Sector

INTRODUCTION: Life without stress is like death of an individual. In this fast changing world of today, no individual is stress free and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress primarily from their work. Tension and anxiety are the toppings of the duties assigned to them. While challenges help us motivate to work better, stress has physical, psychological and emotional effects on. As a positive influence, stress can drive a person towards action; it can result in creating new awareness, help him to accept different challenges/opportunities. As a negative influence, it can result in feelings of rejection, anger and depression; it can sometimes result in few health problems like headaches, high blood pressure, cardio vascular disease, and sometimes even suicidal tendency. There could be different reasons for job stress in banks like role ambiguity, unrealistic objectives, boring/monotonous job, haphazard working conditions, over burden of work, extra/long working hours etc. High labor turnover, absenteeism rate, drop out ratio, less productivity, spoil of goodwill in the market, customer complaints for the services provided, less motivation, less job satisfaction could be some of the negative effects of job stress, from an organizational standpoint. In order to reduce occupational stress of their employees, banks adopt various stress management techniques, but they may not be enough in every situation and need to be improved upon. The main objective of stress management is to buffer the stress among employees. With the help of proper stress management techniques, the stress level of employees can be reduced to a certain extent or can even be eliminated. This can work as a driving force for the employees to stay committed and dedicated for the organizations in which they are working. Employees by themselves also do various activities for their stress management. It is the hope of this study to examine the causes, effects, employee-management interactions and stress management effectiveness to better society as whole by improving a particular aspect of India's urban financial sector.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The term "STRESS" was originated in the late nineteenth century in the field of physics. According to the physical definition of stress, it is a resulting internal force created in a material to counter-balance any external force (termed strain), that tends to disturb the internal equilibrium in the material. Hans Selye coined the word stress in 1936. He defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change." Stress seen in individuals, is defined as any interference that disturbs a person's healthy physical and mental well-being. It occurs when the body is required to perform beyond its normal range of ca-

pabilities.

NIOSH has defined workplace stress as "The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury." Workers who are stressed are also more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work. Their organizations are less likely to be successful in a competitive market. Stress at work can be a real problem to the organization as well as for its workers. Good management and good work organization are the best forms of stress prevention.

Pestonjee (1983) has identified three important factors of life in which stress originates. These are – job & organizational sector, the social sector and intrapsychic sector. Job and organization sector includes totality of the work environment (task, atmosphere, compensations, policies, etc.) The social sector refers to the socio-cultural context of one's life. It may include religion, caste, language, and other factors. The intrapsychic sector encompasses those things, which are intimate and personal like temperament, values, abilities and health.

Cooper and Marshall (1976) developed a model of work related stress which includes five sources of stress at work. They are (a) Intrinsic to the job, including factors such as poor physical working conditions, work overload (b) role in the organization, including role ambiguity and role conflict (c) career development, including lack of job security and under promotion; (d) relationships at work, including poor relationships with the boss or colleagues, and (e) organizational structure and climate, including little involvement in decision-making.

Cary Cooper (1983) gave a list of 6 different sources of job stress.

- Job conditions – Quantitative & qualitative work load, technology oriented stress, physical danger and poor working conditions.
- Interpersonal factors – Lack of trust, unfair treatment, lack of management concern towards employees, biasness towards worker, political problems and poor social systems
- Organizational structure – Poor organization climate, autocratic management, lack of training & development workshops, rigid organizational structure, lack of supervi-

- sion & motivation, unclear objectives
- Career development – Over promotion, under promotion, demotion, job insecurity, frustrated & vague ambitions
- Role stress – Role ambiguity, sex bias, sex role stereotypes
- Personal issues – Spill over, lack of support from spouse, marital problems, dual career stress.

Beehr and Newman (1978) job stress contributes to health-related problems among workers and to organizational problems such as employee dissatisfaction, alienation, low productivity, absenteeism, and turnover.

Rigopoulou, Theodosiou, Katsikea & Perdakis (2012) designing an effective role stress management programme requires a clear understanding of the employee experience of role stressors. Segmenting employees based on the extent of their experience of role stressors may provide a useful framework for designing an effective role stress management programme. However, the available framework for comprehending the role stressor based segments of employees is inadequate, and particularly so in the context of frontline bank employees who occupy boundary spanning positions and face increasing role pressures. (Rigopoulou, Theodosiou, Katsikea and Perdakis, 2012).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Population	The population selected for this particular study is employees from private sector banks of Ahmedabad city
Research design	It is explorative and descriptive in nature
Type of universe	Finite
Sampling unit	Ahmedabad city
Source list	Private sector bank employees
Size of sample	220
Research instrument	Primary data collection through distribution of questionnaires and secondary data through standard journals, magazines, research papers, etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED STUDY:

- To analyse the levels of occupational stress observed in private urban banking sector employees.
- To identify stressors among employees'.
- To examine what is the effect of stress on work factors (e.g., morale, job satisfaction, task effort, organizational commitment, etc.) and health aspects of employees when people are under high stress.
- Examine the perceived role and contribution of the organization on stress management.
- Examine the methods undertaken by employees to reduce/manage stress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

- 95% of the total respondents believe that they feel stressed with their current roles and responsibilities.
- Respondents lying between the age group of 26-30 years feels more stress as compared to other age groups.
- Respondents belonging to clerical staff feels more job stress as compared to other staff members.
- Respondents belonging to the traditional branch-banking department feel more job stress as compared to other departments.
- Employees who are working in the same organization for 3-5 years experiences more job stress.
- Respondents working upto 54 hours per week feels more stress.
- Looking from the view point of health disorders, headache, disorders of cardio vascular system and exhaustion & lack of energy are the most common observed.
- Inability to let go of work from the mind when employees are outside the office environment and office hours, consumption of narcotic substances/alcohol to escape from stress, inability to achieve desired level of productivity, frustration and helplessness are the most common psychological disorders felt by employees.
- If employees are stressed, their anger and irritation are most expressed on their co-worker; tendency to have negative at-

titude towards the higher management is also present.

- The factors causing more occupational stress among bank employees are boredom/repetitive job, unrealistic objectives/excess workload, long/irregular working hours, lack of promotion, pay increment/appreciation for your work, over supervision/multiple superiors and overwhelming burden of responsibility.
- 79% of the respondents say that their workload has increased over the past 1 – 2 year/years. Reduction in total staff has increased and promotion are the major contributors for increase in workload of the employees.
- 27% of the respondents say that they are mostly satisfied with the organization, 26% believe that they are confident and forward looking regarding their career development in the same organization, 24% believe that they are charged and motivated to work at their current position and 23% report that they are committed towards the organization.
- Self-efforts done by the employees to reduce/manage their stress are yoga and meditation, take training to learn how to relieve stress during work hours, train yourself to improve productivity & skills, exercise and periodic refreshments and breaks. These all methods are usually adopted by the respondents to relieve their occupational stress.
- Majority of employees prefer to share their stress related problems with colleagues and next majority is of supervisors and managers.
- Majority of the employees believe that their organization does stress management through the following points:
 - a) Improved workplace ambience
 - b) Improve IT infrastructure and digitization of work for simplicity and efficiency
 - c) Increase employee autonomy and create a participative leadership style
 - d) Voluntary leave and holidays
 - e) Improve work/family interface and support flexibility in work hours
 - f) Monetary/non-monetary incentive and public appreciation
 Create and enforce a positive work culture and environment

CONCLUSION: It is seen that there is a significant number of respondents experience some degree of stress and it reflects into health problems, of which headache is the most common. It also has significant psychological and relationship problems for most people, which are evident from the research findings, which may also trickle down into various areas of their lives. While a lot of people make some effort to manage the stress they have, it can be seen from the results, that the organization can make more efforts in different ways to buffer the systemic stress problem. This study can be taken upon by other researchers to expand geographically, include more respondents and organizations, their personal lives to understand the problem and its various aspects and variables better, and work towards better solutions.

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