A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS AND COPING MECHANISM IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS

ABSTRACT

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An individual in the organization or everyone in this world wants to accomplish goals (individual as well as organizational) in a state of mind that is free from all the tensions and strains. But when situations are such that one is not able to concentrate or function properly in a planned way, the results are failures and unaccomplished goals causing stress. So, a stress can be that state which is not a normal one or not planned or a system which is not designed properly to work in it. It is said to be a deviation state that gives rise to non-accomplished targets. Organizational stress arises when people interact with their jobs and change is required within people due to the factors of job that forces them to move away from the normal functioning in the organization. It could be due to the various types of roles given to an employee in the organization, organizational climate, relationship at work, work stressors such as complex work, monotonous work, etc. When a person is suffering from stress, he also makes an effort to come out of it. The method of relieving the stress is said to be coping mechanism. Coping mechanism helps in reducing or minimizing the harmful consequences of stress which results from the potential stressor.

The main objective of the study is to find out the degree of stress perceived by the bank employees working in public sector and private sector banks and to bring out the factors affecting it. The study also emphasizes to find out if there are ways that are being followed by the employees to cope with the stress and recommending them the coping mechanisms to be followed so that the job can be done in more enhanced way thereby increasing the productivity.

To meet out the objectives in the research study the sample size of 500 employees working with private and public sector banks in Delhi region in India were considered. A standard and structured questionnaire was used for identifying the job situations and organizational conditions that leads to increase stress level among employees and the coping mechanisms being used by them to manage the stress. A multistage random sampling method was used for the selection of public and private sector banks. Responses have been collected from selection of organizations in these two sectors. Top two banks have been selected from each sector. Banks included from Public sector Banks were SBI and PNB and from Private sector Banks were HDFC.
Bank and ICICI Bank. In all, 500 employees responded, 250 each from both the sectors; comprising of 470 middle level managerial responses and 30 responses from the top level.

The data have been analyzed using Microsoft Excel, Analysis of Moments of Structure (AMOS) 18, and Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) 18. Various statistical tools like Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA, Two Independent Sample t-test, Chi Square Test, Correlation, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling have been used to analyze the data.

By using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), two SEM models were developed initially that validated the items explaining the organizational (role and other organizational) stressors, its impact upon overall job satisfaction, overall job performance and a use of coping mechanisms in public and private sector banks. The SEM model indicates that there is a negative impact of role stress (regression coefficients=-0.38) and other organisational stress (regression coefficients=-0.40) on the overall job satisfaction. There is a direct relationship between the overall job satisfaction and overall job performance (regression coefficients=0.66). Higher job satisfaction; higher the job performance. Stress and coping model indicates that lower overall job satisfaction due to various stressors leads to an efforts of employees towards stress coping (regression coefficients= 0.69).

Sector wise analysis reveals that the null hypothesis of no significant difference has been accepted in case of the stress due to role erosion (t statistic=-0.565, P-value=0.572); role isolation (t statistic=-15.15 p-value=0.130); and resource inadequacy (t statistic=0.986 p- value=0.325). Hence, the stress level due to role erosion, role isolation, and resource inadequacy is similar for employees working in the public and private sector banks. In case of stress arising from all other role stressors, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in terms of level of stress has not been accepted. Role stressors are found to be significantly higher in case of employees working in private sector banks as compared to employees of public sector banks. In case of other organisational stressors such as work stressors, organizational climate, and relationship at work, the null hypothesis of no difference in terms of level of stress has not been accepted whereas the stress level due to financial risk factors (t statistic=1.837, P-value=0.067) is similar for employees working in the public and
private sector banks. The level of stress due to these stressors is significantly higher in case of the employees working in public sector banks as compared to employees of private sector banks. The overall role stress results shows a significant difference (t-statistic =-2.234; P value=0.021) for the public and private sector bank employees. Due to this significant difference in overall role stress, two (SEM) models were developed, one for public sector banks and other for private sector banks to find out the reasons for such a difference. Resource inadequacy (standardised regression weight=0.71) and role overload (standardised regression weight=0.69) were found as a common role stressor in case of both the public and private sector bank employees. The squared multiple correlation of overall job satisfaction and overall job performance were found to be high in case of private sector bank employees.

At hierarchical levels, there is found to be a significant difference in the stress perception of the employees of both the public and private sector banks with respect to inter role distance, role stagnation, role erosion, and resource inadequacy stressors. Here, Stress is found to be significantly high in case of Middle level employees. The overall stress results were found to be significant with probability value=0.000.

The study reflects that in case of both the public and private sector banks, the employees were using escape avoidance (mean=16.81) coping mechanism. The results of using the coping mechanism, in general, as well as sector wise are similar. This shows that there is no significant difference between the coping mechanism used by the public and private sector bank employees. The coping mechanism ranked first was Self Controlling (mean=15.90); followed by Confronting Coping (mean=15.43); Positive Reappraisal (mean=14.12); Seeking Social Support (mean=12.12); and Planful Problem Solving (mean=11.19). Accepting Responsibility (mean=7.93) is ranked at last place. It is the use of Emotion Focused coping mechanism followed by problem focused coping mechanism by the employees. Out of self help practices, the mostly used coping mechanism by the employees is self help practices off the job (mean=12.80).

Based on the objectives and hypotheses considered, and on analysis and interpretation of the results obtained, the following recommendations have been made:

1) In case of stress due to Inter Role Distance, an effort should be made from both the sides; employees as well as organizations to fill the gap that arise due to stress, not in the family but also at organizational level. Organization should use
measures of work life balance, such as flexi-time, telecommuting, to meet the
important obligations of the familial role.

2) For minimizing the Role Isolation stress, banks should take measures for
enhancing the inter-linkages among roles.

3) Role Erosion stress should be handled by taking measures for enrichment of
roles; analysis and redesign of eroded roles; abolition of roles that cannot be
enriched; clubbing of eroded roles with other appropriate roles; and clubbing of
two or more eroded roles.

4) Role Expectation Conflict should be dealt if role linkages are established with
other roles and the problem solved by devising some new ways of balancing the
conflicting expectations.

5) For stress due to Role Stagnation, certain structural and organizational
interventions can be introduced by the organization such as for personal growth
of employees.

6) For stress arising due to work overload, job enrichment and job enlargement and
role slimming that involves analysis and redesign of overloaded roles, splitting
of overloaded roles into multiple roles for reducing workload, and delegation of
authority and responsibility should be done.

7) Measure should be taken to incorporate certain policies of the organization of a
positive intent to reduce the stress levels of all those who are suffering from
undue stress.

8) Use of functional coping strategies with the prominent and dominating stressors
and de-emphasizing dysfunctional coping have been recommended at both
individual and organizational levels.

9) Also Self-Audit should be conducted and encouraged among those employees
who are facing strenuous conditions to identify their prominent organizational
stressors.

Key words: Stress, Organisational Stressors, Coping Mechanisms, public and private
sectors.