

Stress among bank employees in Shimla town, Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to know the stress level of the employees working in the banks in Shimla town of Himachal Pradesh. The responses related to stress were collected on 13 parameters and responses to behavior were collected on 15 parameters. The employees were also asked about the ways they get relieved of the stress. It was found that 95 per cent of the employees discussed their problems with their spouses, friends or any other person close to them. Majority (90.00%) of the employees worked for more than 8 hours which could be the reason for their stress. Same number of employees (90.00%) planned their work beforehand which was a positive sign. It was also found that three fourth of the employees (75.00%) were satisfied with their performance. Majority (65.00%) of the employees did not feel that they were achieving less than they should have whereas sixty per cent of the respondents indicated that they had people to talk; they never felt that they were not getting what they wanted out of their job or they never felt that they did not have time to do many things that were important to do good quality job. Majority of them (55.00%) informed that they were in the wrong organization or the wrong profession. Half of the employees also said that they had sufficient time to plan as much as they liked to. Half of them suggested that the best way to reduce stress was talking to family members, watching TV or listening good music followed by 45.00 per cent who advised meditation and yoga. Other suggestions were passing time with close friends and relatives (40.00%), believe in oneself and do what one's heart wanted (35.00%), believe in God (30.00%), get adjusted with others, change yourself with the environment (30.00%) and keep lot of positive attitude (25.00%).

Keywords: Stress; bank employees; working; environment

INTRODUCTION

The study of human resource management is one of the major criteria in the corporate sector. Human resource is the heart of the organization. Now a days the corporate sector is booming in a high speed that the people have to work for prolonged

hours to maintain the standard of living and achieve their basic needs. In spite of having the modern technologies and facilities people are feeling themselves to be work loaded and stressed. Undoubtedly occupational stress is one of the most commonly cited stressors faced by people all over the world.

Stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself. Although stress is typically discussed in a negative context it also has a positive value. It's an opportunity when it offers potential gain. Consider for example the superior performance that an athlete or stage performer gives in 'clutch' situations. Such individuals often use stress positively to rise to the occasion and perform at or near their maximum. Similarly many professionals see the pressures of heavy workloads and deadlines as positive challenges that enhance the quality of their work and the satisfaction they get from their job.

Research has shown that the psychological demands of a job can have pervasive and profound emotional and physical effects on the lives of workers (Kahn 1981, Karasek and Theorell 1990, Matteson and Ivancevich 1982). The explosive increase in research on occupational stress especially during the last decade (Cooper and Cartwright 1994, Quick et al 1997, Spielberger and Reheiser 1994, Spielberger et al 2002) has clearly established that job-related stress has an adverse impact on productivity, absenteeism, worker turnover and employee health. In addition to these severe consequences of stress-related problems in the workplace reduced productivity and diminished customer services are hidden costs that often result from exhausted or depressed employees who are not energetic, accurate or innovative at work

(Karasek and Theorell 1990). According to Matteson and Ivancevich (1982) costs in the US economy relating to reduced productivity, absenteeism and worker turnover have continued to escalate as a function of measured occupational stress.

But it is different in the case of bank employees. The bank employees are the people who also have to achieve the certain targets and so for the non-achievement of targets the employees remain stressed and tensed. The employees who have the simple table work also have to face the problem of stress. Due to recession the banking sector is also facing the problem of employee cut-offs and so the work load of the existing employees increases and they feel stressed.

A study was therefore conducted to know the stress level of the employees working in the banks in Shimla town of Himachal Pradesh.

Study on the stress level has been done by Renu (2011) on bank employees in Chandigarh.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted on the employees of three nationalized banks of Shimla town. Two questionnaires were used having stress related questions and the questions related to their common behavior. The research was to carry out the study

that how much stressed the employees of the banks were and how do their stress affect their work life, social life, output etc. A sample of 40 employees of the rank of clerk/cashier was selected randomly from the three banks namely Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India and Bank of India. The respondents were given two types of pre-tested questionnaire and their suggestions for reducing the stress were also collected. The responses related to stress were collected on 13 parameters with three response choices namely yes, no and no reply. Similarly the responses to behavior were collected on 15 parameters with 5 response choices namely not at all, rarely, sometimes, often and very often. The employees were also asked about the ways they get relieved of the stress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response of employees about stress related queries

The response of the employees with respect to stress related queries was collected and the data are given in Table 1. It is evident from the data that 95 per cent of the employees discussed their problems with their spouses, friends or any other person close to them. It is a good sign in the sense that sharing gives relief and people get solutions from their nears and dears. Majority (90.00%) of the employees worked for more than 8 hours which could be the reason for their stress. Same number of employees (90.00%) planned their work

beforehand which was a positive sign. It was also found that three fourth of the employees (75.00%) were satisfied with their performance. A quite high number of respondents (62.50%) feared about the quality of their performance at their workplace and about similar number of them (60.00%) got tensed at non-achievement of their target. This indicates the sincerity of the employees towards their organizations. Half of the employees (50.00%) did admit that they felt stressed sometimes during their daily life. Interestingly only 15.00 per cent of the employees stated that they were suffering from depression or they worried about their colleagues' opinion about them. Half of the respondents also admitted that their social life was not balanced.

Response of bank employees about their general behavior

It is evident from the data given in Table 2 that majority (65.00%) of the employees did not feel that they were achieving less than they should have. This shows that they were satisfied with their work as same number of them also indicated that they were not at all becoming frustrated with parts of their job. Sixty per cent of the respondents indicated that they had people to talk; they never felt that they were not getting what they wanted out of their job or they never felt that they did not have time to do many things that were important to do good quality job. Majority of them (55.00%) informed that they were

Table 1. Response of the bank employees to the queries related to stress

Query	Response		
	Yes	No	No reply
1. Are you satisfied with the performance you give at your work?	32(75.00)	8(25.00)	0(0.00)
2. Do you think that you are suffering from depression?	6(15.00)	34(85.00)	0(0.00)
3. Do you worry about your colleagues' opinion about you?	6(15.00)	34(85.00)	0(0.00)
4. Do you discuss your problem with your spouse or friend or any other close to you?	38(95.00)	2(5.00)	0(0.00)
5. Do you work more than 8 hours a day?	36(90.00)	4(10.00)	0(0.00)
6. You have an important function at your home and your boss asks to give a 4 hour over time, what will be your response?	14(35.00)	24(60.00)	2(5.00)
7. Do you regularly spend time for entertainment?	22(55.00)	18(45.00)	0(0.00)
8. Is your social life balanced?	16(40.00)	20(50.00)	4(10.00)
9. Do you plan your work before doing?	36(90.00)	4(10.00)	0(0.00)
10. Do you fear about the quality of your performance?	25(62.50)	15(37.50)	0(0.00)
11. Are you a heart patient?	6(15.00)	34(85.00)	0(0.00)
12. Do you get tensed at non-achievement of your target?	24(60.00)	16(40.00)	0(0.00)
13. Do you feel stress sometimes?	20(50.00)	12(30.00)	8(20.00)

Table 2. Response of bank employees related to their behavior

	Questions	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1.	Do you feel run down and drained of physical or emotional energy?	2(5.00)	13(32.50)	17(42.50)	6(15.00)	2(5.00)
2.	Do you find that you are prone to negative thinking about your job?	3(7.50)	5(12.50)	19(47.50)	7(17.50)	6(15.00)
3.	Do you find that you are harder and less sympathetic with people than perhaps they deserve?	10(25.00)	16(40.00)	5(12.50)	5(12.50)	4(10.00)
4.	Do you find yourself getting easily irritated by small problems, or by your co-workers and team?	7(17.50)	18(45.00)	11(27.50)	2(5.00)	2(5.00)
5.	Do you feel misunderstood or unappreciated by your co-workers?	6(15.00)	8(20.00)	22(55.00)	2(5.00)	2(5.00)
6.	Do you feel that you have no one to talk to?	24(60.00)	6(15.00)	4(10.00)	3(7.50)	3(7.50)
7.	Do you feel that you are achieving less than you should?	26(65.00)	8(20.00)	2(5.00)	2(5.00)	2(5.00)
8.	Do you feel under an unpleasant level of pressure to succeed?	18(45.00)	12(30.00)	4(10.00)	4(10.00)	2(5.00)
9.	Do you feel that you are not getting what you want out of your job?	24(60.00)	8(20.00)	4(10.00)	3(7.50)	1(2.50)
10.	Do you feel that you are in the wrong organization or the wrong profession?	22(55.00)	6(15.00)	6(15.00)	4(10.00)	2(5.00)

Questions	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
11. Are you becoming frustrated with parts of your job?	26(65.00)	6(15.00)	2(5.00)	4(10.00)	2(5.00)
12. Do you feel that organizational politics or bureaucracy frustrates your ability to do a good job?	24(60.00)	4(10.00)	3(7.50)	5(12.50)	4(10.00)
13. Do you feel that there is more work to do than you practically have the ability to do?	16(40.00)	12(30.00)	6(15.00)	4(10.00)	2(5.00)
14. Do you feel that you do not have time to do many of the things that are important to doing a good quality job?	24(60.00)	12(30.00)	2(5.00)	2(5.00)	0(0.00)
15. Do you find that you do not have time plan as much as you would like to?	20(50.00)	16(40.00)	1(2.50)	1(2.50)	2(5.00)
Average	16.8(42.00)	10.0(25.00)	7.2(18.00)	3.6(9.00)	2.4(6.00)

Values in parentheses are per cent values

Table 3. The ways suggested by the employees to reduce stress

Technique	Response	
	Number	%
Do meditation and yoga	18	45
Just smile away	6	15
Just believe in yourself and just do what your heart wants	14	35
Talking to family members, watching TV or listening good music	20	50
Pass your time with your close friends and relatives	16	40
Going for a walk or long drive	8	20
Believe in God	12	30
Respect yourself and give time to yourself	4	10
Keep lot of positive attitude	10	25
Play the game of your choice and watch cricket	8	20
Get adjusted with others, change yourself with the environment	12	30
Take alcohol to relax	8	20

in the wrong organization or the wrong profession. Half of the employees also said that they had sufficient time to plan as much as they liked to. Less than half of the employees (45.00%) did not feel under an unpleasant level of pressure to succeed. Forty per cent of them also realized that there was not more work to do than they practically had the ability to do. Fifty five per cent of the employees sometimes felt misunderstood or unappreciated by their co-workers. Similarly 47.50 per cent of them also sometimes found that they were prone to negative thinking about their job.

The various techniques which can help reduce stress

The respondents were asked to give their views on the ways through which one can reduce stress or they adopt to reduce stress. The responses given by them are tabulated in Table 3. Half of them suggested the best way to reduce stress was talking to family members, watching TV or listening good music followed by 45.00 per cent who advised meditation and yoga. Other suggestions were passing time with close friends and relatives (40.00%), believe in oneself and do what one's heart

wanted (35.00%), believe in God (30.00%), get adjusted with others, change yourself with the environment (30.00%) and keep lot of positive attitude (10.00%). Twenty per cent of the respondents also suggested going for long walk or long drive, playing the game of one's choice and watching cricket or taking alcohol to relax. Only fifteen per cent suggested that just smiling away and ten per cent advised that respecting oneself and giving time to self could reduce stress

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