

ROLE OF STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ENHANCING BANKERS HAPPINESS

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Abstract

Stress is a universal phenomenon that essentially manifests itself in human as a result of pressure emanating from several experiences or challenging situation. Today, workplace stress is becoming a major issue and a matter of concern for the employees and the organizations. Stress Management is getting more and more attention now-a-days, particularly in the financial sectors. There is no such thing like stress- free job. To reduce the stress for maintaining the overall health is really vital in our daily life because it can improve our mood, enhance immune function, encourage longevity and allow us to be more creative. Stress management system plays an important role to bring you in a healthier life. This paper is discussing the importance of stress management in enhancing bankers' happiness just by knowing the reasons of stress, such as personal problems, job satisfaction, work overload, salary structure, and behaviour of upper staffs. We are also discussing the methods to reduce the stress with the help of stress management system, which can be classified under two categories: Unhealthy way and healthy way. Unhealthy way includes: Smoking, drinking, zoning out for hours in front of the TV or computer, withdrawing from friends, family, and activities, using pills or drugs to relax, sleeping too much, taking out your stress on others whereas the healthy way includes good ambience, continuous training, programme on stress management and meditation. The effect of Stress Management system includes happiness and increased productivity. This paper has been designed to study the causes of stress and initiatives for handling the stress level in bankers and recommend suggestions for enhancing the bankers' happiness.

Keywords: Stress Management, Bankers Happiness, Causes of Stress, and Initiatives.

Introduction

Stress is a fact of life, wherever you are and whatever you are doing. You cannot avoid stress, but you can learn to manage it so it doesn't manage you. Stress is often termed as a twentieth century syndrome born out of

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man's race toward modern progress and its ensuring complexities. At one point or the other, everybody suffers from stress. Stress has become a part of day-to-day living of every individual. On the one side, stress provides the means to express talents and energies, and pursue happiness; while on the other it can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological. Stress is a burning issue in modern society. It is often termed as a twentieth century syndrome born out of man's race towards progress and its ensuring complexities. At one point or the other everybody suffers from stress. While the college or University students may experience stress in meeting the academic demands, the people on the job and businessmen may suffer stress to reach office in time and to complete their projects on time. Even in household ladies may experience stress in managing the home affairs and may resort to look for house help/maids/servants. Stress condition can be real or perceived. However, the brain doesn't differentiate between real and imagined stress. It reacts the same way to both causes of stress by releasing stress hormones equal to the degrees of stress felt.

Basically, stress is a person's reaction to events and it can be positive or negative depending upon how that person reacts. Stress is regarded as an inevitable consequence of employees' functionality. Stress has become a pervading feature of people's life in the modern world. The modern world which is said to be a world of achievements is also a world of stress. Stress is everywhere, whether it is in the family, business organization, enterprise, institute or any other social or economic activity. Right from birth till death, an individual is invariably exposed to various stressful situations. It has become a part of life for the employees, as life today has become so complex at home as well as outside that it is impossible to avoid stress. During the past decade, the banking sector had undergone rapid and striking changes like policy changes due to globalisation and liberalisation, increased competition due to the entrance of more private (corporate) sector banks, downsizing, introduction of new technologies, etc. Due to these changes, the employees in the banking sector are experiencing a high level of stress. The advent of technological revolution in all walks of life coupled with globalisation, privatisation policies has drastically changed conventional patterns in all sectors. The banking sector is no exemption. This research therefore seeks to explore various stress management techniques employed by banks in the course of their day to day activities in the workplace.

Concept of Stress Management

Stress is a fact of everyday life. When people reach out for help, they are often dealing with circumstances, situations, and stresses in their lives that leave them feeling emotionally and physically overwhelmed. Many people feel that they have very little resources or skills to deal with the high levels of stress they are experiencing. Although we all talk about stress, it often isn't clear what stress is really about. Many people consider stress to be something that happens to them, an event such as an injury or a job loss. Others think that stress is what happens to our body, mind, and behaviour in response to an event (E.g. heart pounding, anxiety, or nail biting). Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or anxious. Everyone sees situations differently and has different coping skills. Stress is a normal part of life. In small quantities, stress is good; it can motivate you and help you become more productive. However, too much stress, or a strong response to stress can be harmful.

Stress is the body's nonspecific response to a demand placed on it. **(Hans Selye)**

Stress as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize. **(Richard S. Lazarus)**

In the most accurate meaning, stress management is not about learning how to avoid or escape the pressures and turbulence of modern living; it is about learning to appreciate how the body reacts to these pressures, and about learning how to develop skills which enhance the body's adjustment. To learn stress management is to learn about the mind-body connection and to the degree to which we can control our health in a positive sense.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the concept of stress and level of stress among bankers.
2. To identify the factors make a cause of stress in bank employees.
3. To explore the stress related problems of bankers and suggest the initiatives for handling the stress level of bankers to enhance work performance and happiness.

Research Methodology

The study is based on primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data was collected from Books, Journals, Internet, Magazines, and Newspaper reports. Primary data were collected through questionnaires, personal interview and also by observation methods. In all, 60 respondents of Kangra, the district of Himachal Pradesh service in banking at different places was taken as a sample selected on the basis of convenience

sampling. Questions were framed to study the concept of stress, causes of stress and initiatives for handling the stress in bankers'. While selecting the sample an utmost care has been taken to ensure that the respondents of different age, and designation in the banking sector. Consistent with the study objectives, different techniques like, percentage methods and averages have been used to analyze the data. In case of certain hypothesis, an advanced statistical technique such as Chi square test, Standard deviation and Skewness has also been used. Interpretation of data is based on rigorous exercises aiming at the achievement of study objectives.

Data Analysis and Results

Rating Given by Respondents about the Concept of Stress: It is evident from the table 1 that rating given by respondents about the concept of stress in bank employees regarding work. The majority of the respondents i.e. 70 percent are strongly agree and agree on the concept of stress in the banking sector. The remaining 30 percent respondents of banks in which 10 percent neutral and 20 percent are not satisfied with this concept of stress.

Table 1: Rating Given by Respondents about the Concept of Stress

	Rating Scale	Frequency	% of Respondent
5	Strongly Agree	23	38.3
4	Agree	19	31.7
3	Neutral	6	10.0
2	Disagree	10	16.7
1	Strongly Disagree	2	3.3
	Total	60	100

Source: Various Questionnaires from the Respondents

Views of Respondents regarding the Causes of Stress in Banking Sector: From Table 2, it is inferred that major causes of stress among the bank employees are personal problems, work overload, job satisfaction & salary structure, impatient customers, improper reward system, stress due to technological problem and behaviour of upper staff. The table 2, further indicates that the mean value of opinion relating to the causes of stress in the banking sector is higher than the mean standard score i.e. 3 in five point scale. The standard deviation and skewness shows that the opinion of the respondents is changing towards the higher side of the mean standard

score. From the table 2, we get that Chi-square value is greater than table value at the 5 percent level of significance. Therefore, our hypothesis is rejected, which means views of respondents are strongly agree and agree regarding the causes of stress in the banking sector. In a nutshell, it can be concluded that the causes of stress among bank employees play a significant role in the banking sector.

Table 2: Views of Respondents regarding the Causes of Stress in Banking Sector

Causes of Stress	Nature of Responses					Total	x	S.D	SKW	x ²
	S.A	A	N	DA	SDA					
Personal problems	15 (25)	22 (36.7)	16 (26.7)	5 (8.3)	2 (3.3)	60 (100)	3.7 2	1.04 3	- 0.604	22.8 3
Work overload	10 (16.7)	34 (56.7)	9 (15)	6 (10)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	3.7 7	0.90 9	- 0.914	54.5 0
Job satisfaction & salary structure	10 (16.7)	21 (35)	13 (21.7)	5 (8.3)	11 (18.3)	60 (100)	3.2 3	1.34 5	- 0.486	11.3 3
Impatient customer	6 (10)	25 (41.7)	20 (33.3)	7 (11.7)	2 (3.3)	60 (100)	3.4 3	0.94 5	- 0.486	32.8 3
Improper Reward System	7 (11.7)	27 (45)	19 (31.7)	6 (10)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	3.5 5	0.89 1	- 0.453	38
Stress due to technological problem	13 (21.7)	23 (38.3)	16 (26.7)	6 (10)	2 (3.3)	60 (100)	3.6 5	1.03 9	- 0.557	22.8 3
Behaviour of upper staffs	27 (45)	16 (26.7)	15 (25)	1 (1.7)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	4.1 2	0.95 8	- 0.838	41

Source: Various Questionnaires from the Respondents

Various Initiatives for Handling the Stress Level of Bankers and Enhancing Happiness: The various initiatives for handling the stress level of bank employees are good ambience, recognition, continuous training, effective communication, programme on stress management and meditation. The table 3, depicts that the mean value of respondents regarding stress level is higher than the mean standard score i.e. 3 in five point scale. The Standard deviation and Skewness shows that the perception of the respondents is changing towards the higher side of the mean standard score. From table 3, we get that chi-square value is greater than table value at the 5 percent level of significance. Therefore, our hypothesis is rejected, which means there is a significant difference in the responses regarding various initiatives of stress level.

Table 3: Various Initiatives for Handling the Stress Level of Bankers and Enhancing Happiness

INITIATIVES	Nature of Responses					Total	x̄	S.D	SK W	x ²
	S.A	A	N	DA	SDA					
Good Ambience	11 (18.3)	31 (51.7)	17 (28.3)	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	3.85	0.771	-0.625	31.47
Recognition	6 (10)	22 (36.7)	22 (36.7)	6 (10)	4 (6.7)	60 (100)	3.33	1.020	-0.522	28
Continuous Training	21 (35)	18 (30)	18 (30)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	3.93	0.972	-0.551	31.17
Effective Communication	11 (18.3)	30 (50)	6 (10)	11 (18.3)	2 (3.3)	60 (100)	3.62	1.091	-0.715	38.50
Programme on stress management	5 (8.3)	32 (53.3)	20 (33.3)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	3.63	0.758	-0.712	61.17
Meditation	15 (25)	37 (61.7)	5 (8.3)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.7)	60 (100)	4.05	0.790	-1.369	75.33

Source: Various Questionnaires from the Respondents

Conclusion

Stress in the workplace has become the black plague of the present century. Much of the stress at work is caused not only by work overload and time pressure but also by lack of rewards & praise, and more importantly, by not providing individuals with the autonomy to do their work as they would like. Most of the employees were not satisfied with the grievance handling procedure of the organization which was founded by the unstructured interview. Begin to manage people at work differently, treating them with respect and valuing their contribution. If we enhance the psychological well being and health of the employees, in the coming future the organization would make more revenue as well as employee retention. Because it is said that, "A Healthy Employee is a Productive Employee". The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in the banking sector. In order to manage stress within the organization, it is recommended that the organization encourages employee Development and embark on training interventions for employees.

- Organize a Stress Management Program that focuses on different leave categories of employees' at all hierarchical levels.
- Introduce more job oriented training programs, which improve employee skill and their confidence to work effectively.

- Encourage open channel of communication to deal with work related stress.
- Provide counselling on work related and personnel problems and support from a team of welfare health and counselling staff.
- The allocation of departments to employees should be according to their specialize skills and capabilities and supervisors also should support and help them in problematic situations.
- Do effort for conducting new and creative training programs in which increase the innovative capabilities and confidence of the employees for doing work effectively.
- Motivate the employees to do participate in decision making and for creating new ideas for the alleviation of stress level.
- The relaxation approaches include mind relaxation techniques and mediation and visual imagery. The third technique involves identification and controlling of negative feelings with a realistic approach of perceiving life and replacing of negative and rigid thoughts with positive, flexible and realistic thoughts for behaving rationally and productively

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