**A Study on Stress Management Among Women Employees in Private Banking Sector**

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**Abstract**

 Stress has become an inexorable part of human life now – a – days and it makes life more challenging and pioneering. Work–life balance plays an important role in banking sector. This study is an attempt by the researcher to find out the causes of stress among the Private sector bank employees and its influence. This research shows that bank employees are facing stress due to longer working hours, work load, job insecurity, work pressure, work–life pressure etc. The researcher has used simple random sampling method to obtain the sample. Information has been collected from 100 employees of Private banks including managers and employees, randomly selected from different branches of private banks. 100 questionnaires were distributed out of which 60 employees responded. Data was collected using a questionnaire method and interview method. Techniques such as percentage analysis and Kruskal – Wallis H test were used to analyze the data.

Keywords: Bank employees, Productivity, Banking sector, Stress, Work – life balance.

**Introduction:**

 Stress is the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with mental or emotional pressure. It is often caused when we experience something new, unexpected or that threatens our sense of self or when we feel we have little control over a situation. Now – a – days at workplace employees are having lot of stress due to this and they are unable to concentrate on work properly and they are facing conflicts at home and also in the organizations they work. Lack of support or help from superiors and co – workers, poor work environment also lead to stress. If stress is interfering in the work then performance, health and personal life will be effected. In banks some of the causes of stress are fear of being laid off, overtime due to lack of staff, job insecurity and pressure to work at optimum levels etc. Some of the symptoms of excessive stress are feeling anxious, depressed or irritable, fatigue, muscle tensions or headache, stomach problems, weight gain and lack of interest in work etc. Some of the ways in which stress can be managed by organizations are:

* Job design: clarifying role and reducing the role ambiguity and role expectations.
* Targets and performance standards: setting reasonable and achievable targets.
* Placements: placing the people in jobs that are within their capabilities.
* Career development: promoting staff in accordance with their proficiencies.
* Counselling: giving opportunities to talk about their problems.
* Management training: on the basis of performance review counselling.
* Work–life balance policies: which include provisions such as special leave and flexi working hours.

The researcher divided the sample on the basis of geographic segmentation, behavioral segmentation and skill set segmentation. The researcher chose the location “Vijayawada” as the study region. The sample is chosen from women employees working in private sector banks. The study reveals that the women employees working in private sector banks as a career option have left the job within five years after taking up the job. The reasons cited by the employees are the high level of intensive work, lack of personal time, job insecurity and anxiety due to extremely stressful situations.

**Review of Literature**

Dr. N. Dhanabhakyam, V. Anitha (2011), found that the respondents have distress due to personal and organizational sources. Some of the major factors causing stress for working women are managing the daily household activities, child care and looking after the family members. Younger working women are facing more stress than the middle aged working women. 64.3 percent of the respondents reported suffering headache due to stress. Children are mostly affected due to distress which is indicated by a mean score of 76.

N. Mohan, Dr. J. Ashok (2011), found that stress is high in women employees working in banks with more than 5 years of experience and low in employees with less than 3 years experience. 87 percent of the employees disagree about the policies and strategies. 72 percent of the employees said that stress is not due to organizational changes and only 28 percent of the employees said that organizational change leads to stress. Occupational stress among software professionals is observed to occur due to role overload, role authority ambiquity, role conflict and lack of senior level support. The management should provide various types of training and development facilities to women employees in order to reduce stress in organization. Organization should give more refreshment and motivational programs to reduce stress in women employees.

According to Sanjay Sinha (2016), the primary reason for stress is that employees are not getting sufficient leaves and holidays. There is uncertainty in work allocation, customer demand, unsuitable working environment, shortage in staff etc. If stress is properly managed, then employees’ performance will be good and they achieve targets easily. Stress must be monitored and managed effectively then only employees can get positive result.

Dr. Mini Amit Arrawatia, Deepanshi (2017), pointed out that in private sector banks most of the employees are experiencing stress related problems. This is having a negative impact on employees’ life and also on their health. Due to stress, some of the health problems that the employees are facing are blood pressure, frustration, headache, mood swings etc.

Rohit Yadav (2017), found that 65 percent of the employees refrain from taking promotions because they believe that promotions make life stressful. 71 percent of the employees are quitting or changing the job. 64.5 percent of the employees sought continuous training to counter stress. Employees should indulge in physical exercise, yoga and meditation, sports etc. Workshops on stress management should be organized by the organization. 84.5 percent of the employees have to work for more than their normal working hours. Lack of adequate staff and high targets are also responsible for stress.

According to K. Saravanan, K. Muthulakshmi, bank employees are facing stress in their working area due to work pressure and inter personal conflicts. Stress can be managed through laughter therapy, music therapy, behavior self – control, cognitive therapy, networking, massage therapy, hydro therapy, relaxation, physical exercise etc.

**Research Gap:**

The Researcher chose the study of stress management among women employees in private banking sector primarily because the area has largely been ignored. The researcher feels that plenty of scope is there for studying this topic because the study deals with the work life balance among women employees especially with more women in India choosing a career in banking sector.

**Objectives of the study**

* Study the impact of stress on employees work performance in Private sector banks.
* Analyze the factors influencing work-life balance of women employees in Private sector banks.
* Identify the measures adopted to reduce stress in women employees working in private sector banks.
* Offer appropriate suggestions for better management of stress.

 The present paper focuses on the main causes of stress in the employees’ performance who are working in private banking sector. The paper makes an attempt to bring out the stress management strategies adopted by the employees and the employers to handle stress and improve performance.

**Research Methodology**

Study methodology involves selecting a representative sample, preparing a data capture instrument, collection of data from respondents and analysis of such data. The sample for the study is of 100 respondents. In some cases, where, the employees did not have the time to fill up the questionnaire, interview technique is used and the answers for the questions were filled up by the researcher. The research design used is descriptive type of design. Primary data is collected by administering the questionnaire and the study is conducted in a stress free environment during tea breaks or leisure time. It is done primarily with the intention to obtain the correct information.

Collection of secondary data is done primarily from newspaper articles and scholarly articles which highlight the importance of the study topic “Stress Management”.

 Analysis of the data collected from the structured questionnaire filled by the respondents, interviews noted by the researcher are arranged in the form of tables.

**Hypothesis**

H1: The mean ranks of the respondents working in Private sector banks are not same.

 **Table 1: Distribution of the sample respondents based on demographic factors**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Number of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| **Age(in years)** | Below 30 | 25 | 41.7 |
| 30 – 40 | 20 | 33.3 |
| 41 – 50 | 10 | 16.7 |
| Above 50 | 5 | 8.3 |
| **Marital Status** | Married | 20 | 33.3 |
| Unmarried | 40 | 66.7 |
| **Cadre** | Manager | 20 | 33.3 |
| Assistant Manager  | 10 | 16.7 |
| Clerk | 30 | 50 |
| **Total** |  | 60 | 100 |

**Inference:**

 Demographic classification is done based on factors such as marital status, cadre and age. Out of 100 employees chosen for the study, 74 percent are below 40 years of age, of which 41.7 percent of the respondents are below 30 years age. Only 8.3 percent of the respondents are above 50 years of age. 50 percent of the respondents belong to Clerical cadre and 33.3 percent of the respondents belonging to Manager cadre, 66.7 percent of them are unmarried. This indicates that most of the respondents working in private sector banks are below 40 years’ age and in clerical cadre and single in status.

**Table 2**

**Respondents opinions on factors affecting stress at work**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  Statement | SA | A | N | DA | SDA |
| a) I have time to spend with family members. | 19 | 15 | 8 | 8 | 10 |
| b) I need time for a good sleep. | 23 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 4 |
| c) I think that long working hours have impact on my performance. | 25 | 16 | 10 | 6 | 3 |
| d) I always get assignments done in time. | 20 | 19 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| e) I often face conflicts with my colleagues. | 19 | 19 | 6 | 11 | 5 |
| f) I lose temper while being stressed at work. | 13 | 14 | 15 | 8 | 10 |
| g) I feel that lack of co-operation with superiors affect my performance. | 10 | 11 | 20 | 9 | 10 |
| h) I have time for hobbies and interests. | 9 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 13 |
| i) My work permits to take part in social / cultural events. | 10 | 12 | 14 | 12 | 12 |
| j) I feel that lack of motivation affect my performance. | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 9 |
| MEAN | 16.4 | 14.1 | 11.8 | 9.6 | 8.1 |
| S.D | 5.70 | 3.21 | 4.05 | 2.46 | 3.54 |
| Kruskal –Wallis H test | 17.4 |

**Inference:**

 From the above table, it is observed that 46 percent of the respondents said that they need time for good sleep. Due to less sleep they are unable to concentrate on work. 68.3 percent of the respondents said that working for more than normal working hours has deleterious impact not only on performance but also on their personal life. Significant percentage of respondents (63.3 percent) are facing conflicts with their colleagues due to stress and they are losing temper also leading to inter personal conflicts. 66.67 percent of the respondents reported not having time for hobbies and other interests. Majority of the respondents feel that there is lack of motivation from their superiors and co – workers.

 Here calculated value of Kruskal – Wallis H test for the table is 17.4. The table value for chi – square value at 5 percent level of significance for 4 degrees of freedom table value is 9.488. This concludes that table value is less than the calculated value. So null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted i.e., the mean ranks of the respondents working in Private sector banks are not same.

Spending time with family, cultivating a hobby and allocating time for it, emotional control, conflict resolution ability are very significant in managing stress at work and in life. Interactions with employees revealed that wherever organizations provided such kind of work environment incidence of stress has been found to be less and thereby performance found to be better.

**Findings**

* There is higher incidence of stress among women employees working in Private sector banks and enough provision for management of stress at work.
* 50 percent of the respondents feel that there is lack of motivation from their superiors and co – workers which affect their performance. This often results in failure to complete work in time.
* 63.3 percent of the respondents said that their job does not permit them to take part in social and cultural activities due to more working hours especially women employees.
* 45 percent of the respondents have agreed that they lose temper when they are stressed at work. This may be due to problems in relationships, peer pressure, anxiety and depression.

**Suggestions**

* An effective communication system with employees should be adopted to regularly identify stressors at work /life.
* Adopt a mechanism for effective motivation to employees to handle challenging tasks and difficult situations. This will improve their performance and encourage them to work with more enthusiasm.
* Banks should provide flexible working hours or job sharing among employees. So that they can balance work life and personal life, they can also attend social and cultural activities.
* Banks should make compulsory physical exercises, yoga, meditation and workshops on stress management to the employees so that they learn mechanisms to reduce/ manage stress.

**Conclusion**

 In banking sector stress among employees is due to excess work pressure and work–life imbalance. In order to reduce it organizations should take necessary steps to overcome this problem. Communicating and consulting with the employees openly on regular basis can reduce stress. Work–life balance policies must take into account the pressures on employees who have responsibilities of parents, partners or dependents. Banks should also provide good work environment, training should be provided on regular basis, counselling should be given the employees who are suffering from stress and there must be motivation from superiors, co – workers and also from the management.

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