ABSTRACT

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 entrance of more private sector banks, downsizing, introduction of new technologies etc. The implications of the above said transformations have affected the social, economic and psychological domains of the bank employees and their relations. Evidence from existing literature states that more than 60% of the bank employees are facing serious stress issues. In this context, the researcher has undertaken a study to find out the causes of stress among bank employees of ICICI in Kollam district and to address their stress related problems.

Keywords: banking sector, bank employees, job stress

INTRODUCTION

Stress is an unavoidable consequence of modern living. It is a condition of strain that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person. Steers (1981) indicate that “Occupational stress has become an important topic of organisational behaviour for several reasons. 1. Stress has harmful psychological and physiological effects on employees, 2. Stress is a major cause of employee turnover and absenteeism, 3. Stress experienced by one employee can affect the safety of other employees, 4. By controlling dysfunctional stress; individual and organisation can be managed more effectively”.

The advent of technological revolution in all walks of life coupled with globalisation an privatisation policies have drastically changed conventional patterns in all sectors. The banking sector is of no exemption. The 1990s saw radical policy changes with regard to fiscal deficit and structural changes in India so as to prepare her to cope with the new economic world order. Globalisation and privatisation led policies compelled the banking sector to adjust and reform to have a competitive edge to cope up with multinational led environment. All these factors discussed above have contributed to job stress and related disorders among the employees. This study throws light into the pathogenesis of various stress related problems of bank employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job stress

The stress begins with demand and opportunity from environment for a person and ends with the individual’s response to that demand and opportunity (Shah, 2003).

An individual experiences dysfunction in organizations expectations and his own needs due to stress. It is now becoming a global issue which is affecting all the countries, all categories of employees and societies (Haider and Supriya, 2007).
Job stress is an unpleasant emotional situation that an individual experiences when the requirements of the job are not counter balanced with his ability to cope up the situation. It is a well-known phenomenon that expresses itself different in different work situations and affects the workers differently (Medi Bank private Inc., 2008).

Causes of Job Stress

High level of stressors like heavy work load and uncertainty about supervisor’s expectations are associated with physical symptoms. Stress also gets caused when employee does not fulfil the demand of job and supervisor (Rehman, 2010).

Work load, technological problems, higher targets, compensation and salary, outcomes of decisions, management and peer support behavior, longer time frame are the main factors of causing stress in employees (Badar, 2011).

Inflexible work hours, work overload, risky job and poor co-worker relations are the main contributor to job stress, which create dissatisfaction among the employees (Shahid, 2012).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Banking industry has traditionally operated in a moderately stable environment for decades, However, the banking business has changed significantly over the past 25 years especially in technological change. Innovations in banking services like retail banking, debit and credit cards, ATM, fund transfers, internet banking, mobile banking and other services have led to changes in the styles of management in banks. Due to these changes, the employees in the banking sector are experiencing a high level of stress.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is centred on Occupational stress among bank employees with special reference to ICICI, Kollam district.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of this study are:

i) To find out the stress level of ICICI bank employees.
ii) To understand the various causes for occupational stress.
iii) To study the effect of occupational stress among bank employees.
iv) To offer concrete suggestions to ICICI Bank on how to address stress related problems of employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study is descriptive in nature. In order to study the occupational stress among bank employees of ICICI, Kollam district, 10 employees from 10 branches in Kollam were selected based on simple random sampling. Hence total sample size was 100. Primary data was collected by using a structured questionnaire. Apart from that, secondary sources like newspapers, journals, official records, and thesis were used for the study. Collected data was analysed with the help of various statistical tools like percentage analysis, Likert’s point scale analysis and mean.
CONCLUSION

Occupational stress is a situation where job related factors interact with employees to change i.e., disrupt or enhance his/her psychological and/or the physiological condition, such that the person is forced to deviate from the normal functioning. Prolonged exposure to intense stress exerts harmful effects to the individual’s physiological, psychological and behavioural well-being. It should be recognised that certain amount of stress in organisation is desirable. Each individual needs a moderate amount of stress to be alert and capable of functioning. An organisation completely without stress might make for complacency among its participants, may neglect environmental danger and may be soon out of business. Each individual reacts to stress according to his/her ability to cope and the consequences maybe mediated by one’s personality and/or outlook to life. The best strategy of coping with stress is self-management. Every employee should be enhancing his self-awareness continually knowledge of our idiosyncrasies, preferences, and needs enables us to make choices which avoid stressful situations. It has been confirmed that some amount of stress is necessary for an individual as well as the organisation to stay alive and perform well. However, it is the employee’s level of stress that leads to biological malfunctioning and dysfunctional behaviour pattern. Training and workshops are the most common stress management strategies offered by banks. Meanwhile employees may resort to measures like going for trips, taking break from work, listening to music etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the employees

i) Become knowledgeable about stress.

ii) Take a systematic approach to problem solving.

iii) Come to terms with your feelings.

iv) Develop effective behavioural skills.

V) Establish and maintain a strong support network.

vi) Plan and execute successful life style changes.

vii) Concentrate on positive spiritual development.

viii) Develop a lifestyle that will act as a buffer against the effects of stress.

ix) Simplify your life. Attempt to foresee the occurrence of stress producing job.

x) Leave room within your coping range for those unanticipated stress situations.

To the banks

i) Recruitment should focus on right man to the right job.

ii) Try to make the work environment a more enjoyable place.

iii) Managers should try to develop a harmonious relationship with their subordinates.

iv) Work load should not be excessive.

v) Provide training programs/ workshops to make the employees more comfortable at work.
vi) Provide sufficient recreation to employees to reduce their stress levels.

vii) Investment of time and money in creating awareness towards stress related hazards of employees.

viii) Establishing a Stress Management Cell (SMC) and its branches in the banking sectors to help people influenced by stress related health problems.

ix) Clarity of vision and mission of banking and thereby help create responsibility in achieving both individual as well as organizational betterment.

REFERENCES


