

STRESS MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES AMONG BANKING SECTOR MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES IN THE BATTICALOA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the level of stress management competencies and effects of personal factors on it in banking sector managerial employees. The stress management competencies is measured using the dimension of respectful and responsible behavior, managing and communicating work, managing individual in a team and managing difficult situations. The data is collected using questionnaires from 84 managerial employees, randomly selected from the banks in the Batticaloa district. The data is analyzed using the statistical techniques of descriptive statistics, one sample t test, independent sample t test, ANOVA test, and correlation and cross tabulation techniques. The study found that the stress management competencies and its dimension of managerial employees are at high level. Personal profile of managers reveals significance difference in stress management competencies

Keywords: Stress, Stress Management Competencies, Managerial Employees, Banking Sector

INTRODUCTION

The stress affects peoples' mental health and caused to mental and physical distress (WHO, 2012). In an organization perspective, stress has implications of this for employee productivity and organizational performance (Oke and Dawson, 2008). Ross stated that "work stress has the potential to affect the performance of all levels of staff, ranging from senior management to the young and newly employed" (1995). However, certain extent "stress may prove an asset as long as it is tolerable and helps in creating healthy competition" (Aravinthon and Velnampy, 2012). Karunanithy and Ambika (2013) ensured the negative relationship between stress and performance.

The term stress is defined as "pressure or tension exerted on a material object" or "a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances" (Oxford Dictionaries). The level of stress is varying person to person based on their personality and nature of living context. "Spector mentioned that personality variables play an important role in the understanding of a range of behaviors in the workplace" (Ross, 1995).

In modern times, stress plays an important role for the successful or unsuccessful productive work activity, and in general in enjoying our lives. There are many factors causes for the work place job stress in an organization, such as setting unrealistic goals for work completion, number of hours work in a day, feeling of job insecurity, competing in the workplace for performance, external environment, interruptions (Rojas and Kleiner, 2000).

In case of banking sector, most of employees feel that their job is stress full. They suffer from work overload, lack of relationship with other co-workers and competitiveness in career development (Karunanithy and Ambika, 2013, P 94). Hence, this study intends to address the stress management competencies among managerial employees in commercial banks.

The stress management competencies of people are important to enhance individual well-being and organizational growth. Therefore this study attempts to identify the level of stress management competencies in working context among the managerial employees in banking sector in Batticaloa District.

Hence, this study raises the research problem as “what extent managerial employees have competencies to manage their stress among banks in the Batticaloa district?”

METHODOLOGY

The primary data is collected using questionnaires from 84 managerial employees who are randomly selected from the banks in the Batticaloa district. The data is analyzed using the statistical techniques of descriptive statistics, one sample t test, independent sample t test, ANOVA test, correlation and cross tabulation techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The stress management competencies are measure by the dimension of respectful and responsible behavior, managing and communicating work, managing individual in a team and managing difficult situations. The univariate analysis and one sample t test reveals that all the dimensions are at high level with significance level of 0.000 at the test value of 3.5, while managing individual in a team falls above satisfactory level with significance of 0.01 at the test value of 4.

In order to find the effect of age, experience, number of training obtained on the stress management competencies and its dimension, Pearson correlation analysis is executed. The coefficient of correlation reveals that there is negative weak significance correlation between age and dimension of managing individual in a team, managing difficult situations and stress management competencies is -0.328, -0.228 and -0.217, significance at 0.05 respectively. Whereas correlation between experience and managing individual in a team, managing difficult situations and stress management competencies also shows weak negative coefficient i.e., -0.319, -0.286 and -0.243, significance at 0.05 respectively. This shows that the managerial employees are not adequately involve in developing their competencies. Further, it also found that the correlation between number of training obtained and stress management competencies have positive weak insignificance coefficient.

Independent sample T test is executed with categorical variable of gender, family type: joint/ separate, marital status and banking sector with stress management competencies and its dimensions. Gender shows that female staffs have more competence in managing difficult situations, at the significance of 0.038. Family type shows that joint family have more stress management competency with its dimensions than separate, which is significance at 0.000. Marital status and banking sector are not show significance difference in stress management competency.

Further, the ANOVA test is taken to reveals the difference with the categorical variable of educational qualification, family size, designation, task involved and average monthly income. Educational qualification effects on the stress management competency at the significance of 0.03, where the master degree completed employees have more competency in the aspect of managing individual in a team and managing difficult situations at the significance 0.003 and 0.026 respectively. Next to this, graduates show the higher competency in stress management. The family size has only impact on the managing difficult situations, where family size of two recoded highest competency. Designation also did not reveal significance impact except

managing difficult situations which is at the significance of 0.048, where lower grade officer show the higher competency in managing difficult situations.

ANOVA test depicts that task involved also influence on the competency of managing and communicating work and managing difficult situations with significance of 0.048 and 0.004 respectively. It shows that front counter and loan related task shows lowest competency than other task, whereas pawning task shows the highest competency for stress management. In case of average monthly income, the ANOVA test shows that there is significance difference in stress management competency with significance of 0.000. And its all dimensions of respectful and responsible behavior, managing and communicating work, managing individual in a team and managing difficult situations also significance difference with the significance of 0.003, 0.001, 0.000 and 0.000 respectively, in which lowest income group recorded more competency than other income level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study is conducted to analyses the stress management competencies of managerial staff of banks in the Batticaloa district. Further this study explores the effect of personal factors in stress management competencies. The study found that the stress management competencies are at high level with its dimensions.

The analysis proof that the negative weak significance correlation between age and managing individual in a team, managing difficult situations and stress Management competencies. And experiences also have similar effect like age. It ensures the lack reflective practice and involvement of managerial employees to enhance their competencies. This shows poor reflective practice and leadership by experienced managers. Therefore special awareness have to be taken among managerial staff to have reflective practice and keep mind to improve their managerial competency over the experience. The analysis shows the insignificance positive effect of current training practice on the competency of staff. Hence, the current training practice and content is needed to be redesigned to enhance the stress management competencies of managerial staff.

The personal profiles of managerial staff also have significance effect on their stress management competency. Female staffs have more competencies in managing difficult situations than male. Joint family setting also produces more stress management capacity than separate. Educational qualification strengthen stress management competency. Therefore, management can bring awareness of joint family setting and it's important. Special attentions have to be taken to increase the capacity of male staff for managing difficult situations. Further, graduate can be encouraged to upgrade their academic qualification.

The family size has only impact on the managing difficult situations, where family size of two recoded highest competency. Higher designated employees face difficulty in managing difficult situations. Further, type task involved also influence on the competency of managers, such as communicating work and managing difficult situations. It shows that front counter and loan related task shows lowest competency than other task. So task delegations have to be revised in an effective manner.

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