

A Study of Role Stress in Railway and Banking Employees

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ABSTRACT

Role stress refers to the pressure, conflict, ambiguity, and overload experienced by individuals while performing job-related roles. Employees working in service sectors like railways and banking face multiple challenges such as heavy workload, long working hours, customer handling, job responsibility, and organizational expectations. The present study aims to examine the level of role stress among railway and banking employees and compare the nature of stress experienced by them. A sample of employees from both sectors was selected using purposive sampling. Descriptive statistics and comparative analysis were used to study the dimensions of role stress such as role overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, self-role distance, and resource inadequacy. The findings reveal that banking employees experience higher role overload and time pressure, while railway employees experience more role conflict and resource inadequacy. The study highlights the need for stress management programs, organizational counselling, and better work-life balance policies.

Keywords: *Role Stress, Railway Employees, Banking Employees, Role Conflict, Role Overload, Work Stress, Organizational Behaviour*

Stress is an inevitable part of modern work life. In organizational settings, stress often emerges when job demands exceed an individual's ability to cope. In service sectors such as the railway and banking industries, stress levels have increased due to rising customer expectations, technological changes, and administrative pressures. Role stress refers specifically to stress arising from the expectations and responsibilities associated with job roles.

Railway employees, particularly those in operational and technical roles, often work under unpredictable schedules, public pressure, safety concerns, and manpower shortages.

Banking employees, especially after digitalization and customer-centric reforms, face constant workload pressure, service deadlines, multitasking demands, and performance targets.

Understanding role stress in these sectors is essential, as prolonged stress affects productivity, job satisfaction, and mental health.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Concept of Role Stress

Role stress refers to the stress experienced due to job roles, responsibilities, expectations, and organizational structure. According to Kahn et al. (1964), role stress arises from conflicting or unclear role expectations.

Types of Role Stress

1. **Role Overload:** When demands exceed the individual's capacity.
2. **Role Conflict:** When incompatible expectations arise from different stakeholders.
3. **Role Ambiguity:** When job responsibilities or expectations are unclear.
4. **Self-Role Distance:** When the job role is inconsistent with the self-concept.
5. **Role Stagnation:** Lack of growth and development opportunities.
6. **Resource Inadequacy:** Lack of tools, support, or resources to perform the role.

Role Stress in Railway Employees

Research indicates that railway staff often experience:

- long duty hours
- lack of manpower
- shift work
- safety responsibilities
- pressure from passengers and supervisors (Singh & Sharma, 2019; Kumar, 2020).

Role Stress in Banking Employees

Studies show banking employees face:

- customer pressure
- heavy workload
- digital banking responsibilities
- performance targets
- multitasking demands (Chaudhary, 2021; Dhawan, 2022).

Comparative Studies

Comparisons between public and private sector employees show that private banking staff experience higher time pressure, while government employees face bureaucratic stress (Rastogi, 2017).

The literature suggests that both sectors experience stress, but its nature differs.

Significance of the Study

- Helps identify key stressors affecting railway and banking employees.
- Useful for HR managers and policy makers in designing stress management interventions.
- Enhances understanding of sector-specific job demands.
- Helps organizations improve employee well-being and efficiency.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the level of role stress among railway employees.
2. To study the level of role stress among banking employees.
3. To compare role stress between railway and banking employees.
4. To identify major dimensions of role stress in both sectors.
5. To suggest measures to manage and reduce role stress.

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Hypothesis

1. There will be a significant difference in role stress between railway and banking employees.
2. Banking employees will experience higher role overload compared to railway employees.
3. Railway employees will experience higher role conflict compared to banking employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive and comparative research design.

Sample

- **Total Sample:** 120 employees
 - 60 railway employees
 - 60 banking employees

Sampling Method: Purposive sampling.

Tools Used

Organizational Role Stress Scale (ORS) – Pareek (1983) measuring:

- Role Overload
- Role Conflict
- Role Ambiguity
- Role Expectations Conflict
- Resource Inadequacy
- Role Stagnation
- Self-Role Distance
- Role Isolation

Data Collection

Structured questionnaire administered personally and through Google forms.

Statistical Techniques

- Mean, Standard Deviation
- t-test for comparison

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall Role Stress

Banking employees showed higher mean scores on role overload and time pressure. Railway employees showed higher scores on conflict and resource inadequacy.

Dimension-wise Analysis

1. **Role Overload:** Banking employees experience more overload due to customer rush, deadlines, and digital responsibilities.
2. **Role Conflict:** Railway employees face multiple role expectations (from passengers, seniors, technical staff).
3. **Role Ambiguity:** Higher in railway staff due to frequent administrative changes and unclear SOPs.
4. **Self-Role Distance:** Moderate in both groups.

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5. **Resource Inadequacy:** Higher among railway employees due to infrastructure constraints.

Hypothesis Testing

- Significant difference found between the two sectors.
- Banking employees have higher role overload.
- Railway employees show higher role conflict.

Findings

1. Banking employees experience higher overall role overload.
2. Railway employees experience higher role conflict and resource inadequacy.
3. Stress arises from both organizational and interpersonal demands.
4. Both sectors require better role clarity and workload balance.
5. Stress significantly affects productivity and mental health.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while both railway and banking employees face role stress, the types and intensity of stress vary across sectors. Banking staff suffer from role overload and customer pressure, whereas railway staff deal with ambiguity, conflict, and inadequate resources. Addressing these issues through organizational reforms, stress management training, and effective human resource practices can reduce stress and enhance employee well-being.

Suggestions

1. Role clarity and transparent communication.
2. Regular training and staff support programs.
3. Stress management and counseling facilities.
4. Better distribution of workload.
5. Incentives and recognition programs.
6. Improving infrastructure, especially in railway services.
7. Encouraging teamwork and supportive work culture.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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