

A study of employee's stress in Indian Railways with reference to Mumbai Division

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Key words: Work culture, stress, work environment

Introduction

India becomes second most populous country in the world as per 2011 census. Transportation in the Republic of India is an important part of the nation's economy. India's public transport systems are among the most heavily used in the world. Indian Railway is a huge organisation under the control of Central Government and administered by the Railway Recruitment Board.

Objectives of the study

The study deals with a variety of aspects related to the work culture and working conditions in the internal administration of Indian railways. The policies of Railway Ministry and decisions by Railway Boards are extremely important in deciding the work environment of railway departments. The general managers of divisional levels are the superiors, who decide the work environment of departmental level. They have to follow good human resource practices, while effectively implementing the government regulations. This organization, primarily a service entity is directly linked to providing smooth transportation facilities to the society at large. This automatically increases the work pressure on its employees.

Significance of the study

Indian railway is a huge organization under the control of Ministry of Railways and administered by The Railway Recruitment Boards. It is classified into sixteen different zones for facilitating the effective administration and control. Each zone has certain number of divisions and under each division; there are certain number of departments. The organizational structure represents the scope of railway network. The number of employees is also huge to manage this network. Based on the vision of Indian railways, it has laid down

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certain norms, quality policies, discipline to be followed by every department. It forms a pattern of work culture in the organization and employees are supposed to follow it.

The word stress means a lot in today's corporate world. Lot of research is going on to understand the causes of stress and the measure to reduce it. Stress can be in work life or in personal life. Both can affect each other. It finally hampers the performance of an employee. The researcher found the need to understand whether the employees come across any stress in their work life and whether they face any stressful situations while performing the job.

Hypothesis of the study

The study intends on stress level of employees related to nature of work. Hence, the hypothesis of the study is as follows - **The stress levels of railway employees varies according to the nature of jobs performed by them.**

Research Methodology

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. Central Zone of Indian Railways is too large to be covered under the study. Therefore the study of work culture was undertaken with special reference to Mumbai division. It covers the employees from divisional office of Mumbai division. The researcher has determined the geographical coverage of the study, methods of sampling frame, the techniques of data collection and hypotheses testing.

Geographical coverage of the study

The study is undertaken in the geographical area of Maharashtra State with an emphasis on Mumbai region. The justification of selecting Mumbai region is as follows:

1. Mumbai is one of the most populous cities in the country. This financial capital of India is a home to 12655220 people. (2011 census).
2. This was a place to undertake a right type of pilot study for evaluation of work culture in Indian Railways.
3. Mumbai division has more challenges to face like increasing load of daily commuters, long distance passengers which has increased the pressure on limited staff and has created problems for developing healthy work culture.

Sampling frame

The study has covered a set of respondents from railway employees working at different levels in Mumbai division. This has been specified in the table below. There are ten departments in Mumbai division. The following table shows the universe size and the number of respondents selected for the study.

Table 1: Departmental Hierarchy-Wise Sampling Frame

| Levels Dept | Class D | Class C | Total |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Personnel | 13 | 13 | 26 |
| Accounts | 02 | 02 | 04 |
| Administration | - | 01 | 01 |
| Commercial | 75 | 75 | 150 |
| Electrical | 110 | 110 | 220 |
| Engineering | 110 | 110 | 220 |
| Mechanical | 50 | 60 | 110 |
| Medical | 20 | 20 | 40 |
| Operating | 120 | 120 | 240 |
| Signal and Telecom | 30 | 30 | 60 |
| Safety | 01 | 03 | 04 |
| Stores | - | 01 | 01 |
| Total | 531 | 545 | 1076 |

Source: Compiled from the field study.

Data collection

The data required for the purpose of present study comprised both from primary and secondary sources.

The secondary data was collected by visiting the administrative offices of Mumbai division, Central Zone at Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus. Records maintained by various departments of Mumbai division as well as the head offices of Central Railways were the sources to gather information. The secondary sources comprised of books from libraries like Mumbai University, S.N.D.T. University and Central Railway headquarters.

Direct visits to departments of Mumbai division were the major source of primary data collection. Almost equal representation was given to each department. Questionnaire was prepared which had questions related with general personal information, working conditions,

human resource policies and practices, attitude towards job, training in new fields, reward system to sincere and honest employees etc.

Techniques of data analysis

The researcher has collected qualitative and quantitative data from different respondent segments. The data being varied in nature required statistical treatment by using different techniques. Percentage analysis method has been used by researcher for data analysis and testing of hypothesis.

Scope of the study

The study will give insight into the personality and work related traits of the railway staff which is suitable for the healthy organizational climate. The core values need to be adopted by them. The study will describe the limitations and obstacles in implementation of the core values. The study also intends to suggest the promotion policies as well as performance appraisal procedure required for delivering a committed, positive productive railway staff.

Analysis of the study

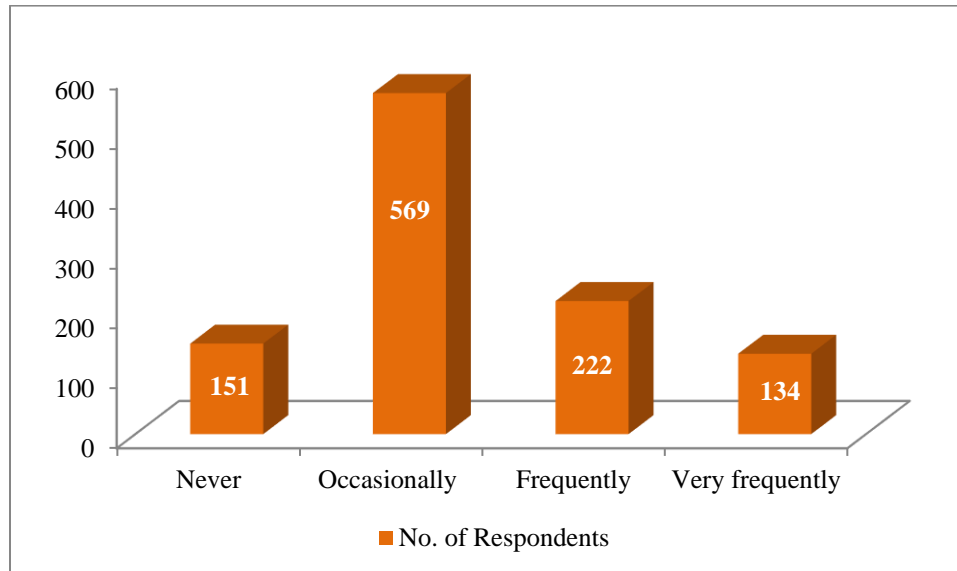
Table No. 2 – Stress in Work Life among Subordinate Staff

| Sr. No. | Level of stress | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Never | 151 | 14.00 |
| 2 | Occasionally | 569 | 52.90 |
| 3 | Frequently | 222 | 20.60 |
| 4 | Very frequently | 134 | 12.50 |
| | Total | 1076 | 100.00 |

Source: Compiled from field study.

The respondents were given the option of level of stress as never, occasionally, frequently or very frequently. Majority of them expressed that they experience stress occasionally. Their percentage is 52.90. Only 14 percent of them never experience stress

and 20.60 percent experience stress frequently. The percentage of respondents experiencing stress very frequently is 12.50.



Graph 1 - Stress in Work Life among Subordinate Staff

The graph represents the number wise classification of respondents in each category. The number of respondents is 151, 569, 222 and 134 who experience stress never, occasionally, frequently and very frequently respectively. The capacity to handle stress is different in each individual. The employees who experience stress frequently are running staff or technical staff. Motormen and guards experience stress very frequently. Railways implement certain measures to reduce and manage stress on such employees. More constructive techniques to be adopted for stress management.

Limitations of the study

Out of sixteen zones of Indian Railways, only central zone is considered for the study. Under central zone, there are five divisions viz. Mumbai, Pune, Bhusawal, Solapur and Nagpur. The focus of the study is on Mumbai division for the convenience of geographical

coverage. There is a scope to study work culture in other areas related to railways like workshops etc. The researcher has not covered these areas. Researcher has considered the human resource and stress related aspect for the study.

Conclusions of the study

1. The stress experienced by subordinates is closely related to their nature of duties.
2. Operating and technical staff experience the work stress most frequently.
3. Clerical staff experience stress less frequently or occasionally as their duties are of routine type.

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