

JOB STRESS AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF STATE AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Out of four State Agricultural Universities of Gujarat, two SAUs namely Anand Agricultural University and Junagadh Agricultural University were purposively selected. The present study was conducted with 160 teaching cadre employees (research and extension staff) from both the universities. The 40 respondents from cadre-I employees on the post of Professor and Associate Professor and 40 respondents from cadre-II employees on the post of Assistant Professor from each university were selected randomly. In regards with various indicators of job stress, majority of the employees had very low to low level of role expectation conflict, role erosion and technological change. Majority of them had high to very high level of role overload, while low to very low level of role ambiguity, role isolation, resource and personal inadequacy and inter role distance. Majority of the employees had medium to low level job stress ascribed to organizational leadership. Thus, majority (89.38 per cent) of the employees had medium to low overall job stress.

Keywords : job stress, occupational stress, state agricultural universities, job stress index

INTRODUCTION

Job stress is an increasing concern around the world, affecting not just employees’ health and well-being, but also effectiveness of organization/institution. Employees who are stressed are unable to do their jobs effectively, which ultimately decrease the output of the organization.

Every organization wishes to have good performance from its employees. But many-a-time, performance of employees is affected by stress which they feel in their job. For SAUs to play their role effectively, it is not only essential but inevitable to ensure that the circumstances causing job stress which can hinder the employee performance are minimized, if not eliminated. Thus, study of this job stress of employees is of vital importance for the organization. With this in view, the study on “Job stress among employees of SAUs of Gujarat state” was purposively selected with the following objectives:

OBJECTIVE

To study the job stress among the employees of SAUs of Gujarat state

METHODOLOGY

For this investigation, out of four SAUs of Gujarat, two SAUs namely Anand Agricultural University and Junagadh Agricultural University were purposively selected

and for selection of employees, teaching cadre employees (research and extension staff) were taken into consideration. From each of these two universities, 40 respondents from the cadre-I employees on the post of Professor and Associate Professor and 40 respondents from the cadre-II employees on the post of Assistant Professor were randomly selected making the total sample of 160 respondents. The interview schedule was prepared in light of the objectives and the respondents were interviewed at their workplace. Ex-post facto research design was used.

Respondents’ overall job stress index was determined by using the following formula:

$$SI = \left(\frac{R_1}{M_1}\right) \times W_1 + \left(\frac{R_2}{M_2}\right) \times W_2 + \dots + \left(\frac{R_n}{M_n}\right) \times W_r$$

Where,

- JSI** : Overall Job Stress Index of respondent
- R₁, R₂,.....,R_n** : Job stress score obtained by the respondent for the particular job stress indicator (received score for each indicator by each respondent)
- M₁, M₂,.....,M_n** : Potential score of the respondent for particular job stress indicator
- W₁, W₂,.....,W_n** : Relative weight value of the particular job stress indicator

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Table 1: Distribution of the employees of SAUs according to different components of job stress**

(n=160)

Sr. No.	Job stress components	Cadre of the employees				Overall	
		Cadre – I		Cadre – II			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Role ambiguity						
a	Very Low (Up to 04.80)	27	33.75	16	20.00	043	26.87
b	Low (04.81 to 09.60)	38	47.50	42	52.50	080	50.00
c	Medium (09.61 to 14.40)	13	16.25	19	23.75	032	20.00
d	High (14.41 to 19.20)	02	02.50	03	03.75	005	03.13
e	Very high (Above 19.20)	00	00.00	00	00.00	000	00.00
2	Role overload						
a	Very Low (Up to 03.20)	04	05.00	01	01.25	005	03.13
b	Low (03.21 to 06.40)	13	16.25	04	05.00	017	10.62
c	Medium (06.41 to 09.60)	21	26.25	21	26.25	042	26.25
d	High (09.61 to 12.80)	25	31.25	28	35.00	053	33.13
e	Very high (Above 12.80)	17	21.25	26	32.50	043	26.87
3	Role isolation						
a	Very Low (Up to 06.40)	28	35.00	20	25.00	048	30.00
b	Low (06.41 to 12.80)	32	40.00	30	37.50	062	38.75
c	Medium (12.81 to 19.20)	17	21.25	25	31.25	042	26.25
d	High (19.21 to 25.60)	03	03.75	03	03.75	006	03.75
e	Very high (Above 25.60)	00	00.00	02	02.50	002	01.25
4	Role erosion						
a	Very Low (Up to 06.40)	38	47.50	34	42.50	072	45.00
b	Low (06.41 to 12.80)	32	40.00	26	32.50	058	36.25
c	Medium (12.81 to 19.20)	09	11.25	15	18.75	024	15.00
d	High (19.21 to 25.60)	01	01.25	03	03.75	004	02.50
e	Very high (Above 25.60)	00	00.00	02	02.50	002	01.25
5	Resource and personal inadequacy						
a	Very Low (Up to 04.80)	28	35.00	22	27.50	050	31.25
b	Low (04.81 to 09.60)	32	40.00	24	30.00	056	35.00
c	Medium (09.61 to 14.40)	17	21.25	28	35.00	045	28.12
d	High (14.41 to 19.20)	03	03.75	05	06.25	008	05.00
e	Very high (Above 19.20)	00	00.00	01	01.25	001	00.63
6	Role expectation conflict						
a	Very Low (Up to 03.20)	42	52.50	39	48.75	081	50.62
b	Low (03.21 to 06.40)	26	32.50	27	33.75	053	33.13
c	Medium (06.41 to 09.60)	11	13.75	05	06.25	016	10.00
d	High (09.61 to 12.80)	00	00.00	04	05.00	004	02.50
e	Very high (Above 12.80)	01	01.25	05	06.25	006	03.75
7	Inter role distance						
a	Very Low (Up to 05.00)	39	48.75	27	33.75	066	41.25
b	Low (05.01 to 10.00)	33	41.25	39	48.75	072	45.00
c	Medium (10.01 to 15.00)	07	08.75	11	13.75	018	11.25
d	High (15.01 to 20.00)	01	01.25	03	03.75	004	02.50
e	Very high (Above 20.00)	00	00.00	00	00.00	000	00.00
8	Organizational leadership						
a	Very Low (Up to 06.40)	20	25.00	16	20.00	036	22.50
b	Low (06.41 to 12.80)	25	31.25	23	28.75	048	30.00
c	Medium (12.81 to 19.20)	32	40.00	29	36.25	061	38.13
d	High (19.21 to 25.60)	02	02.50	10	12.50	012	07.50
e	Very high (Above 25.60)	01	01.25	02	02.50	003	01.87

Sr. No.	Job stress components	Cadre of the employees				Overall	
		Cadre – I		Cadre – II			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
9	Technological change						
a	Very Low (Up to 04.80)	43	53.75	63	78.75	106	66.25
b	Low (04.81 to 09.60)	24	30.00	07	08.75	031	19.37
c	Medium (09.61 to 14.40)	11	13.75	09	11.25	020	12.50
d	High (14.41 to 19.20)	02	02.50	01	01.25	003	01.88
e	Very high (Above 19.20)	00	00.00	00	00.00	000	00.00
10	Overall job stress						
a	Very Low (Up to 20.00)	04	05.00	01	01.25	005	03.12
b	Low (20.01 to 40.00)	40	50.00	26	32.50	066	41.25
c	Medium (40.01 to 60.00)	34	42.50	43	53.75	077	48.13
d	High (60.01 to 80.00)	02	02.50	07	08.75	009	05.63
e	Very high (Above 80.00)	00	00.00	03	03.75	003	01.87

In relation to the query about various components of job stress, the data presented in Table-1 indicate that slightly less than half (47.50 per cent) employees in cadre-I and slightly more than half (52.50 per cent) of the employees in cadre-II had low role ambiguity. In consideration with both the cadres together, it can be concluded that majority (76.87 per cent) of the employees of SAUs had low to very low role ambiguity. The results are indicative of prevalence of good clarity and certainty about the role to be performed among the employees. This finding is in consonance with that reported by Patel *et al.* (2014).

In case of role overload, slightly less than one-third (31.25 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I and slightly more than one-third (35.00 per cent) of the employees from cadre-II had high role overload. The overall results indicate that majority of the employees (60.00 per cent) had high to very high role over load. The major reason behind this is the shortage of staff in SAUs. The staff being recruited is much less in comparison to staff being retired. Hence, the duties to be performed by the employees have been widened as they are required to play multifarious roles. This finding is in line with those reported by Patel *et al.* (2014).

The data depicted in Table-1 clearly indicate that majority (75.00 per cent) of the employees in cadre-I had low to very low role isolation. In relation to cadre-II, slightly less than two-fifth (37.50 per cent) of the employees had low role isolation. Overall, it can be concluded that majority (68.75 per cent) of the employees had low to very low role isolation. The reasons for such result might be good relations among staff members, good interpersonal communication and their tendency to help one another at work place. This finding is in agreement with that of Patel *et al.* (2014).

It is clear from the data presented in Table-1 that majority (87.50 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I felt very low to low role erosion. In case of cadre-II also, three-fourth (75.00 per cent) of the employees felt very low to low role erosion. Considering the overall scenario, it can be inferred that majority of the employees (81.25 per cent) felt very low to low level of role erosion. This reflects that the employees must be in a good state of receiving recognition for their good piece of work and must be assigned the duties and roles which are due to them on account of their expertise and potential. This finding is in consonance with that reported by Patel *et al.* (2014).

It is obvious from the data depicted in Table-1 that majority (75.00 per cent) of the employees in cadre-I felt low to very low level of resource and personal inadequacy. In context to cadre-II, slightly more than one-third (35.00 per cent) of the employees felt medium level of resource and personal inadequacy. Overall, it can be concluded that majority (66.25 per cent) of the employees of SAUs felt low to very low level of resource and personal inadequacy. This indicates that the employee must be getting fairly enough resources, if not plenty to perform the roles and their job experience as well as required trainings must have made them at least fairly enough competent to perform the roles. This finding is support from the finding of that reported by Patel *et al.* (2014).

The data presented in Table-1 indicate that majority (85.00 per cent) of the employees of SAUs from cadre-I felt very low to low role expectation conflict. In relation to cadre-II also, majority (82.50 per cent) of the employees felt very low to low role expectation conflict. All in all, it can be concluded that majority (83.73 per cent) of the employees

of SAUs felt very low to low role expectation conflict. The probable reason might be the observance of the management principle of unity of command in the SAUs or the employees might not have felt it much difficult in satisfying the different role demands, if the case was so. This finding is in agreement with that of Patel *et al.* (2014).

A perusal of data presented in Table-1 reveals that vast majority (90.00 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I had very low to low inter role distance. In case of cadre-II also, majority (82.50 per cent) of the employees had low to very low inter role distance. Overall, it can be inferred that 86.25 per cent of the employees of SAUs had low to very low level of inter role distance. This is indicative of the fact that the employees must have been able to keep due balance between their social and organizational roles. This finding is in line with those reported by Patel *et al.* (2014).

The data depicted in Table-1 clearly indicate that two-fifth (40.00 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I felt medium job stress on account of organizational leadership. In context to cadre-II, slightly more than one-third (36.25 per cent) of the employees felt medium level of job stress. In consideration with both the cadres together, it can be concluded that majority (68.13 per cent) of the employees felt medium to low level of job stress ascribed to organizational leadership. The probable reason for the above result might be good working style of head who would have created congenial atmosphere in which employees could work without fear or stress.

The data depicted in Table-1 clearly indicate that slightly more than half (53.75 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I had very low job stress respectively on account of technological change. In case of cadre-II, majority (78.75 per cent) of the employees were observed with very low job stress on account of technological change. The overall results indicate that majority (85.62 per cent) of the employees of SAUs had very low to low level of job stress on account of technology change. This indicates that employees might have felt quite comfortable with new technology or they might have enjoyed working with new technology

It is clear from the data presented in Table 1 that the overall job stress of half (50.00 per cent) of the employees from cadre-I was low. In regards with cadre-II, more than half (53.75 per cent) of the employees had medium overall job stress. All in all, it can be concluded that majority (89.38 per cent) of the employees of SAUs had medium to low overall job stress. All in all, it can be concluded that majority (89.38 per cent) of the employees of SAUs had medium to low overall job stress.

This finding is in consonance with that reported by Mohan and Basco (2000), Swarnlatha (2000), Manjunath (2004), Kumar (2006), Sandika (2006), Mishra *et al.* (2007), Mol (2010), Joshi (2012) and Patel *et al.* (2014).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present investigation lead to conclude that majority of the employees of State Agricultural University had medium to low job stress. Out of all nine components, role overload seems relatively more important with more number of respondents in high to very high category; which might be on account of vacant posts and unfair distribution of work. This implies for due effort to be made at appropriate level to mitigate undue stress among employees.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The overall job stress of the employees of cadre-II was comparatively higher than that of cadre-I. It could be revealed during the investigation that employees of cadre-II had higher workload as compared with cadre-I that is reflected in data also and this might have increased the job stress among cadre-II employees. Higher workload might be on account of vacant posts and unfair distribution of work. Hence, university authorities should make every effort and take due care to reduce employee stress by filling vacant posts and applying the principle of division of work, wherever felt necessary.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest among researchers.

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