

An Analysis of Organisational Role Stress Among the Extensionists in ICAR- Krishi Vigyan Kendras

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ABSTRACT

Stress has become inevitable in today's competitive environment. Though moderate level of stress is said to be a motivator but high level of stress has an adverse impact both on the individual as well on the organization's performance. The present study attempts to examine the organizational role stress among the Extensionists working in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras. A total sample size of 240 Extension professionals were selected by simple random sampling technique from the four zones viz., Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute (ATARI) Zone I, Zone II, Zone IV and Zone VII. The scale developed by Pareek (1983) was used with suitable modifications to study the organizational role stress. Extensionists were significantly different on the various components of role stress and Inter Role Distance was given the highest rank. The comparison among the zones showed that the zones were significantly different on the organizational role stress and the components Inter Role Distance, Role Stagnation, Role Expectation Conflict, Role load and Role Inadequacy also were significantly different. Further, comparison for each role stressor for extensionists based on their gender showed significant difference in role stress experienced across the group.

Keyword: Extension professional, experience, gender, krishi vigyan kendra, organizational role stress

INTRODUCTION

Stress generally refers to the strain that arises from the conflict between demand from the environment and our ability to perform which leads to emotional and physical pressure. In the present competitive world, stress has become a common phenomenon. Stress is not always harmful as mild stress act as a motivating factor. Selye (1936) made the first reference to Stress in humans which was conceptualised as a nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon.

Over the years, ICAR has developed and evolved an effective frontline extension which got accolades worldwide. ICAR has established a total of 680 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) under different host institutions SAUs, CAU, ICAR Institutes, Deemed Universities (DUs), State Governments, Public Sector Undertaking (PSU), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Other Educational Institutions (OEI) which aims at assessment, refinement, demonstration and large scale adoption of technology/products through various activities. Extension services focuses on providing

research based information, educational programs and technology.

Poor financing of extension programmes has been a long standing problem facing the services (Adams 1984). The extensionists are subjected to enormous demands both from the clientele and their organization. They have to deal with the clients, fulfilling various roles and at the same time, respond to their administrative duties within the organization. These conditions may lead to development of stressful situation for the Extensionists. Nowadays organizations have become a potential source of stress with employees' workloads and professional deadlines increasing manifold.

These advancements have created stress among employees in the form of occupational stress. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) report, inefficiencies arising from occupational stress may cost up to 10 percent of a country's GNP (Midgley, 1997). In Kentucky, Fetsch et al (1984) noted that extension professionals had higher mean stress level score than normal adult and that prolonged exposure to such high

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stress levels make them susceptible to physiological and emotional stress-related problems. Considering the significance of the organizational role stress which affects the productivity, the present investigation was formulated to study the organizational role stress among the Extension professionals working in the ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendras in India.

METHODOLOGY

There were eight zones in ICAR at the time of data collection. From the 8 zones of ICAR- ATARI, 4 zones were selected purposively based on the number of Krishi Vigyan Kendras in each zones and number of farmers and extension personnel trained in a year. Hence, four selected zones were, zone I, zone II, zone IV and zone VII. From each zones, 60 Extension Professionals from the Krishi Vigyan Kendras were selected using simple random sampling technique making a total of 240.

For the analysis of organizational role stress, Udai Pareek's (1983) scale with slight modification was used.

This scale uses a five point Likert scale with the value ranging from 0 to 4. Each component of the ORS scale consist of five items, hence a total of 50 statements. The total score ranges from 0 to 200. Norms table was used to analyse the data by Khanna (1986) cited in Pareek (1993). An Extensionist, for the present study, was operationalized as an Extension Professional having acquired a specialised degree in agricultural sciences or allied sciences and directly in contact with the clientele/farmers. Non-parametric tests namely Friedman's test, Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test and Mann Whitney test were used for analysing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The level of organizational role stress was analysed using Khanna 1996 norms. It is clear from the table 1 that the mean of organizational role stress is quite high. The high score of Extensionist may be due to the nature of their work as they have to deal directly with the clientele one hand and do the administrative work at the organization on other hand.

Extensionists perceived high level of stress on Inter Role Distance, Role Expectation Conflict, Role overload, Role Isolation and Resource Inadequacy while moderate level of role stress on the dimensions of Role Stagnation, Role Erosion, Personal Inadequacy, Self-Role Distance, and Role ambiguity.

Table 1: Organizational Role Stress score of Extensionists

Role Stress component	Mean	Remark
Inter-Role Distance (IRD)	11.30	High
Resource Inadequacy (RIn)	10.54	High
Role Isolation (RI)	10.51	High
Role Overload (RO)	9.91	High
Role Expectation Conflict (REC)	9.09	High
Role Stagnation (RS)	6.85	Moderate
Role Erosion (RE)	9.52	Moderate
Personal Inadequacy (PI)	7.98	Moderate
Self-Role Distance (SRD)	8.16	Moderate
Role Ambiguity (RA)	6.50	Moderate
Organizational Role Stress (ORS)	91.41	High

The comparison of the organisational role stress of the Extensionists in four zones was analysed using kruskal wallis test. Since the p-value was found to be less than the value at one and five percent level of significance (Table 2), there is significant difference among the Extensionists of the four zones on the organizational role stress. Among the components of organizational role stress, Inter Role Distance, Role stagnation, Role expectation conflict, Role overload, and Role inadequacy also showed significant difference among the Extensionists of the four zones both at one and five percent level of significance.

The mean rank for organizational role stress was highest for zone I followed by zone II, zone IV and zone VII. This trend was seen both in Inter Role distance and Role Inadequacy while for role stagnation mean rank of zone II was highest followed by zone IV, zone I and zone VII and for role overload, zone I was highest followed by zone IV, zone II and zone I.

Table 2: Organizational role stress of extensionists in different zones based on mean ranks as per kruskal wallis test

Role stress component	MEAN RANKS(N=240)				chi square	Asymp. Sig.
	Zone	Zone	Zone	Zone		
	I(n=60)	II(n=60)	IV(n=60)	VII(n=60)		
IRD	152.07	125.89	115.86	88.18	26.417**	.000
RS	133.90	137.32	126.08	84.70	22.301**	.000
REC	121.96	139.29	127.75	93.00	14.682**	.002
RE	128.12	124.95	114.95	113.98	1.916	.590
RO	152.81	102.63	118.16	108.41	19.246**	.000
RI	114.57	103.31	112.28	121.85	2.202	.717
PI	117.00	111.15	116.93	116.93	1.966	.546
SRD	114.56	118.43	124.51	124.51	3.029	.605
RA	114.88	126.14	120.49	120.49	.799	.850
RIn	165.40	118.42	99.09	99.01	37.236**	.000
ORS	136.63	129.36	122.23	93.78	13.158**	.004

** Significance at 1% level, * significance at 5% level

Friedman's test was used for studying the variation in the organizational role stress components among Extension professionals. The p-value was found to be less than the table value at one and five percent significance level (Table 3). Therefore, it was concluded that there exists a significant difference between the ORS components among the Extensionists.

There are several dimensions of organizational role stressors such as Inter-Role Distance which covers work home conflict, e.g. work in the bank interfering with the demands at home (Penson *et al*, 2000). Inter Role Distance is accorded the highest mean rank showing that the work at the office interferes with their work at home. It can be inferred from the result that the extensionists experienced the maximum amount of stress due to inter role distance. Resource inadequacy was given the next highest mean rank. Resource inadequacy pertains to unavailability of monetary and non-monetary incentives at work (Piko, 2005). Baba (2012) also reported in his study that Inter Role Distance was the top component of stress faced by the doctors followed by Resource Inadequacy. The third highest stressor was Role Erosion among the Extension Professionals. Predominance of Role Erosion in the public sector (Sandra & Frans 2002) companies has been reported by many researchers (Mohan & Chauhan 1999).

Table 3: Analysis of component of organizational role stress among Extensionists based on the mean ranks as per Friedman's test

Role stress component	Mean rank	Rank
Inter-Role Distance (IRD)	7.64	I
Resource Inadequacy (RIn)	6.90	II
Role Erosion (RE)	6.80	III
Role Stagnation (RS)	6.09	IV
Role Overload (RO)	6.33	V
Role Expectation Conflict (REC)	5.40	VI
Role Isolation (RI)	4.88	VII
Self-Role Distance (SRD)	4.47	VIII
Personal Inadequacy (PI)	4.46	IX
Role Ambiguity (RA)	3.04	X
Friedman's test statistics		
Chi- Square	446.997**	
Df	9	
Asymp. Sig.(p)	.000	

** Significance at 1% level, * significance at 5% level

The analysis on the basis of years of work experience of the respondent was done using kruskal wallis test. The p-value was less than the table value at five percent significance level (Table 4). Therefore, it is inferred that there was statistically significant difference between the

respondent on organisational role stress on the basis of their experience. This has also been reported by Patwardhan *et al*. (2014) in their study on managers in Indian hospitality industry. Bano and Jha (2011) showed that there was significant difference in ORS between the groups based on their degree of work experience. Among the components of organizational role stress, Self Role Distance was statistically significant. Self Role Distance refers to the demands of the job that may conflict with one's personal beliefs, e.g. blood transfusion is not permitted by certain religious beliefs (Begat *et al*, 2005). The mean rank of the organizational role stress for group 1(1-10 years of experience) was higher when compared to the other groups. Baba (2012) also inferred that the more experienced doctors have slightly lower level of stress, when compared with other two groups. Junior employees face more stress on account of their position in the organization and the expectation of the senior. They had to work hard and show their ability to reach higher position in the organization. Consequently, they experienced more stress. This has also been reported by Rao and Chandariah (2012).

Table 4: Analysis of organizational role stress among extensionists on the basis of their experience.

Role stress component	Mean ranks (n =240)			chi square	Asymp . Sig.
	Exp(1-10yrs) (n=87)	Exp(11-21yrs) (n=86)	Exp(21yrs and above) (n=67)		
ORS	139.69	113.18	112.69	7.10*	.029
IRD	110.46	129.86	121.52	3.44	.178
RS	125.84	113.65	122.36	1.41	.493
REC	121.17	112.73	129.60	2.26	.322
RE	109.36	128.98	124.08	3.77	.152
RO	115.16	123.62	123.43	.824	.662
RI	121.86	123.90	114.37	.77	.679
PI	120.02	118.49	123.69	.22	.896.
SRD	135.11	108.59	116.82	6.70*	.035
RA	121.74	123.74	114.73	.68	.710
RIn	126.42	116.31	118.19	1.03	.595

** Significance at 1% level, * significance at 5% level

Mann Whitney test was conducted to find out the differences in the stress level between male and female extensionists. Since the calculated p value is less than the table value both at one and five percent level of significance, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between male and female extension professionals on the level of organizational role stress (Table 5). It is in confirmation with the study of Chaturvedi (2011) on men and women in government institutes. The results of table 5 revealed statistically significant difference between men and women on Role Stagnation, Role Erosion and Role Isolation for which the p-value was less than 0.05. Role Stagnation and Role Isolation was also reported as significant by Patwardhan

et al. (2014). Women had significant higher mean rank for Role Stagnation and Role Isolation except Role Erosion which was higher for males. This result is in line with the findings of Abbas *et al.* (2012)

Table 5: Analysis of organizational role stress among extensionist on the basis of gender

Role stress component	Mean (n=240)		Mann whitney z	Sig
	Male n=157	Female n=83		
Inter-Role Distance (IRD)	117.55	126.08	-.91	.361
Role Stagnation (RS)	112.01	136.56	-2.61**	.009
Role Expectation Conflict (REC)	116.67	127.75	-1.18	.236
Role Erosion (RE)	132.29	117.12	-2.55*	.031
Role Overload (RO)	116.50	128.06	-1.23	.215
Role Isolation (RI)	113.25	134.22	-2.24*	.025
Personal Inadequacy (PI)	114.45	131.95	-1.87	.061
Self-Role Distance (SRD)	112.41	125.81	-1.50	.212
Role Ambiguity (RA)	115.22	130.49	-1.62	.103
Resource Inadequacy (RIn)	116.71	127.67	-1.17	.240
Organizational role stress	110.96	138.55	-2.93**	.003

** Significance at 1% level, * significance at 5% level

CONCLUSION

Organizational role stress among the extensionists has been investigated in this study. It was revealed in the study that the role stress experienced by the extensionist was different among the zones. This may be attributed to the fact that different zones had different organizational structures. They also have difference in social and economic setting besides having different cropping patterns. Among the role stressor, inter role distance was accorded the highest place. Experience was also affecting the organizational role stress. More experienced extensionists were having less organizational role stress in comparison to the less experienced extensionists. It can be concluded that, cumulatively, women extensionists are experiencing significantly higher stress arising from multiple roles at work, home and other factors than men Extensionists. This study confirms that people in different region experience different level of stress and people working in the same organization also perceived difference in the stress level. Specific targeted solution to reduce the stress level among the extensionists in different zones should be formulated. Srivastava (2010) also concluded in his study by recommending tailor made solution for different parts of the organization. By integrating the self with the role, the role stress can be lessened and a person's effectiveness in the organisation can be enhanced. In order to reduce job stress among extensionists, organizations should clearly outline and communicate its expectations, provide opportunity to develop their career, provide training and move to higher positions in the organization. Attention can also be paid

to gender differences as organizations attempt to provide support and design programs to reduce stress levels of women Extensionists. Appropriate organizational development interventions need to be implemented by ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendras for the reducing organizational role stress and enhancing organisational productivity

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