

Impact of Role Stagnation on Employees' Sensitivity

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Abstract-Organizations are a complex system of people and processes and from past two decades it has become more and more multifaceted. Organization does not hire people's they hire individuals with certain mindsets who bring both personal and professional demands in the workplace, at the same time their society also tag numerous expectations with them. Thus stress is evident, organizational Role stress due to role stagnation create stress which leads to conflict within an individual, now-a-days due to high pressure career demands as well as personal demands individual always feels under stress, however these conflicts can be avoided to some extent if jobs are designed properly and at the same time the sensitivity level of an employee can be checked so that employees' can be guided towards their conflicting situations.

Keywords: *Equity Sensitivity, Gender, Job status, Organizational Role Stress, Role space conflict, Role stagnation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

For hundreds of years, employers have searched for an answer to a common managerial question "How do I get the most from my employees'?" Irrespective of the fact that, what type of employees' they have and what type of systems/cultures are there in the organization.

Organizations consist of system and process, structure and goals while individual comes with personality, competence and need or expectations. Individuals occupy number of roles in the organization and each role demands are variant, which try to pull the individual and exert pressure mentally and physically, as a result causing stress and conflict to people. The interesting part of all this process is that the coping strategy to handle this stress and conflict varies with individual. Why these differences exist? What organizations should do to eliminate it? Reasons can be individual or organizational. Whatever be the reason but outcome always affects individual and subsequently to the organization.

One of the motivational theories that tried to explain the reason behind this is Adam's Equity Theory; it explains why the reaction of different type of stress is different on people and at the same time why the reaction of inequity is different for different group of people. The concept of equity sensitivity is based on the idea that there are individual differences in the ways people perceive and respond to equity, and that these preferences are influenced by characteristics such as nationalities, age and gender, protestant work ethic, Machiavellianism, and self-esteem, (Huseman et al, 1987; King et al, 1994). Employees' who are highly "equity sensitive" prefer for their ratio of inputs and outputs to be equal to others. They generally prefer this

equity ratio because they feel distress when they are under-rewarded and guilt when they are over-rewarded.

A) Role Stagnation

Role Stagnation is the result of experiencing lack of growth in one's role. Growth can be in career or competence. After occupying a role for a long time, an individual may feel insecure in taking up a new role. He may keep on stagnating in his old role in which he feels more comfortable and secure. RS is commonly encountered when the role occupant lacks the skills needed for the new role. For example, a software programmer of long-standing would experience RS on being promoted as a project manager if he does not have project management skills. Lack of delegation by a boss to his/her subordinates or the boss trying to do his/her subordinates work is often due to RS experienced by the boss.

B) Equity sensitivity

Adams (1965) suggested organizational equity exists when an individual perceives the ratio of output (e.g., compensation) to input (e.g., work performance) is equivalent, compared to a cognitively chosen referent (e.g., coworkers). When perceived inputs and outputs are identified, an individual assesses the balance between his or her inputs and organizations' outcomes by comparing the other individual's inputs and outputs. The other individual could be her coworkers with similar skills or a group of individuals working at different organizations, performing similar jobs with similar skills. Perceived equity exists as long as there is a balance between her inputs and outputs compared to the other's inputs and outputs. Adams (1965) claimed that inequity exists for an individual, "whenever he perceives that the ratio of his outcomes to inputs and the ratio of other's outcomes to inputs are unequal". Adams (1963) suggested there are two different types of inequity a person can experience, and both types of inequity create tension. For instance, a person experiences the first type of inequity when she receives less pay than her coworker when both are performing the same tasks and producing the same results with similar skills. The other type of inequity that a person can experience is when she receives more pay than her coworker when they are performing the same tasks and producing the same results with similar skills: the feeling of being overpaid. Equity theory claims that both overpaid and underpaid situations create tension, and this tension motivates a person to reduce or eliminate inequity with different responses. The strength of motivation to reduce or

eliminate the amount of inequity depends upon the magnitude of tension in a person.

C) Job Status

A job is a group of homogenous tasks related by similarity of functions. When performed by an employee in an exchange for pay, a job, a job consists of duties responsibilities and tasks that are 1) defined and specific, and 2) can be accomplished, quantified, measured, and rated. From a wider perspective, a job is synonymous with a role and includes the physical and social aspects of a work environment. Often individuals identify themselves with their job or role and derive motivation from its uniqueness or usefulness. An increased job status according to Herzberg et al (1959) provides individuals with both increased hygiene (e.g. pay, bonus, perks) and Motivator factors (e.g. power, recognition etc) it is believed that this variable will be positively associated with job satisfaction responses.

Men and women report different reactions to stress, both physically and mentally. They attempt to manage stress in very different ways and also perceive their ability to do so — and the things that stand in their way — in markedly different ways. Several Findings suggest that while women are more likely to report physical symptoms associated with stress, they are doing a better job connecting with others in their lives and, at times, these connections are important to their stress management strategies.

Further, a review conducted by Nelson and Quick indicated that employed women experience greater stress than both non-employed women and men because of several unique stressors faced by employed women. Baruch, Biener and Barnett on the other hand, found that non-employed women experience great stress than employed women, while Martocchio and O'Leary who undertook a meta-analysis of 15 studies that examined sex differences in occupational stress, found no differences in experienced and perceived work stress.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chui KaLok (2007) examined the predictive relationship between employees' equity perception on their reward systems and the pay satisfaction. Yet, the perception of equity varies among people and is hard to be measured objectively. He also examines the moderating effect of employees' personality type, equity sensitivity, on the constructed relationship. Results indicate that, in general, if employees' perceive their reward system equitable, they score higher on pay satisfaction. In addition, this positive relationship is found to be particularly strong for the equity sensitive group than the equity insensitive group, further confirming the influences of individual personality on the constructed relationship.

Alma Mintu-Wimsatt investigated the relationship between equity sensitivity and negotiators' cooperative behaviors among a sample of Mexican industrial exporters.

Results suggest that benevolent demonstrated significantly higher levels of cooperation than entitled negotiators. The findings also provide some evidence that supports the positive association between equity sensitivity and negotiators' perceptions of their own cooperative behaviors.

Eunhui Lee (2007) examined the relationship between the Big Five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) and equity sensitivity and transformational leadership behavior, as well as interaction between equity sensitivity and specific personality traits (extraversion and agreeableness). Agreeableness and openness to experience have a significant positive relationship with transformational leadership behavior. However, when the model includes equity sensitivity, the effect of agreeableness disappears. Conscientiousness and neuroticism do not have any significant relationship with transformational leadership behavior. In addition, extraversion does not positively relate to transformational leadership behavior, and equity sensitivity does not interact with extraversion and agreeableness when predicting transformational leadership behavior. When equity sensitivity is measured by the EPQ, the results show a positive relationship between equity sensitivity and transformational leadership behavior, while there is no significant relationship when equity sensitivity is measured by the ESI.

Dongho Kim (2009) examined both gender and individual differences using the equity sensitivity construct in two types of under-rewarded situations within a collectivistic culture, Korea. The results of the study illustrated that gender differences in equity sensitivity exist between Korean male and female students. Analyses of previous studies and the results of this study demonstrated the efficacy of equity sensitivity theory. Korean workers felt more entitled than did workers from other countries in earlier studies. The significant finding was that Korean female students felt more entitled than did Korean male participants and their behaviors as entitled was consistent with the dimensions of equity sensitivity theory.

Deondra S. Conner (2002) examined the role of equity sensitivity as an individual difference variable in the perception of organizational justice and the stress process. Results indicated that there is a relationship between Equity sensitivity and both procedural interactional justice perceptions. Equity sensitivity moderated the relationship between both procedural justice and interactional justice perceptions and various important outcomes of interests (satisfaction, turnover, stress). Moreover; equity sensitivity caused some aspects of organizational justice to be more important and/or effective than others for different individuals. In addition, procedural and interactional justice perceptions were shown to predict process and outcome related stress.

Subha Imtiaz & Shakil Ahmad (2009) studied how stress affects employee performance, managerial responsibility, & consequences of high stress They identified the factors

affecting stress as ; personal issues, lack of administrator support, lack of acceptance for work done, low span over work environment, unpredictability in work environment & inadequate monetary reward. Analysis showed immense support for negative relationship between stress and job performance; greatly affected career change over and job satisfaction, errors in treatment, knowledge. The results showed that with every unit; increase in personal dilemmas, decrease in financial reward, decrease in influence over work environment, decrease in supervisor support there would be decreases in job performance. Higher level of stress existed with no managerial concern for solution consequently lowering the employee performance; staking organizational reputation and loss of skilled employees', these situations call for immediate concern from organization management for employing effective stress management practices to increase employee satisfaction and overall employee performance.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives of the study were formulated:

1. To find out the effects of equity sensitivity, job status and gender on Role stress arising from Role Stagnation conflict in employees' working in private sector companies.
2. To enumerate the interactive effects of equity sensitivity, job status and gender on Role stress arising from Role Stagnation conflict organization in employees' working in private sector companies.

IV. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

4.1- Variables Studied:-

4.1.1- Independent Variables:

4.1.1.1- Equity Sensitivity:- Equity sensitivity as an independent variable has two levels-

- (a) Equity Sensitive Employees'
- (b) Non Equity Sensitive Employees'

4.1.1.2- Job Status:-

Job Status as an independent variable has two levels-

- (a) Upper Job Status
- (b) Middle Job Status

4.1.1.3- Gender:- Gender as an independent variable has two levels-

4.2- Sampling Procedure:

The sample of 160 employees' has been drawn by simple random sampling technique from the 16 private sector companies in Delhi, Gurgaon and Noida. 10 employees' from each company were selected using random sampling.

All the employees' selected for the sample were executives in the company. The data was collected from the following companies:

Coca Cola India, Pizza Hut, Costa Coffee, Varun Beverages, KLAUS Multi parking system Pvt.Ltd., Bagrry's India Ltd., NKC conveyors, Automagindiapvt. Ltd, Mech tech process & conveying system, Nerolac, Eastman industries ltd, Grip engineers pvt ltd, PAN India Ltd., Denon India, Sab Miller India, Minda Silica Ltd., Yamaha Motors, Pudumjee Hygiene products Ltd. , CJ International Hotels Ltd. , DLF Ltd., Indiabulls, Sahara India (Media)

4.3- Research Paradigm

LEVEL S	UPPER JOB STATU S	MIDDL E JOB STATU S	Σ		
	MALE	FEMA LE	MAL E	FEM ALE	
EQUIT Y SENSIT IVE	(1) 20	(2) 20	(3) 20	(4) 20	80
NON EQUIT Y SENSIT IVE	(5) 20	(6) 20	(7) 20	(8) 20	80
Σ	40	40	40	40	160

4.4- Tools for Data Collection:

The following two psychological tests were used for collecting data from the sample respondents...

- a) Organizational Role Stress Scale: Developed by Dr. Udai Pareek
- b) Equity Sensitivity Questionnaire: Developed by Jason Matthew

4.5- Tools for Statistical Analyses of Data:

In the present study the following two statistical tools for the analysis of data have been used:-

- a) F-test
- b) t-test

4.6- Hypotheses

The seven basic null hypotheses for the present study are:

H_{0s} :(F. Test)

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 1. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity | = | 0 |
| 2. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Job Status | = | 0 |
| 3. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Gender | = | 0 |
| 4. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status | = | 0 |
| 5. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Gender | = | 0 |
| 6. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Job Status \times Gender | = | 0 |
| 7. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status \times Gender | = | 0 |

ORS = Organizational Role Stress

RS = Role Stagnation

V. EXPERIMENT AND RESULTS-

- A) *Test:* Organizational Role Stress due to Role Stagnation as a function = f (Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status \times Gender)

H_{0s} :(F. Test)

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 1. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity | = | 0 |
| 2. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Job Status | = | 0 |
| 3. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Gender | = | 0 |
| 4. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status | = | 0 |
| 5. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Gender | = | 0 |
| 6. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Job Status \times Gender | = | 0 |
| 7. | ORS due to RS is | = | f Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status \times Gender | = | 0 |

ORS = Organizational Role Stress

RS = Role Stagnation

THE ANOVA SUMMARY (α .05)

ORS DUE TO RS : THE ANOVA SUMMARY ($2 \times 2 \times 2$ TRIVARIATE FACTORIAL DESIGN)

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	S. S.	df	M. S.	F	P
TREATMENT	344.54	7	49.22		
EQUITY SENSITIVITY	16.26	1	16.26	0.97	
JOB STATUS	35.16	1	35.16	2.09	
GENDER	20.31	1	20.31	1.21	
EQUITY SENSITIVITY \times JOB STATUS	150.16	1	150.16	8.92	< 0.01
EQUITY SENSITIVITY \times GENDER	0.51	1	0.51	0.03	
JOB STATUS \times GENDER	1.41	1	1.41	0.08	
EQUITY SENSITIVITY \times JOB STATUS \times GENDER	120.73	1	120.73	7.17	< 0.01
ERROR	2559.05	152	16.84		
TOTAL	2903.59	159	18.26		

$$F_{0.05}(1, 152) = 3.89$$

$$F_{0.01}(1, 152) = 6.76$$

B) Details of Significant Results:

1. The retained H_0 s (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6) show that main effects (Equity Sensitivity, Job Status & Gender), bivariate interactions (Equity Sensitivity \times Gender & Job Status \times Gender) are not significant.

2. The rejected H_0 may be detailed as given below:

(a) H_0 4. Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status is rejected at 0.01 ls.

BREAK UP : EQUITY SENSITIVITY \times JOB STATUS (2 \times 2 BIVARIATE INTERACTION)

H_0 s	GROUPS	N	M	SD	SE _D	df	t	P	
I	EQUITY SENSITIVE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	8.73	3.53	0.87	78	1.15	
		MIDDLE JOB STATUS	40	7.73	4.25				
II	NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	6.15	4.73	0.96	78	3.00	< 0.01
		MIDDLE JOB	40	9.03	3.84				

		STATUS							
III	UPPER JOB STATUS	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	8.73	3.53	0.93	78	2.77	< 0.01
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	6.15	4.73				
IV	MIDDLE JOB STATUS	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	7.73	4.25	0.91	78	1.43	
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	9.03	3.84				

$$t_{0.05} (78) = 1.99$$

$$t_{0.01} (78) = 2.64$$

(II) Non Equity Sensitive (*Upper Job Status : Middle Job Status*) $P < 0.01$

Non equity sensitive employees reflect more organizational role stress due to role stagnation in middle job status ($M = 9.03$) than in upper job status ($M = 6.15$).

(III) Upper Job Status (*Equity Sensitive : Non Equity Sensitive*) $P < 0.01$

In upper job status, equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 8.73$) in comparison to non equity sensitive employees ($M = 6.15$).

(b) H_0 7. Equity Sensitivity \times Job Status \times Gender is rejected at 0.01 ls.

BREAK UP : EQUITY SENSITIVITY \times JOB STATUS \times GENDER ($2 \times 2 \times 2$ TRIVARIATE INTERACTION)

H ₀ s	GROUPS	N	M	SD	SE _D	df	t	P	
I	EQUITY SENSITIVE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	8.73	3.52	0.87	78	1.15	
		MIDDLE JOB STATUS	40	7.73	4.25				
II	EQUITY SENSITIVE	MALE	40	7.93	5.02	0.88	78	0.68	

		FEMALE	40	8.53	2.35				
III	NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	6.15	4.73	0.96	78	3.00	< 0.01
		MIDDLE JOB STATUS	40	9.03	3.84				
IV	NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	MALE	40	7.18	5.07	1.01	78	0.81	
		FEMALE	40	8.00	3.89				
V	UPPER JOB STATUS	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	8.73	3.53	0.93	78	2.77	< 0.01
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	6.15	4.73				
VI	UPPER JOB STATUS	MALE	40	7.18	5.42	0.97	78	0.54	
		FEMALE	40	7.70	2.93				
VII	MIDDLE JOB STATUS	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	7.73	4.25	0.91	78	1.43	< 0.05
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	9.03	3.84				
VIII	MIDDLE JOB STATUS	MALE	40	7.93	4.66	0.91	78	0.99	
		FEMALE	40	8.83	3.40				
IX	MALE	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	7.93	5.02	1.13	78	0.66	
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	7.18	5.07				

X	MALE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	7.18	5.42	1.13	78	0.66	
		MIDDLE JOB STATUS	40	7.93	4.66				
XI	FEMALE	EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	8.53	2.35	0.72	78	0.74	< 0.01
		NON EQUITY SENSITIVE	40	8.00	3.89				
XII	FEMALE	UPPER JOB STATUS	40	7.70	2.93	0.71	78	1.59	
		MIDDLE JOB STATUS	40	8.83	3.40				

$t_{0.05} (78) = 1.99$

$t_{0.01} (78) = 2.64$

(IV) Non-Equity Sensitive (Upper Job Status : Middle Job Status) $P < 0.01$

Non-equity sensitive employees reflect more organizational role stress due to role stagnation in middle job status ($M = 9.03$) than in upper job status ($M = 6.15$).

(V) Upper Job Status (Equity Sensitive : Non Equity Sensitive) $P < 0.01$

In upper job status, equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 8.73$) in comparison to non equity sensitive employees ($M = 6.15$).

(VII) Middle Job Status (Equity Sensitive : Non Equity Sensitive) $P < 0.05$

In middle job status, non equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 9.03$) in comparison to equity sensitive employees ($M = 7.73$).

(XI) Female (Equity Sensitive : Non Equity Sensitive) $P < 0.01$

Equity sensitive female employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 8.53$) in comparison to non equity sensitive female employees ($M = 8.00$).

C) Summary Of Result

1. Non-equity sensitive employees reflect more organizational role stress due to role stagnation in middle job status ($M = 9.03$) than in upper job status ($M = 6.15$).
2. In upper job status, equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 8.73$) in comparison to non-equity sensitive employees ($M = 6.15$).
3. In middle job status, non-equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 9.03$) in comparison to equity sensitive employees ($M = 7.73$).
4. Equity sensitive female employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation ($M = 8.53$) in comparison to non-equity sensitive female employees ($M = 8.00$).

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study indicated that non equity sensitive employees reflect more Organizational role stress due to role stagnation in middle job status than in upper job status and non equity sensitive employees show high organizational role stress due to role stagnation in comparison to equity sensitive employees, thus making it clear that in middle job status if there are jobs were possibility of organizational role stress due to role stagnation is higher than its better to recruit an individual who is equity sensitive rather than non equity sensitive. **Sahgal, P. (1990)** studied Organizational role stress on Executives belonging to junior, middle and senior levels and found that senior level executives experience higher stress than junior and middle level. Middle level executives reported higher role stagnation conflict. In general also equity sensitive levels will be reflected in performance of an individual also. Organization can develop training programs wherein they can make people realize their sensitivity level and help them in dealing with performance problems.

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