

Xavierian Journal of Research in COMMERCE
XJORC

Vol 3 No 1 January 2018



Publisher

Post Graduate Department of Commerce & Research (S/F)

St. Xavier's College for Women
(Nationally Re-Accredited with A Grade)
Aluva P.O., Ernakulam Dist., Kerala
(Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala)
Website : www.stxaviersaluva.ac.in,
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started in the year 2013, with
an aim of disseminating
information in the field of
human ities, banking and
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CONTENTS

A study on emotional intelligence among the officers of private sector banks with reference to ernakulam district
Geethanjali Anil K

A study on the impact of employee involvement in the banking sector
Ms. Kochuthresia Mathew

The study on customer satisfaction and service quality of Kochi metro rail ltd.
Resma George

A study on factors affecting selection of a commercial bank among customers with special reference to thrissur district
Bini James
A study on the factors influencing work life balance in personal and work environment of women employees
Mariya. P.A

A study on financial behaviour of self help group bank linkage programme with special reference to canara bank in thrissur district
Josbeena Jhonson

A study on role of esaf swasraya multi state co-operative credit society limited for women empowerment with special reference to Thrissur district
Ragin Davis

Society for rural improvement and women empowerment
Ankitha baby

**A STUDY ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG THE OFFICERS OF
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS WITH REFERENCE TO ERNAKULAM DISTRICT**

Geethanjali Anil K

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

Abstract

Emotional intelligence is accepted in every organisation and is an important determinant of success of an individual in life than the earlier concept intelligence quotient (IQ). It is defined as the understanding of oneself and others by adapting them to immediate surroundings that tends to be more successful in dealing with their demands. The objective of the study is to analyze the dimensions and level of emotional intelligence among the officers of private sector banks. Data were collected by using structured questionnaire and the statements were constructed by using Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Upeinder Dhar, Sanjoyot Pethe and Anukool Hyde. Structural Equation Modeling and one sample Z test were used for the data analysis .The findings reveals that the dimensions namely understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions have a significant influence on emotional intelligence and its level was found to excellent among the officers in private sector banks.

I. Introduction to the Study

Emotions play a very crucial role in our daily life. Today, the constructs of emotional intelligence is one of the most researched area to study the behaviour of organisations and its employees. The comprehensive changes in business organisations, especially in the last few decades, have influenced work culture and performance of the organisations. The major restructuring in the nature of work has taken place in 1990. In the business organisations, new era of management witnessed a paradigm shift from administrative role to strategic role. This contributed to the contemporary concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the dominant predictor of workplace success. The concept gave a new dimension and momentum to the research initiatives, which establishes a relationship with the performance of employees and their nature of job.

The difference between intelligence quotient and emotional intelligence is that the former is concerned with personal competency of an individual that qualifies him for a particular job, whereas, emotional intelligence is the understanding of oneself and others by adapting them to immediate surroundings that tends to be more successful in dealing with their demands. The present study is aimed to measure various dimensions and level of emotional intelligence among the officers of the private sector banks with reference of Ernakulam district. The banking sector is viewed as one of the most competitive sector in the world because of the emergence of new banks. It is a dominant sub-sector within the financial sector and plays an important role for the overall development of the country.

Emotional intelligence is expected to play a major role in moderating behavioral issues and work related outcomes. Therefore, it is desirable to study emotional intelligence among the officers of private sector banks. The study was undertaken among the officers of private sector banks irrespective of their designation and pay scale and concentrates on evaluating the dimensions and level of emotional intelligence.

II. Review of Literature

The review of literature presents an overview of those studies that are related to emotional intelligence. These studies have contributed significant findings and have application to the present study. It has helped the researcher in understanding the various aspects of emotional intelligence.

Kailash and Bharamanaikar (2004) conducted a study in India among 291 Indian army officers and found that there exists a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. The results revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and career success and emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

Puja (2011) in the study identified the strong relationship between emotional intelligence and quality of service. Emotional intelligence was found to be weak in public sector banks as compared to the private sector banks. The dimensions of emotional intelligence includes intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability and general temperament were found to be significant factors affecting emotional intelligence of employees in both public and private sector banks.

Anurag and Anu (2012) in their empirical study on emotional intelligence among the bank employees attempted to unveil the factors affecting their emotional intelligence, their perception towards emotional quotient and its effect on their performance. The results were analyzed by using various statistical tools like factor analysis, t test, Likert scale ratings, percentage method, mean, standard deviation etc. The study revealed that employees of selected banks were completely aware of the concept of emotional intelligence and there is significant difference between male and female on various emotional intelligence traits. The females scored better on overall emotional intelligence than males.

Praveena (2015) in the study titled “Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance of bank Managers” adopted validated research instruments. The results stated that the higher the levels of emotional intelligence of bank managers the higher the levels of job performance and higher the levels of job satisfaction.

Jils (2015) in the study titled ‘Workplace Outcomes and Emotional Intelligence: A Study of selected Public Sector Firms in Kerala’ by defined the dimensions of emotional

intelligence and workplace outcomes and studied the relationship between both. The variables used in the study include workplace outcomes and emotional intelligence. It was found that both the variables are positively related.

Anil, Medhavi and Suraj (2017) in the study titled “Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance among Bank Employees” attempted to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of bank employees at Jodhpur, India. The results indicated that there exists no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male and female bank employees but those employees having higher emotional intelligence perform better on the job and vice versa.

III. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the dimensions of emotional intelligence among the officers in private sector banks.
2. To measure the level of emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks.

IV. Research Methodology

The present study utilizes scoring of the variables and therefore, it is exploratory and analytical in nature. The study uses quantitative techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The primary data is collected from officers of private sector banks irrespective of their designation or pay scale by using structured questionnaire. A multi-stage sampling technique was applied in the study for selecting the sample. The data was collected from 240 respondents in officer cadre of private sector banks. Out of them, 120 were from each old and new private sector banks. Among that, 60 samples were collected from each of the private sector banks chosen for the study that includes The Federal Bank Ltd, Catholic Syrian Bank Ltd, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank. 360 questionnaires (90 from each banks) were distributed among the officers of the four banks, who were willing to co-operate and 292 (73 from each banks) were collected. Out of them, 240 questionnaires were found to be completely filled and was selected for the study.

V. Data Analysis and Results

In this study a set of demographic characteristics namely, age, gender, education, monthly income and work experience of 240 respondents have been examined and presented in the following sessions.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

| <i>Characteristics</i> | <i>Frequency of Respondents</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|

| | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| <i>Age</i> | | |
| 20-30 | 112 | 46.7 |
| 31-40 | 88 | 36.7 |
| 41-50 | 20 | 8.3 |
| 51-60 | 20 | 8.3 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |
| <i>Gender</i> | | |
| Male | 156 | 65.0 |
| Female | 84 | 35.0 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |
| <i>Total Work Experience (years)</i> | | |
| Less than 10 | 188 | 78.3 |
| 11-20 | 32 | 13.3 |
| 21-30 | 16 | 6.7 |
| more than 30 | 4 | 1.7 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |
| <i>Experience in the current organisation (years)</i> | | |
| Less than 10 | 196 | 81.7 |
| 11-20 | 28 | 11.7 |
| 21-30 | 16 | 6.7 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |
| <i>Qualification</i> | | |
| UG | 64 | 26.7 |
| PG | 100 | 41.7 |
| Professional | 76 | 31.7 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |
| <i>Monthly income</i> | | |
| Less than 30000 | 80 | 33.3 |
| 31000-40000 | 52 | 21.7 |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----|-------|
| 41000-50000 | 80 | 33.3 |
| 51000-60000 | 16 | 6.7 |
| More than 60000 | 12 | 5.0 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |

(Source: Survey data)

Among the respondents, 65% of them are male and 35% are female. Highest percentage of respondents (46.7%) belongs to the age group of 20-30. 78.3% of the respondents has less than 10 years of total work experience. 81.7% of respondents have less than 10 years of experience in their current organisation. Educational qualification of 41.7% of the respondents is postgraduates. 33.3% of the respondents have monthly income of less than 30,000 and the same belongs to 41,000-50,000 income group.

Dimensions of emotional intelligence among the officers in private sector banks

The first objective of the study is to analyse the dimensions of emotional intelligence among the officers. The questionnaire includes 34 statements on five-point Likert scale as listed under the variables, namely understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions was asked to the respondents.

Understanding emotions comprises statements that are related to the ability to sense variations between emotions, recognize and describe how emotions revolve overtime. It is the ability to understand emotions and appreciate complicated relationships. Perceiving emotions is the capacities and abilities of recognizing and identifying emotions in others than their biological and physiological process involved. Managing emotions helps to regulate emotions in both ourselves and others. However, the emotionally intelligent person utilize emotions and manage them to achieve their intended goals. Using emotions is the capacity to guide the cognitive system and promote thinking in any situations, meeting commitments and policies for pursuing goals despite setbacks and obstacles.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to evaluate the dimensions of emotional intelligence among the officers. It is used to test the hypothesis and the result of the analysis is presented in table 3 and table 4.

H₁: Understanding Emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

H₂: Perception of emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

H₃: Management of emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

H₄: Using Emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

Table 2: Model fit Indices for CFA –Emotional Intelligence

| | χ^2 | DF | P | Normed χ^2 | GFI | AGFI | NFI | TLI | CFI | RMR | RMSEA |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|------|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Emotional intelligence | 5.870 | 2 | .053 | 2.935 | .988 | .940 | .992 | .984 | .995 | .121 | .090 |

(Source: Survey Data)

All the attributes loaded significantly on the latent constructs. The value of the fit indices indicates a reasonable fit of the measurement model with data, as all the values are greater than the recommended values. The table 3 presents the regression coefficients of various dimensions affecting emotional intelligence.

Table 3: The Regression Coefficients -Emotional Intelligence

| Path | Estimate | Critical Ratio (CR) | P | Variance explained |
|--|----------|---------------------|--------|--------------------|
| Understanding Emotions→ Emotional intelligence | 0.873 | 20.715 | <0.001 | 76.2 |
| Perception of emotions→ Emotional intelligence | 0.897 | 22.425 | <0.001 | 80.4 |
| Management of emotions→ Emotional intelligence | 0.862 | 20.030 | <0.001 | 74.3 |
| Using emotions→ Emotional intelligence | 0.822 | 17.903 | <0.001 | 67.6 |

(Source: Survey Data)

H₁: Understanding emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

The results exhibited in table 3 revealed that the regulatory construct understanding emotions has significant influence on emotional intelligence of the officers as the standardized direct effect of this construct on emotional intelligence is 0.873, which is more than the recommended value of 0.4 (p value is significant). Therefore, the hypothesis H₁ is accepted and it can be concluded that understanding emotions has significant impact on emotional intelligence of the officers.

H₂: Perception of emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

The results exhibited in table 3 revealed that the regulatory construct perception of emotions has significant influence on emotional intelligence of the officers as the standardized direct effect of this construct on emotional intelligence is 0.897, which is more than the recommended value of 0.4 (p value is significant). Therefore, the hypothesis H₂ is accepted and it can be concluded that perception of emotions has significant impact on emotional intelligence of the officers.

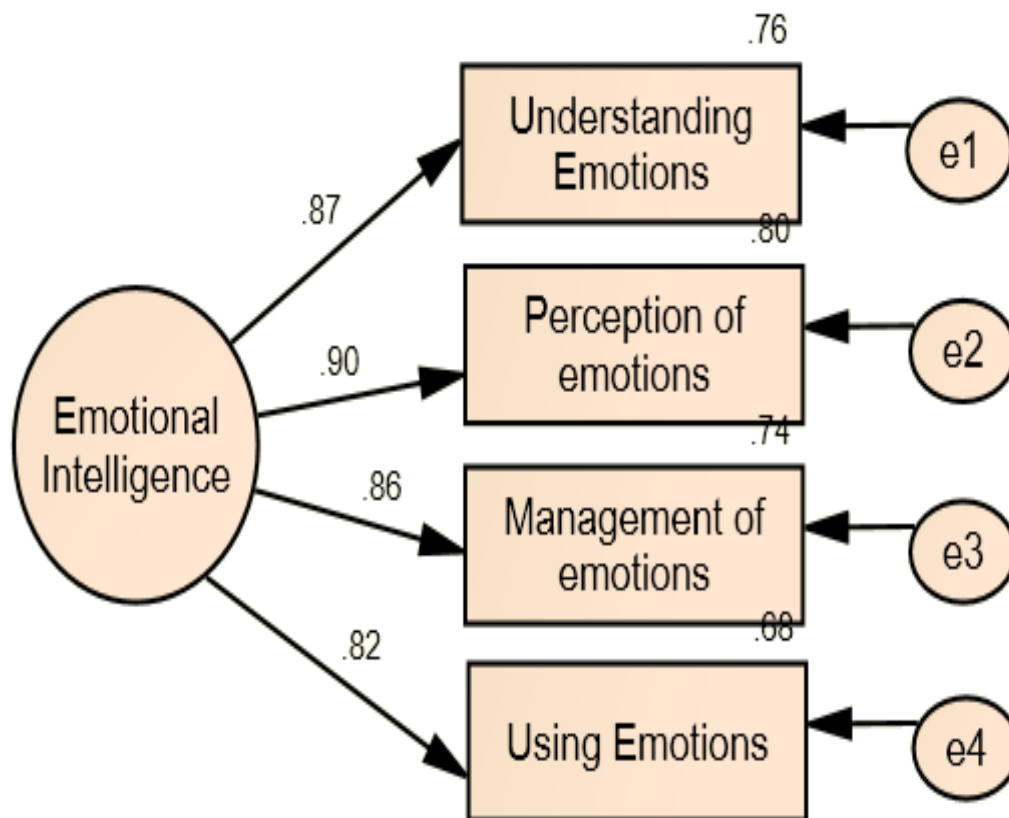
H₃: Management of emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

The results exhibited in table 3 revealed that the regulatory construct management of emotions has significant influence on emotional intelligence of the officers as the standardized direct effect of this construct on emotional intelligence is 0.862, which is more than the recommended value of 0.4 (p value is significant). Therefore, the hypothesis H₃ is accepted and concludes that management of emotions has significant impact on emotional intelligence of the officers.

H₄: Using emotions is an influencing factor of emotional intelligence

The results exhibited in table 3 revealed that the regulatory construct using emotions has significant influence on emotional intelligence of the officers as the standardized direct effect of this construct on emotional intelligence is 0.882, which is more than the recommended value of 0.4 (p value is significant). Therefore, the hypothesis H₄ is accepted and it can be concluded that using emotions has significant impact on emotional intelligence of the officers.

Figure 1: Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence



(Source: Survey Data)

In the above input model developed using AMOS-18 graphics, the rectangles represent the observed variables which are understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions, the dimensions of emotional intelligence. The ovals represent the unobserved variables e1, e2, e3 and e4. The straight-headed arrow represents the factor loadings of the observed variables. Therefore, the graphics explain that all the four observed values have a significant impact on emotional intelligence of officers, as the values of the regression coefficient of these factors are greater than the recommended value of 0.4.

Level of emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks

In order to study the second objective, to measure the level of emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks, the respondents were asked 34 questions on five point Likert scale regarding emotional intelligence. The responses are scored as 1 for 'Strongly Disagree', 2 for 'Disagree', 3 for 'Neutral', 4 for 'Agree' and 5 for 'Strongly agree'. The total score of the 34 questions for all 240 respondents was calculated, based on which the mean percentage score $\left[\text{MPS} = \frac{\text{MeanScore} \times 100}{\text{Maximum possible score}} \right]$ of the participants is calculated. This score is classified into one of the four groups as poor or low if the mean %

score is less than 35%, average if the mean % score is between 35 to 50 per cent, good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%. A one sample Z test is carried out to test the significance. The following table 4 gives the Mean, SD, Mean Percentage Score and Z value of the variables considered.

Table 4: Mean, SD, MPS and z value for Emotional Intelligence of officers in Private Sector Banks

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % score | CV | z | p value |
|------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|--------------|------|--------|---------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 240 | 145.80 | 11.62 | 85.76 | 7.97 | 24.395 | <0.001 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The mean percentage score of emotional Intelligence of officers in private sector banks is 85.76%, which indicate that emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks are excellent. The coefficient of variation, $CV = \frac{\text{Standard deviation} * 100}{\text{Mean}}$ indicate that this score is stable as the value is less than 20%. To test whether the sample information observed exists in the population or to verify that the emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks is excellent or not, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H₀: The emotional Intelligence of officers in private sector banks is good

H₁: The emotional Intelligence of officers in private sector banks is excellent

The above hypothesis is tested using one sample Z test and the result is exhibited in table 4.6. From the table, the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that the emotional intelligence of officers in private sector banks are excellent.

Emotional intelligence is measured by using variables like understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions. A one sample Z test is carried out to test the significance of these variables. The following table 5 gives the Mean, Standard Deviation, Mean Percentage Score and Z value of the variables considered.

Table 5: Mean, SD, MPS and z value for variables of Emotional Intelligence among the Officers in Private Sector Banks

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % Score | CV | z | p value |
|----------|---|------|----------------|--------------|----|---|---------|
|----------|---|------|----------------|--------------|----|---|---------|

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|------|--------|--------|
| Understanding emotions | 240 | 47.17 | 4.27 | 85.76 | 9.05 | 21.477 | <0.001 |
| Perception of emotions | 240 | 38.47 | 3.32 | 85.48 | 8.62 | 22.037 | <0.001 |
| Management of emotions | 240 | 34.35 | 3.02 | 85.88 | 8.80 | 22.300 | <0.001 |
| Using emotions | 240 | 25.82 | 2.26 | 86.06 | 8.75 | 22.743 | <0.001 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The mean percentage scores of different dimensions of emotional intelligence like understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions are 85.76%, 85.48%, 85.88% and 86.06% respectively. The CV indicates that these scores are stable as the value is less than 20%. To test whether the sample information that observed exists in the population or to verify that these variables are excellent or not, the following hypothesis are formulated.

Hypothesis a: Understanding emotions

H_{0a}: Understanding emotions of officers in private sector banks is good

H_{1a}: Understanding emotions of officers in private sector banks is excellent

Hypothesis b: Perception of emotions

H_{0b}: Perception of emotions of officers in private sector banks is good

H_{1b}: Perception of emotions of officers in private sector banks is excellent

Hypothesis c: Management of emotions

H_{0c}: Management of emotions of officers in private sector banks is good

H_{1c}: Management of emotions of officers in private sector banks is excellent

Hypothesis d: Using emotions

H_{0d}: Using emotions officers in private sector banks is good

H_{1d}: Using emotions officers in private sector banks is excellent

The above hypotheses are tested using one sample Z test and the result is exhibited in table 5. From the table, it can be viewed that the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that level of all the variables of emotional intelligence like understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions of officers in private sector banks are excellent.

VI. Suggestions

The present study examined the dimensions and level of emotional intelligence among the officers of the private sector banks in Ernakulam district. After analysing the objectives of the study, it was stimulated to suggest the following directions for the upliftment of emotional intelligence and job performance of the workforce.

1. From the structural equation modeling of emotional intelligence, it was found that the standardized direct effect of regulatory constructs understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions are more than the recommended value of 0.4. Therefore, it can be inferred that all the dimensions have significant impact on emotional intelligence of officers. Hence, efforts should be taken to maintain the abilities on these aspects in order withstand the level of emotional intelligence. This can be enabled by adopting and employing innovative training approaches in their job, which will benefit themselves as well as their organisation by encouraging them in initiating efforts.
2. The top management should encourage the officers in private sector banks to perceive organisational matters from others point of view. This will help them to understand the differences of opinions if any, existing among other employees with whom they interact. It will also enable them to understand the reason behind the conflicts and will be able to employ appropriate methods in resolving the conflicts in an fruitful manner. They must support and include the officers in their decisions and actions oriented towards the improvements in the organisation. The support extended by them will result in a positive approach among the officers towards the organisation and will enable them to cope with the dynamic situations.

VII. Conclusion

Modern organisations are highly volatile, dynamic and demand higher productivity. Emotional intelligence is a significant aspect that has to deal with for performing the tasks by interacting with others effectively in routine ways. These tasks involve understanding, communicating, empathising and learning from other employees working in the organisation. According to the study, emotional intelligence of the employees in private sector banks are influenced by understanding emotions, perception of emotions, management of emotions and using emotions. The level of emotional intelligence is excellent for the officers in private sector banks. Those who have well developed emotional competencies have an edge over others to manage people, establish relationships, assuming roles etc., for their own psychological well being and

organisational productivity. Organisations aim in attracting and retaining the best talents to enhance their performance.

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A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN THE BANKING SECTOR

Ms. Kochuthresia Mathew
Faculty
St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

Abstract

Indian banks have experienced an extraordinary growth in the past decade with the introduction of Economic Reforms. To be more profitable, the banks have become competitive and more customer oriented. Competition and globalization of banking services are compelling banks to become more productive & profitable and take a more practical approach towards conducting business. The entire service industry has become "customer-specific". Involving employees will increase customer satisfaction, productivity and decrease employee turnover. The quality of employer-employee relationship plays an important role in promoting employee involvement.

Key word: Indian banking sector, employee involvement

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

One of the greatest underlying factors in the success or failure of any organization is the power of its people, and how well that power is focused towards meeting the organization's objectives. It is a common knowledge that every business organisation depends on its effective functioning of human resources. The importance of this factor is due to its unique characteristics. This is the only resources which is able to produce an output greater than its input. All companies operate on the strengths and weaknesses of their employees. Even in a fully automated factory, employees have to design, maintain, and operate the systems that create output. Organizations that can tap the strengths of their people would be stronger and more competitive than those that cannot (Cooper, 2011). Organizations that regard people as automatons or mere cogs in a wheel would never realize their full potential. In the long run, such companies' inefficiencies attract competition, and unless the management philosophy changes, they would be forced go out of business. Employee involvement is a process for empowering employees to participate in managerial decision-making and improvement activities appropriate to their levels in the organization.

There is at the end of the day only one thing that differentiates one company from another – its people. Not the product, not service establishments, not the process, not secret ingredients; ultimately any of these can be duplicated. Success of every organisation is depends on the work environment, commitment of employees, job satisfaction and most importantly on employee involvement. Employee involvement means that every employee

is regarded as a unique human being, not just a cog in a machine and each employee is involved in helping the organisation to meet its goals. Employee involvement is a process of engaging employees also to the decision making process (Sarangi, 2012).

AN OVERVIEW OF INDIAN BANKING SYSTEM

Banking in India in the modern sense originated in the last decades of the 18th century. The first bank was the Bank of Hindustan, which was established in 1770 and liquidated in 1829-bank, and the oldest still in existence, is the State Bank of India. It was originated as the Bank of Calcutta in June 1806. In 1809, it was renamed as the Bank of Bengal. This was one of the three banks funded by presidency government, the other two were the Bank of Bombay and Bank of Madras. The Reserve Bank of India, India's central banking authority, was established in April 1935, but was nationalised on 1 January 1949 under the terms of the RBI Act 1948.

The Indian Banking Sector is broadly classified into scheduled banks and non-scheduled banks. All banks which are included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 are Scheduled Banks. These banks comprises Scheduled Commercial Banks and Scheduled Co-operative Banks. Scheduled Co-operative Banks consist of Scheduled State Co-operative Banks and Scheduled Urban Co-operative Banks. (Sahoo, 2012).

CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

The success of the organisation is also dependence on the availability of qualified employees. When an organization truly wants to create a positive work environment that is based on high trust, exceptional customer service, collaborative teamwork, operational excellence, and creative problem solving, then the leadership team must begin to understand, investing, and be responsive to the needs of the group that represents the organization's most valuable assets, and is also one of its most important customers, the employees. Involvement, however is more than just the exchange of information. It is the gradual but radical delegation of control to those closest to the process itself. Self-managed teams, cell-based manufacture, autonomous work groups, high performance work systems, are all examples of true involvement. The concept of involvement is generally seen as a way of reducing power differences between the workers and the management.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To retain employees in the organization there is an easy way that is development and evolution of involvement. Employee involvement enhance employees to profoundly express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during the performance of

various roles in the organization. There are some studies relating employee involvement are discussed below;

Sarangi (2012) examined the employee engagement initiatives in Indian banking sector that, employee engagement is a force that motivate employees to the higher level of performance and it gives commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership to the organisation. The author stated that the, employee engagement is closely related with the employee turnover, customer satisfaction, productivity, safety, profitability and so on. In this study, the author described the banking sector of India that, the Banking system in India is significantly different from other Asian Nations because of the country's unique geographic, social and economic characters.

Suthisai (2001) analysed the employee involvement, work related values and organisational commitment in Thai manufacturing companies and found that, employee involvement is a method of improving job performance, job satisfaction, creativity, problem solving, decision making and individual effort to accomplish personal and organisational goals. In this study, the author states that, employee involvement is based on an open model system which increases organisational adaptability and effectiveness. Hence this study concluded that, employee involvement in decision making process and distribution of responsibility and authority enable them to increase the commitment and also the organisational effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To identify the factors leading to involvement of employees in the banking sector.
2. To make a comparison of employee involvement of executives and non- executives in the banking sector.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In this study the following research hypotheses were developed in respect of the objectives:

1. Selected factors have significant impact on employee involvement in the banking sector.
2. There is a significant difference between involvement of executives and non-executives in the banking sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study on 'the impact of employee involvement in the banking sector' is descriptive in nature and hence make use of a descriptive research design. Both primary and

secondary data are used in the study. Secondary data were collected for finding out the number of executive and non- executive bank employees and also the number of nationalised, traditional and new private sector banks.

Primary data was collected from a sample of 367 executive and non- executive bank employees belonging to nationalised, traditional and new private sector banks in the Ernakulam district using a pretested structural questionnaire. The reason behind to selecting the district was there are many nationalised banks, private sector banks, foreign banks and regional rural banks functioning in this district, considering the number of branches and number of employees.

State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Federal Bank, South Indian Bank, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank were selected for the study. These Banks were selected according to the number of employees and branches. The size of the sample for the study was determined by using a ‘Sample Size Calculator’ from SurveyMonkey.

Sample Size Calculator

| | | |
|----------------------|---|------------|
| Population size | = | 8088 |
| Confidence Level (%) | = | 95 |
| Margin of Error (%) | = | 5 |
| Sample | = | 367 |

Cronbach’s Alpha results (overall)

| Cronbach’s alpha | Cronbach’s alpha based on standardized items | No. of items | ANOVA |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------|
| .755 | .959 | 89 | .000 |

(Source: Survey data)

Generally, it says that, the value of Cronbach’s alpha should be more than 0.5 and the value of ANOVA should be less than 0.05, it reveals the internal consistency of the questionnaire. So according to the table, all variables fulfilled the criterion relating Cronbach’s alpha and ANOVA.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to bank employees in Ernakulam District in view of time constraints.
2. The study focuses on selected nationalized, traditional private sector and new private sector banks only. The participation level of other bank employees may be significantly different from this.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The present study use Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for analyzing the factors affecting employee involvement and One-Way ANOVA for analyzing the involvement of executive and non- executive employees in the banking sector. SEM conveys two important aspects of the procedures: a) causal process under study is represented by a series of structural (regression) equations, and b) these structural relationships can be modelled to facilitate a clearer conceptualization of the theory under study. In this study using, AMOS 18.0 for the graphical representation of factor affecting employee involvement.

1. Factors leading to employee involvement

Hypotheses:

H₀: Construct EI 1 to EI 10 has no impact on employee empowerment.

H₁: Construct EI 1 to EI 10 has significant impact on employee empowerment.

Model fit indicates For CFA Employee Involvement

| Factor/ Variable | χ^2 | DF | P | Normed χ^2 | GFI | AGFI | NFI | TLI | CFI | RMR | RMSEA |
|----------------------|----------|----|------|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Employee involvement | 24.516 | 20 | .221 | 1.226 | .987 | .963 | .969 | .986 | .994 | .031 | .025 |

(Source: Survey Data)

All the attributes loaded significantly on the latent constructs. The value of the fit indices indicates a reasonable fit of the measurement model with data.

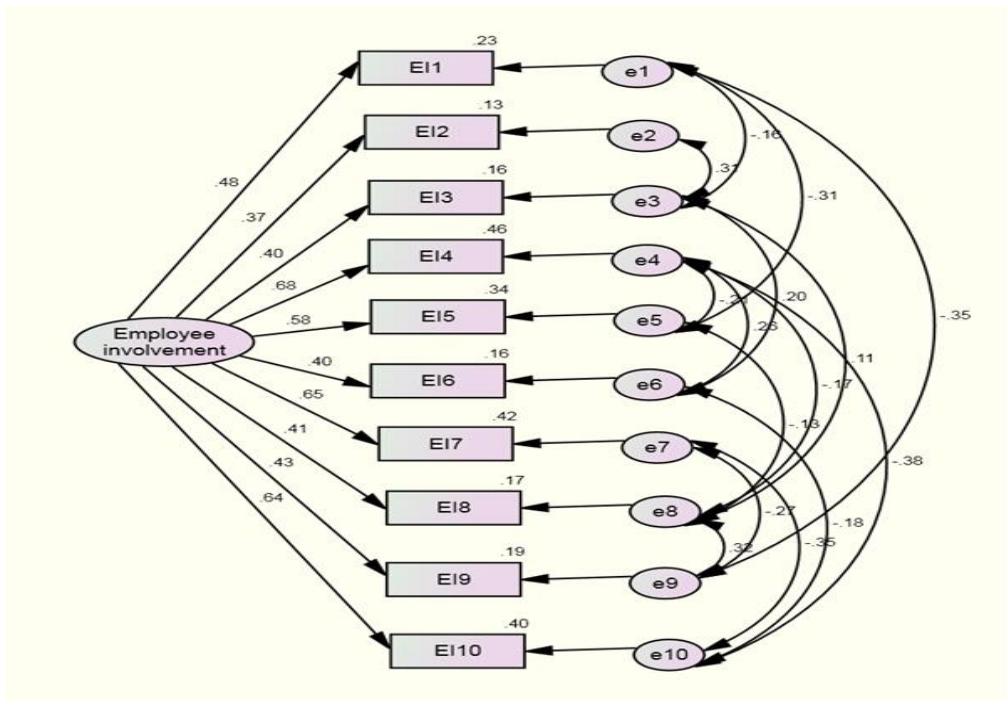
The Regression Coefficients of Employee Involvement

| Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable) | Construct (Independent Variable) | Regression Coefficient | C.R. | P | Variance explained (%) | Cronbach Alpha coefficient before | |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | Before | After |
| Employee involvement | Self- Analysis | 0.478 | | | 22.9 | 0.742 | 0.724 |
| | Motivation | 0.365 | 5.590 | <0.001 | 13.3 | | |
| | Collaboration | 0.403 | 5.598 | <0.001 | 16.2 | | |
| | Empowerment | 0.676 | 7.347 | <0.001 | 45.7 | | |
| | Flexibility | 0.585 | 6.640 | <0.001 | 34.2 | | |
| | Consultation | 0.395 | 5.610 | <0.001 | 15.6 | | |
| | Self-Satisfaction | 0.650 | 7.466 | <0.001 | 42.3 | | |
| | Self-Achievements | 0.407 | 5.829 | <0.001 | 16.5 | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|--------|------|
| Self- Knowledge | 0.432 | 5.365 | <0.001 | 18.7 |
| Self- Worth | 0.636 | 6.667 | <0.001 | 40.4 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The above table reveals that, the factors Self- analysis, collaboration, empowerment, flexibility, self-satisfaction, self- achievements, self- knowledge and self- worth have significant impact on dependent variable, that is employee involvement because, the value of regression coefficient of these factors is greater than 0.4. But in the case of motivation and consultation, these factors have no impact on the employee involvement because, its value is less than 0.4.



(Source: Survey Data)

Analysis of Employee Involvement

In the above AMOS 18.0 graphics, the rectangle represents the observed variables which are; EI 1- self- analysis, EI 2- motivation, EI 3- collaboration, EI 4- involvement, EI 5- flexibility, EI 6- consultation, EI 7- self- satisfaction, EI 8- self- achievements, EI 9- self- knowledge and EI 10- self- worth. The ovals shown in the graphics are unobserved variables like; e1, e2, e3.....e10. The curved double headed arrows represent correlation among the unobserved variables. And also the straight headed arrows represent the factor loadings of the observed variables. Therefore, the graphics explain that, most of the observed variables have significant impact with 'employee involvement', because the value is greater than 0.4, while one observed variable has no impact with employee involvement, because, its value is less than 0.4. The graphics also described that, the

highest correlation among unobserved variables is 0.31 with e2 and e3. At the same time, the lowest correlation is between unobserved factors of e4 and e10 with 0.11.

Factors influencing Employee Involvement

| Dependent Variables | Constructs | Factors |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Employee Involvement | EI 1 | Self- analysis |
| | EI 2 | Motivation |
| | EI 3 | Collaboration |
| | EI 4 | Empowerment |
| | EI 5 | Flexibility |
| | EI 6 | Consultation |
| | EI 7 | Self- satisfaction |
| | EI 8 | Self- achievements |
| | EI 9 | Self- knowledge |
| | EI 10 | Self- worth |

(Source: Survey Data)

2. Analysis of demographic variables on employee involvement

To examine the impact of demographic variables on employee involvement, the study use one way ANOVA and post hoc tests.

a) Age

To analyze the employee involvement with different age groups, the questions were given in the Likert Scale. To test the relationship between age with employee involvement ANOVA was conducted with the following hypothesis.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Employee involvement of bank employees do not differ significantly with respect to their

age.

H₁: Employee involvement of bank employees differ significantly with respect to their age.

ANOVA

| Variables | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 102.273 | 3 | 34.091 | 1.422 | .236 |
| | Within Groups | 8701.384 | 363 | 23.971 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

The ANOVA test shows that, mean differences among the different age groups is not significant with regard to employee involvement as the p value is greater than .05 in the case of all the variables.

b) Gender

The attitude of the employees may differ according to the gender. For analyzing the impact of different gender on employee involvement the following hypotheses were formed.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Male and female employees do not differ significantly with respect to employee involvement.

H₁: Male and female employees differ significantly with respect to employee involvement.

Mean, SD and Z value for Gender

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Standard Deviation</i> | <i>z</i> | <i>p value</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|----------|-------------|---------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Employee involvement | Male | 187 | 36.99 | 4.90 | 1.380 | 0.168 |
| | Female | 180 | 36.29 | 4.90 | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

The Z test revealed that, the differences is not significant in the case of employee involvement. Hence, there is no reason to reject the null hypothesis.

c) Banks

The organizational culture in the different banks are differ. There is study conducted to differentiate the organizational culture of nationalized banks, traditional private sector banks and new private sector banks.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Employee involvement of bank employees do not differ significantly with respect to their banks.

H₁: Employee involvement of bank employees differ significantly with respect to their banks.

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 1037.370 | 5 | 207.474 | 9.644 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 7766.287 | 361 | 21.513 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

Employee involvement has significant difference with respect to their banks, the post hoc test conducted to identify which bank is differ significantly with employee involvement.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparison

| Dependent Variable | | | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT | SBI | PNB | 0.778 | 1.084 | 0.980 |
| | | Federal Bank | -0.914 | 0.653 | 0.727 |
| | | South Indian | -2.16756* | 0.704 | 0.027 |
| | | ICICI | 3.19633* | 0.956 | 0.012 |
| | | HDFC | 2.74633* | 0.857 | 0.018 |
| | PNB | SBI | -0.778 | 1.084 | 0.980 |
| | | Federal Bank | -1.692 | 1.099 | 0.638 |
| | | South Indian | -2.946 | 1.130 | 0.098 |
| | | ICICI | 2.418 | 1.302 | 0.430 |
| | | HDFC | 1.968 | 1.231 | 0.600 |
| | Federal Bank | SBI | 0.914 | 0.653 | 0.727 |
| | | PNB | 1.692 | 1.099 | 0.638 |
| | | South Indian | -1.253 | 0.726 | 0.516 |
| | | ICICI | 4.11064* | 0.973 | 0.000 |
| | | HDFC | 3.66064* | 0.876 | 0.001 |
| | South Indian | SBI | 2.16756* | 0.704 | 0.027 |
| | | PNB | 2.946 | 1.130 | 0.098 |
| | | Federal Bank | 1.253 | 0.726 | 0.516 |
| | | ICICI | 5.36389* | 1.008 | 0.000 |
| | | HDFC | 4.91389* | 0.915 | 0.000 |
| | ICICI | SBI | -3.19633* | 0.956 | 0.012 |
| | | PNB | -2.418 | 1.302 | 0.430 |
| | | Federal Bank | -4.11064* | 0.973 | 0.000 |
| | | South Indian | -5.36389* | 1.008 | 0.000 |
| | | HDFC | -0.450 | 1.120 | 0.999 |
| HDFC | SBI | -2.74633* | 0.857 | 0.018 | |
| | PNB | -1.968 | 1.231 | 0.600 | |
| | Federal Bank | -3.66064* | 0.876 | 0.001 | |
| | South Indian | -4.91389* | 0.915 | 0.000 | |
| | ICICI | 0.450 | 1.120 | 0.999 | |

(Source: Survey Data)

The post hoc Tukey test for multiple comparisons shows that the mean differences

employee involvement are significant only for South Indian Bank and ICICI Bank.

d) Education

Education of the employees is one factor which is likely to influence the employee involvement. The following hypotheses were used to test the relationship between educational qualifications with employee involvement

Hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant difference in employee involvement of different educational groups.

H₁: There is significant difference in employee involvement of different educational groups.

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 122.423 | 3 | 40.808 | 1.706 | .165 |
| | Within Groups | 8681.234 | 363 | 23.915 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

The ANOVA failed to reject the null hypotheses that there is no significant difference in the employee involvement of different educational groups.

e) Type of banks

The study analyzed whether there is significant difference in employee involvement among the employees of public sector banks, old private sector banks and traditional private sector banks.

Hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant difference in employee involvement among different type of banks

H₁: There is significant difference in employee involvement among different type of banks.

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 343.661 | 2 | 171.831 | 7.393 | .001 |
| | Within Groups | 8459.995 | 364 | 23.242 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|----------|-----|--|--|--|
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |
|--|-------|----------|-----|--|--|--|

(Source: Survey Data)

The one way ANOVA results shows that, the mean differences are significant in the case of only employee involvement.

Multiple Comparison

| Dependent Variable | | | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT | Nationalised banks | Old private sector bank | -0.607 | 0.581 | 0.549 |
| | | New private sector bank | 1.85307* | 0.680 | 0.018 |
| | Traditional private sector bank | Nationalised banks | 0.607 | 0.581 | 0.549 |
| | | New private sector bank | 2.45988* | 0.645 | 0.000 |
| | New private sector bank | Nationalised banks | -1.85307* | 0.680 | 0.018 |
| | | Old private sector bank | -2.45988* | 0.645 | 0.000 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparison shows that, there is significant difference in the mean value of employee involvement of new private sector banks from that of both public sector and traditional private sector banks.

f) Category of employees

There are two category of employees; executives and non- executives. To analyze the differences in employee involvement between the two categories of employees the following hypotheses were formed.

Hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant difference in employee involvement between executives and non-

executives.

H₁: There is significant difference in employee involvement between executives and non-executives.

Mean, SD and Z value for Category of Employees

| Variable | Category of employees | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | z | p value |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----|-------|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Employee involvement | Executive employees | 121 | 35.76 | 5.20 | -2.450 | 0.015 |
| | Non-Executive employees | 246 | 37.09 | 4.70 | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

According to the above table, non- executive employees has a mean value of 37.09 and

executive employees has a mean value of 35.76 in the employee involvement. This difference is significant with a Z value of 2.450 and p value of 0.01. Thus the null hypotheses is rejected and the alternative hypotheses is that there is significant difference in employee involvement between executives and non- executives employees is accepted.

g) Designation

Employees from four designation is the basic were selected as sample, they are, managers, officers, clerks and others. The study tried to analyze whether designation is essential in determining employee involvement.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Employee involvement of bank employees do not differ significantly with respect to their designation.

H₁: Employee involvement of bank employees differ significantly with respect to their designation.

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 145.324 | 3 | 48.441 | 2.031 | .109 |
| | Within Groups | 8658.332 | 363 | 23.852 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

According to the ANOVA table, the employee involvement do not differ significantly with respect to their designation, because, the p value of all the factors are >0.005.

h) Salary

For the particular study the salary is divided into five categories. To analyze the relationship of salary of employees with employee involvement the following hypothesis were tested.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Employee involvement of bank employees do not differ significantly with respect to their

salary.

H₁: Employee involvement of bank employees differ significantly with respect to their salary

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 157.309 | 4 | 39.327 | 1.647 | .162 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------|-----|--------|--|--|
| | Within Groups | 8646.348 | 362 | 23.885 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

The above ANOVA described that, the employee involvement do not differ significantly with respect to their salary. The p value of these are >0.005 .

i) Experience

To analyze the experience of employees with employee involvement, the following hypotheses were tested.

Hypotheses:

H₀: Employee involvement of bank employees do not differ significantly with respect to their

experience.

H₁: Employee involvement of bank employees differ significantly with respect to their

experience.

ANOVA

| Variable | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|------|
| Employee Involvement | Between Groups | 44.034 | 3 | 14.678 | .608 | .610 |
| | Within Groups | 8759.623 | 363 | 24.131 | | |
| | Total | 8803.657 | 366 | | | |

(Source: Survey Data)

According to the ANOVA, employee involvement do no differ significantly with respect to their experience, because the p value is >0.005 . Therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. When analyzing the factors affecting employee involvement, from the χ^2 test of model fit it is clear that value of chi square is 24.516, while considering the p value is .221 , GFI .987 . AGFI, NFI, TLI and CFI are .963, .969, .986 and .994 respectively. For RMR and for RMSEA the values are .031and .025. From the above mentioned details it is clear that all values in the chi square test of goodness of fit perfectly matches with the standards recommended for each values. That means the model proposed is good and acceptable.

a) The regression co-efficient of employee involvement revealed that the independent variable motivation and consultation have no impact on the

dependent variable employee involvement because its value 0.365 which is less than the standard value 0.4.

- b) At the same time the regression co-efficient of employee involvement states that, other independent variables that is, self-analysis, collaboration, empowerment, flexibility, consultation, self-satisfaction, self-achievements, self-knowledge and self-worth have impact with the dependent variable because their value is greater than the standard value 0.4.
2. The mean value of age is higher in the age group below 25 years and lower in the age group 26-34 years in the case of employee involvement and also the ANOVA revealed that the age has no impact on the employee involvement, because the p value is $.236 > 0.05$.
 3. In the case of employee involvement, both male and female groups have slight differences in the mean value. According to the mean value, the males have highest mean value and the gender has no impact on the employee involvement according to the Z test ($p: 0.168 > 0.05$).
 4. The South Indian bank has highest mean value in the case of employee involvement (38.76). According to the ANOVA, banks have significant difference on employee involvement ($p = 0.000$).
 5. According to the ANOVA, the educational qualification has no impact on the three factors because the p value is > 0.05 .
 6. When consider the ANOVA, it states that, the type of banks has significant impact only with the employee involvement ($p < 0.05$).
 7. The multiple comparison of employee involvement revealed that, nationalized bank is significantly differ only with new private sector banks. The Traditional private sector bank is significantly differ with new private sector bank.
 8. The non- executive employee have the highest mean value in the case of employee involvement (37.09) According to the Z test, category of employees has significant impact on employee involvement ($p < 0.05$).
 9. The officer designation has the lowest mean value in employee involvement (35.75), according to the ANOVA, the employee involvement, do not differ significantly with respect to their designation ($p > 0.05$).
 10. The salary group below Rs. 20000 (37.38) and Rs. 30000- Rs. 40000 (35.92)) have the highest and lowest mean value in the case of employee involvement.
 11. The below 5 years' experience (37.12) group has the highest mean value in employee involvement.

Conclusion

Indian banks have experienced an extraordinary growth in the past decade with the introduction of Economic Reforms. To be more profitable, the banks have become competitive and more customer oriented. Competition and globalization of banking services are compelling banks to become more productive & profitable and take a more practical approach towards conducting business. The entire service industry has become "customer-specific". So the the current study found that, there are some factors which have impact on the employee involvement except motivation and consultation. And also, the study found that, the non- executive employees have more involvement.

Suggestions

Involvement is the process of building human capacity, ownership and responsibility. It is very necessary as it leads to united vision, values and purpose. Employees reduce cost through recommendations to the management. Customer interaction and satisfaction is found to be a key advantage to the success of the organization.

1. Motivation is one of the important factor in the area of management which can enable an employee to work hard to meet the organizational goals, so, if the bank provide proper motivation to employees, it can increase the level of involvement from employees.
2. To be more effective through involvement, the bank has to consult with its employees about the organizational plans and policies and also promote their self-knowledge, self-achievements.
3. To acquire more satisfied employees, the bank has to provide appropriate salary according to their designation and experience.
4. To improve the satisfaction of employees, the bank has to take care of the designation of each employees. Bank has to check whether they are eligible to the particular designation or not.

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THE STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND SERVICE QUALITY OF KOCHI METRO RAIL LTD.

Resma George

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

Abstract: A new concept or project attracts the public initially and they welcome it. They are always eager to have the first experience. Service quality has been viewed as a determinant of Customer Satisfaction in today's competitive market place. In this context, it will be very apt to focus on the newly started Kochi Metro, the dream project of Kerala. For building and maintaining long term relationship with the customer, organization needs to understand and meet the expectations of its customers. The study examines the customer satisfaction and service quality of Kochi Metro Rail Ltd. The study was conducted using survey method. A survey was conducted among the travellers of Kochi Metro using questionnaire. A convenience sample of 240 respondents were taken for data collection. The study concluded that the service quality delivery meets the perception of travellers.

Keywords: Service quality, customer satisfaction, Kochi Metro Rail Ltd.

Introduction

Business always starts and closes with customers and hence the customers are treated as the King of the market. All the business enhancements, profit, status, image, future etc. of the organization depends on customers. Hence it is important for all the organizations to meet all the customers' expectations and identify that they are satisfied customer. Customer satisfaction is a part of customer's experience that exposes a supplier's behaviour on customer's expectation. It also depends on how efficiently it is managed and how promptly services are provided. Service quality can be identified by comparing consumer expectations with actual service performance. Service quality is important by focusing on the benefits to organisations of delivering high – quality service. The customer satisfaction and service quality are relevant to improve the overall performance of organizations.

For promoting economic growth and wealth cities play important role. Ernakulam is a major financial and commercial hub of Kerala and it attracts large crowd of people. Kochi, one of the fastest growing tier 2 cities in India. It is widely known as the commercial capital of Kerala, because it is highest revenue producing district in Kerala. The district

has all means of transportation and is well connected with the all places through roadways, railways, waterways and airways. To cater the growing mobility needs of the resident population and floating population Kochi metro project is being introduced by KMRL. Kochi Metro is 8th metro project in India and it started service on 17th June 2017. The quality services creates satisfaction among customers, because in today's competitive scenario customer satisfaction has the first priority. The quality in services creates more customers.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to find out the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality of Kochi Metro.

Hypothesis Development

The hypothesis designed for the study is based on the assumption that:

H₀: There is no relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality

H₁: There is relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality

Literature Review

A review of literature places a research study in its proper perspective by showing the amount of work already carried out in the related areas of the study. Any effective research must be based upon past-knowledge that helps to eliminate the duplication of what has already been done and provides useful and significant data for research. From the survey report of DeValor Management Consultants, 2017 reported that the number of daily commuters are very low in Kochi metro, due to high ticket rate. The survey is conducted among 1284 travellers in the various stations from Aluva to Pallarivattom. Only 25% of passengers are daily commuters. 43% of passengers replied that the ticket price is very high and travellers suggested to start seasonal tickets in Kochi metro for raising the number of daily commuters. Dr Bhagwan Singh and Devender Kumar (2013) identified that the metro has changed many things in Delhi, in areas with Metro connectivity the middle class now travels differently. Considers the service quality attributes like tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Disha Thanai and Nishant Chungu 2017, the study customer satisfaction towards Delhi Metro Rail Corporation focused on to identify the level of customer satisfaction towards DMRC and also to identify the factors influencing on it. The structured questionnaire method has adopted for survey. The sample size comprised into 40 respondents who are using the services of DMRC. The five variables namely reliability, assurances, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness have positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Mona N. Shah 2016, measuring customer satisfaction using parameters of service quality in Mumbai Metro it proves that customers are satisfied on four out of five determinants of the SERVIQUAL model. Empathy shows

comparatively lower level of significance related to other four, namely reliability, assurance, tangibility and responsiveness. Cleanliness is the most influencing parameter in Mumbai metro station. Vanniarajan and Stephen 2008 identify the attributes that passengers use to evaluate the service quality of Indian Railways as reliability, assurance, empathy, tangibles, and responsiveness. It is found that passengers are “moderately satisfied” to “satisfied” on these dimensions.

Research Methodology

An exploratory and analytical research has been taken to meet the objectives of the study. For this purpose, the data was collected from the people who were travelled in Kochi Metro at the eleven stations from Aluva to Palarivattom. The data was collected from the 240 respondents, who travelled in Kochi Metro. There were two ways to collect the data i.e., Primary data collection method and Secondary data collection method. Primary data was collected through questionnaires. The questionnaire has been designed on the basis of study’s objectives and it has been constructed on Likert 5 point scale to conduct the survey. To analyse the customer satisfaction towards Kochi Metro Rail Ltd, 24 questions on 5 point Likert scale as listed under the variables Physical aspects, Personal interaction, Promotional scheme, service characteristic and technical facility and to analyse the characteristics of services provided by Kochi metro, 29 questions on 5 point Likert scale as listed under the variables Responsiveness, Reliability, Safety & Security, Technical Functioning, Physical Conditions and Convenience. The questionnaire includes questions on each of the fifteen variables. In addition to fifteen questions measuring fifteen factors, the questionnaire also includes three questions measuring customer satisfaction. The Secondary data used for the study have been collected from various published sources like book, journals, websites and newspaper.

Limitations of the Study

1. Time constraints is the major limitation in conducting the study.
2. Travellers were reluctant to fill the questionnaire provided.

Table 1 - Respondents Profile

| Parameters | | Frequency of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Age | Under 20 | 28 | 11.7 |
| | 20-30 | 64 | 26.7 |
| | 30-40 | 76 | 31.7 |
| | 40-50 | 48 | 20.0 |

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-----|-------|
| | 50-60 | 24 | 10.0 |
| Gender | Male | 128 | 53.3 |
| | Female | 112 | 46.7 |
| Qualification | Higher Secondary | 24 | 10.0 |
| | Graduate | 120 | 50.0 |
| | Post Graduate | 88 | 36.7 |
| | Any other | 8 | 3.3 |
| Occupation | Govt. service | 72 | 30.0 |
| | Pvt. service | 72 | 30.0 |
| | Business | 28 | 11.7 |
| | Student | 40 | 16.7 |
| | Others | 28 | 11.7 |
| Monthly Income | Below 10000 | 8 | 4.0 |
| | 10000-20000 | 32 | 16.0 |
| | 20000-30000 | 60 | 30.0 |
| | Above 30000 | 100 | 50.0 |
| Total | | 240 | 100.0 |

(Source: Survey data)

It is very clear that in the first demographic variable age more commuters travel in the Kochi Metro under the age group of 30-40 years, they dominate the sample study (31.7%). Near to that 20-30 years group of Kochi Metro (26.7%). In gender, among the respondents only small variation between male and female. Out of total 240 respondents, the representation of male passengers is (53.3%) more than the female passengers (46.7%). Again next variable educational qualification shows that graduate and post graduate passengers dominate the sample respondents (50% and 36.7%) respectively. Similarly, occupation wise observation revealed that both govt. service and private service people using Kochi Metro equally (30%). Student respondents is the second largest group in the sample (16%). Last variable monthly income having income above Rs.30000 dominate the survey sample (50%) and 30 percent are between Rs.20000 and Rs.30000; combined together they constituted about 80 percent of the sample.

Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Kochi Metro.

Correlation was seen as appropriate to analyse the relationship between Customer satisfaction-Service quality in Kochi Metro which were interval-scaled and ratio-scaled. Pearson Correlation is used to identify the relationship between Customers satisfaction-Service quality.

Table 2 - The correlation between Customer satisfaction-Service Quality

| | Correlation | Lower bound | Upper bound | Z | p |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------|--------|
| Customer satisfaction-Service quality | 0.917 | 0.910 | 0.924 | 35.466 | <0.001 |

(Source: Survey data)

The correlation between Customer satisfaction-Service quality of Kochi Metro is 0.917 which indicate that there is significant positive relationship between Customer satisfaction-Service quality. Since the positive relationship exists between Customer satisfaction-Service quality, in the next step SEM was used to evaluate mathematical relationship between customer satisfaction- service quality and the results are:

Table 3 - Model fit Indices for CFA- Customer satisfaction-Service Quality

| | χ^2 | DF | P | Normed χ^2 | GFI | AGFI | NFI | TLI | CFI | RMR | RMSEA |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----|------|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Customer satisfaction-Service quality | 16.260 | 8 | .039 | 2.032 | .981 | .934 | .944 | .919 | .969 | .238 | 0.066 |

(Source: Survey data)

All the attributes loaded significantly on the latent constructs. The value of the fit indices indicates a reasonable fit of the measurement model with data. Regression coefficient result of customer satisfaction and service quality were presented in table 4.

Table 4 - The regression Coefficient - Customer satisfaction-Service Quality

| Path | Regression coefficient | CR | P value | Variance explained |
|---|------------------------|--------|---------|--------------------|
| Service quality □□□Customer satisfaction | 0.650 | 11.936 | <0.001 | 50.4 |
| Reliability → Service quality | 0.474 | 7.932 | <0.001 | 22.4 |
| Technical functioning→ Service quality | 0.389 | 6.321 | <0.001 | 6.6 |
| Physical Conditions → Service quality | 0.326 | 5.209 | <0.001 | 10.6 |
| Physical aspects → Customer satisfaction | 0.287 | 4.546 | <0.001 | 8.2 |

| | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|--------|------|
| Personal interaction → Customer satisfaction | 0.331 | 5.295 | <0.001 | 11 |
| Service characteristic → Customer satisfaction | 0.496 | 8.375 | <0.001 | 24.6 |
| Technical facility → Customer satisfaction | 0.258 | 4.064 | <0.001 | 15.2 |

(Source: Survey data)

Using Pearson Correlation it is identified that the correlation between Customer satisfaction-Service qualities of Kochi Metro is 0.917 which indicate that there is significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. The regression coefficient value of service quality and customer satisfaction is 0.65, which is greater than recommended value 0.4. Therefore service quality has significant influence on customer satisfaction. Regression coefficient explicates that the service quality taken by KMRL causes 0.65 variance on customer's satisfaction. Therefore, it shows that one unit increase in service quality of KMRL causes 0.65 unit increase in customer's satisfaction.

Suggestions

1. Wi-Fi facility is not available in stations as promised earlier. It is an attracting feature among workers and students.
2. It is advisable to provide more seating facility in stations
3. It will be easier for the senior citizen to board the train if the boarding time increased.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, no business can exist without customers. Establishing a professional relationship with customers empowers the knowledge of what customers need. When a business focuses on delivering what is of value to their customers, this will generate the potential for repeat business as well. The study reveals that service quality factors like reliability, technical functioning and physical conditions are highly relates to the customer satisfaction associated with physical aspect, personnel interaction, service characteristics and technical features.

Further scope of Study

1. Comparative study on KMRL with other Metro Rails in the nation
2. A study related to the Kudumbasree members associated with Kochi Metro.
3. There is scope of employees' satisfaction in the KMRL by structuring questionnaire.

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**A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING SELECTION OF A COMMERCIAL
BANK AMONG CUSTOMERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THRISSUR
DISTRICT**

Bini James

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

Introduction

The banking sector is the lifeline of any modern economy. It is one of the important financial pillars of the financial sector, which plays a vital role in the functioning of an economy. It is very important for economic development of a country that its financing requirements of trade; industry and agriculture are met with higher amount of commitment and responsibility. Thus, the progress of a country is integrally linked with the development of banking. In a modern economy, banks are to be considered not as dealers in money but as the leaders of development. They play an important role in the mobilization of deposits and payment of credit to various sectors of the economy.

Commercial Bank is the institutions that generally accept deposits from the people and advances loans. The Indian banking industry is passing through a phase of customers market. The customers have more choices in choosing their banks. A competition has been established within the banks operating in India. With stiff competition and advancement of technology, the services provided by banks have become more easy and convenient. In this project, tried to find out what are the factors that attract a customer for the selection of commercial banks with special reference to Thrissur District.

Statement of the Problem

The banking industry has been characterized by growing competition since the early 1980s. This has been the outcome of a number of interrelated factors such as competition and deregulation that have revolutionized the allocation of many financial services. In other words, an increased competition resulting from a decade of deregulation of the financial services industry has inevitable that banks find themselves with the task of differentiating their organizations and their offerings as a means of attracting customers

Usually, the marketing strategy of organizations does be unsuccessful at accomplishment due to improper recognition of the factors or determinants that consumers consider in selecting who to deal with. Hence, there is need for banks, like other service organizations, to effectively identify the important parameters that attract customer's attention and help in their choice of banks to do business with. In addition, there is a need for banks to know how customers choose their banks and take measures to attract them before others do.

In Kerala the Banking sector has been increasing significantly it is rather keeping pace with the social and economic improvement. But there is only one previous research work in Kerala regarding the banking selection criteria. In that study, tries to recognize the factors that affect selection of commercial banks among customers. But the selection factors also vary between different demographic nature of the customer like age, income, marital status and others. For this dissimilarity of bank selection criteria, this study particularly intended to examine basic factors that affect selection of commercial banks among customers with special reference to Thrissur district.

Significance and scope of the study

This research examines the major factors of customer's bank selection criteria when they make deposit and evaluate the attitude of the customers and bank selection factors. The results of this study are important in various aspects. Firstly, on the basis of the findings of the study, the top management of commercial banks can easily understand the major selection criteria This helps them to create suitable marketing strategies for attainment and attracting customers. Second, it gives the researcher the opportunity to gain deep knowledge in the area of bank selection criteria.

As of 1999 the state of Kerala has 3210 offices of scheduled commercial banks (SCBS). This study focus on what are the major criteria in the selection of commercial banks among customers in Thrissur district.

Review of Literature

The literature review is a summary of previous research on a topic. They are:

According to Howard and Sheth (1969), Customer happiness is essential to the marketing for both profit and non-profit organizations. It is the basic and invasive concept in marketing. Customer satisfaction is the effect of the contact of opportunity about expected performance and assessment of supposed arrangement. In the Buyer Behavior model, consumer satisfaction is defined as the point at which opportunity and reality match some experts have gone to the level where they described marketing as 'Customer Satisfaction Engineering'.

Kendall and Russ (1975), said that expressed warranties are promises of complaint statement and this often support disappointed customers. They also disagree that viewpoint of warranty services are bigger for durable goods than nondurable goods.

Mehra (1976). Feels that the customer happiness cannot be taken calmly even if only a few customers feel disappointed with an organization. Customer's dissatisfaction is significant for loss of business. Therefore, every assess should be taken to redress grievance of a displeased customer since this is the only way to ensure the survival of a service industry.

Research Gap

Though a lot of research study has been undertaken about banking industry but very few researches has been carried out in the area of factors affecting bank selection. There are number of factors towards the selection of commercial banks among customers .hence this is a study to analyze the factors affecting selection of commercial bank in Kerala with special reference to Thrissur district.

Objectives of the study

1. To determine the criteria that customers consider important when selecting a bank and how those criteria are prioritized according to their importance.
2. To measure the level of satisfaction on the services of commercial banks.

Research Questions

1. What are the criteria that customers consider important when selecting a bank and how those criteria are prioritized according to their importance?
2. What is the level of satisfaction on the services of commercial banks?

Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1: The satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is medium.

Research Methodology

The present study is both exploratory and analytical in nature. The collected primary data contains both the quantitative and qualitative data. Accordingly, the study use both qualitative and quantitative techniques for the analysis of data.

Data collection

Primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The primary data were collected through structured questionnaire and direct interviews from the respondents of Thrissur district. The questionnaire consists of two parts; the first part tries to reveal the socio-demographic factors of the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire tries to bring the factors affecting selection of commercial bank among customers of Thrissur district.

Area of the Study

The area of study with respect to selection of respondents was confined to Thrissur district.

Sample Design

In conducting a study, it is not possible, practical and sometimes expensive to gather data by considering entire population. So that on the basis of Taluks in Thrissur district, divided into 6 regions, they are Thrissur, Chalakudy , Mukundapuram , Kodungallur , Chavakkad

and Thalapilly .And samples were selected from each region on the basis of convenience sampling technique.

Sample size

Sample size to be taken was determined by applying the sample size calculator formula. This sample size calculator is presented as a public service of creative research systems service software.

Determination of sample size:

Confidence level : 95 %

Confidence interval : 6.93

Population : 1861300

Sample size : 200

Major Tools adopted

- The computer program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 17) is used to analyze the data.
- In the case of the ranking questions, the researcher has adopted the weighted average techniques with values starting from the highest possible rank to the lowest and weight as the number of respondents. The weighted mean is calculated for each category and ranks are assigned on the basis of the values of the weighted mean. The mean, standard deviation, percentage and frequencies were first calculated to get the initial reaction of the respondents to each item in the questionnaire. Thus all the items were analyzed using descriptive statistics.
- A one sample Z test was used to investigate the level of quality of work life. To explore the significant difference in response between two companies, an independent Z-test was utilized.
- ANOVA test was applied to find out any difference in responses caused by demographic variables.
- Later, the Chi square tests were adopted to realize the dependency of the personal satisfaction level and the demographic factors .The acceptable level of significance was $P < .05$.
- By using SEM, it is a common practice to use a variety of indices to measure the model fit.

Reference Period

The study was conducted from the month of June 2017 to November 2017

Limitations of the study

The following factors were the major constraints in undertaking the study

1. Time constraint: The time factor was a major limitation in conducting the study.

2. Reluctance of the respondents to provide complete information about their socio economic condition

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are changes sweeping across the banking industry in India and the possible strategy implications in bank marketing. These changes are likely to influence customers' perceptions about different banks and their products and services too. The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the perceptions of customers as applied to the banking industry in Kerala with special reference to Thrissur District, Kerala the state with a legacy of unique, dynamic, and emergent banking history, right from the pre-independence era.

Need to Measure Customer Satisfaction

A customer saved is a customer earned – a saved customer can be worth up to five new Customers. Customers are viewed as a group whose satisfaction with the enterprise must be incorporated in strategic planning efforts. Forward-looking companies are finding value in directly measuring and tracking customer satisfaction as an important strategic success indicator. Evidence is mounting that placing a high priority on customer satisfaction is critical to improved organizational performance in a global market place. With better understanding of customers' perceptions, companies can determine the actions required to meet the customers' needs. They can identify their own strengths and weaknesses, where they stand in comparison to their competitors, chart out the path of future progress and improvement. Customer satisfaction measurement helps to promote an increased focus on customer outcomes and stimulate improvements in the work practices and processes used within the company. When buyers are powerful, the health and strength of the company's relationship with its customers – its most critical economic asset – is its best predictor of the future. Focusing on competition has its place, but with buyer power on the rise, it is more important to pay attention to the customer.

Service Quality

Service quality can be defined as the difference between customer's expectations of service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received (Asubonteng et al., 1996). Quality service has a positive effect on the bottom-line performance of a firm and thereby on the competitive advantages that could be gained from an improvement in the quality of the service offered so that the perceived service exceeds the service level desired by customers (Caruana, 2002; Chumpitaz, 2004). The SERVQUAL scale is the principal instrument widely used to assess service quality of a variety of services. Parasuraman et al., (1988) have conceptualized a five-dimensional

model of service quality consisting of reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangibility. Their measurement instrument is known as SERVQUAL, which has become almost the standard way of measuring service quality. Further, each item of SERVQUAL has been used twice: to measure expectations and perceptions of service quality. The central idea in this model is that service quality is a function of the difference between scores or the gap between expectations and perceptions.

The five dimensions of SERVQUAL include:

- Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.
- Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide a prompt service.
- Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- Empathy: Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

Factors Affecting Customer's Attitudes in Banking Industry

Banking industry is one of the industries where consumer's attitudes play an important role. People deposit their money into the banks and banks on the other hand lend it to different organizations. In a country there exists many financial organizations and different people choose different banks based on their attitudes and preferences. Some people may look for high interest rate and other may look for smooth services. Consumer's attitude towards the banking services depends on several factors. The most important selection criteria are the banks reputation, availability of parking space near the bank, friendliness of bank personnel and availability and location of automated teller machines (ATM) . Reputation, price and service are the most important variables. Furthermore, trends show that influences change over time; the importance of recommendations by others, the offering of incentives and the presence of a wide product range are increasing during the last year's .Overall, people tend to stay with a bank for a long period and therefore the initial selection of an institution is very important for the banking sector.

Consumers are switching banks for two reasons; poor personal service and perceived increases in fees. Because the costs for switching are perceived to be high, a consumer will not switch unless the benefits are more important than the transaction costs

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- 1. Determination of the criteria that customers consider important while selecting a commercial bank and prioritization of those criteria according to their importance.**

In the first objective, the customers are asked to rank their choice from 1 to 10.

These ranks are then converted into score by assigning score of 10 for rank 1, 9 for rank 2 and so on. Based on this score find out the weighted mean for each of the choice and the final ranks are assigned based on this weighted mean. The result of the analysis exhibited in Table 1.

Table 1 Ranking of Customers Prioritization of Criteria

| Reasons for selecting the banks | Mean | Rank |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| High interest rates on deposits | 6.84 | 4 |
| Safety | 7.90 | 2 |
| Better customer service | 7.74 | 3 |
| Greater spread of branches | 5.50 | 6 |
| Nearness to your location | 9.30 | 1 |
| Better image of the bank | 5.70 | 5 |
| Less minimum balance requirement | 2.58 | 9 |
| Convenient timing | 2.82 | 8 |
| Latest technology | 5.42 | 7 |
| Recommendation of friends and relatives | 1.20 | 10 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The result indicates that the most prioritized one is Nearness to your location followed by safety. Better customer service and High interest rates comes in the 3rd and 4th position. Better image of the bank, Greater spread of branches, Latest technology, Convenient timing, less minimum balance requirement and Recommendation of friends and relatives comes in the 5th to 10th position.

In this study opinions converted into a score for some variable. So the answer may be subjected to random variation and is influenced by psychological factors. Hence it is better to use psychometric scale development approaches to evaluate the relationship. The best model for testing the convergent validity and for modeling is Structural equation Model or confirmatory factor analysis. This technique is chosen for its ability to examine a series of dependence relationships simultaneously, especially where there are direct and indirect effects among the constructs within the model. In this study, AMOS 18.0 was used and the SEM estimation procedure is maximum likelihood estimation.

2.Measurement of the Level of Satisfaction on the Services of Commercial Banks.

Next objective is to study the level of satisfaction on the services of commercial banks the respondents are asked 11 questions on five point Likert scale regarding satisfaction on services of commercial banks. The responses are scored as 1 for ‘very much dissatisfied’, 2 for ‘dissatisfied’, 3 for ‘Average’, 4 for ‘satisfied’ and 5 for ‘very much satisfied’. The total score of the 34 questions for all 200 respondents is found out, based on which we calculate the mean % score the participants $\left[MPS = \frac{MeanScore \times 100}{Maximum\ possible\ score} \right]$ of the participants. This score is classified into one of the four groups as poor or low if the mean % score is less than 35%, average if the mean % score is between 35 to 50 per cent, good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%. A one sample Z test is carried out to test the significance. The following table gives the Mean, SD, Mean % Score and Z value of the variables considered.

Table 2: Mean, SD and z value for satisfaction on the Services of Commercial Banks

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % score | CV | z | p value |
|--------------|-----|-------|----------------|--------------|-------|--------|---------|
| Satisfaction | 200 | 39.36 | 6.20 | 71.56 | 15.75 | -4.312 | <0.001 |

(Source: Survey Data)

The mean percentage score of satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is 71.56% which indicate that satisfaction of customers on the services is medium. The CV indicates that this score is stable as the value is less than 20%. To test whether the sample information that we observe exists in the population or to verify that the satisfaction of customers on the services is excellent or not, we formulate the hypothesis;

H₀: The satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is high

H₁: The satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is medium

To test the above hypothesis one sample Z test is used and the test result is exhibited in Table 2. From the table the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it can be conclude that the satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is medium.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Major findings of the study

1. The result indicates that the most prioritized one is Nearness to your location followed by safety. Better customer service and High interest rates comes in the 3rd and 4th position. Better image of the bank, Greater spread of branches, Latest technology, Convenient timing, less minimum balance requirement and Recommendation of friends and relatives comes in the 5th to 10th position.
2. The mean percentage score of satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is 71.56%.which indicates that Satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is found to be medium. Because the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it can conclude that the satisfaction of customers on the services of commercial banks is medium.

Suggestions

The present study was to investigate factors of bank selection criteria's among customers in Thrissur district .based on the findings of the study following recommendations are given.

1. Customers give more emphasis on factors like nearness to location, safety and better customer services. Therefore, such factors should be considered seriously by the commercial banks in designing their marketing strategies by widening their branches and providing good customers services to customers.
2. Bank management should be aware that some of the bank selection determinants differ from one segment to another in the business firm market. These results would enable bank managers to identify the important bank attributes that affect bank selection decisions made by each segment in the business market.

Conclusion

Now a day's number of commercial banks is increasing day by day. Therefore tough competition exists in this sector. By adopting efficient and effective strategies banks can increase their business and can create better brand image among the public. This research examines the major factors of customer's bank selection criteria's. The most important factor that customers select for the selection of commercial bank is nearness to location and safety. According to this study service quality of commercial bank is found to be excellent. Tangibility, Reliability, Security and Value added services have significant impact on service quality of commercial banks. After the introduction of new technologies like internet banking, Mobile banking etc has significant impact on satisfaction of customers on the commercial bank services.

“Customer is the king” importance of this concept is increasing in these days. After the technological development in this sector face to face interaction between customers and employees are become low. Even though improving the customer service also helpful to

the banks to retain their customers.

Scope for further Research

After considering the findings of the study scope for the further study is given below.

1. The study did not include comparison options. For comparative purposes, the future research could be simulated with a sampling frame composed of customers with a different cultural background such as foreign students or emigrants.
2. In addition, future studies can also examine dimensions that influence customers to engage in switching behavior from one bank to another.

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A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK LIFE BALANCE IN PERSONAL AND WORK ENVIRONMENT OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

**Mariya. P.A,
MPhil Scholar**

St. Xavier's college for women Aluva

Abstract

Work-life-balance is one of the most difficult issues facing women employees in the society. Despite the favourable conditions that prevail in the working industry, in the society, and in the family, work-life imbalance is found among women employees which restrict their career advancement, mobility and performance. The present paper identifies the factors that influence work-life-balance of women professionals in industry in Thrissur, kerala. 500 respondents were selected by random sampling method from various companies in thrissur. Primary data were collected by administering questionnaire. There are certain components influencing work-life-balance given in the questionnaire and the response of the women were measured by applying like type five point scales. The respondents have agreed that some of the components have influenced the work-life-balance of respondents in the first stage. The study revealed that the factors such as Job Nature, Work Load, Job Environment, Organizational Support and Family Domain are the Predominant factors that influence work-life-balance of women employees. The study has also confirmed that there exists positive relationship among the five factors and they are close-knit factors.

Keywords: Family support, Information Technology, Job Nature, Organizational Support, Work Environment, Work Load, Women professionals, Work-life-balance

Introduction

In the traditional era, women were cramped to household work like cooking , washing , cleaning , taking care of children etc.. They were considered as home makers were bare of the right or opportunity to go outside home. But now story is different. Apart from home makers role, they also have an important role to engage even outside the home. With the increasing cost of living on one hand and the increasing education and employment opportunities on the other hand, both husband and wife started working and many families became coupled earners. The growth of higher education has improved job prospects for women and resulted in the move from stay-at-home mothers to advancing professional women. Over a period of time women accomplished remarkable progress in every walk of life and made interesting mark in the respective fields. But there is no significant change in performing the role of home maker. In more than a half homes, the women still does house hold work, cooks, take care of family members and manages the house. With increasing demand at work place and at home, the work life balance of women employees is at post.

In the competitive environment, the organisations expectation from the employees are increasing. In order to meet the employers demand, the employees has to extent themselves and focus more on their work which is creating work life imbalance. In fact commanding a balance between work life and personal life is one of the most challenging issues being faced by the women employees in the 21st century. It is said that many women employees are working in various sectors are having a agitated work life balance leading to increasing number of divorces, artificial relationship among the family members, conflicts in organisations and suicides.

The issue of work life balance has become the hot topic in the current day story line. Changes in technology, values and demographic trends contributed to the emergent cogency of work life balance in banking sectors. It is build up by other factors which include increasing complicity of work, change in nature of family and extended number of women entering the work force. Work life balance refers to the process between the work place demands and demands of personal life. When either side become unbalanced for extended period of time, the effect is likely to be visible in unhealthy symptoms (fatigue, stress, depression, etc..). a lake of coordination between domestic life and work life causes great personal and financial hardship, both to the individual and the company. In the competitive era, organisations are under competitive pressure to achieve high productivity and needed employees with healthy work life balance as an employee with good work life balance will be in a position to contribute more towards the organisational growth and success. Therefore it is a high time for employers to draw out a high level plan and helps the women employees to draw out plan and help the women employees to enjoy their work and live life to the fullest.

The fast developing knowledge economy has given place for more number of women to be aware by higher education. Education has not only empowered them but also has given them strong careers. With brain power being the necessary skill in this knowledge era, rather than capacity or physical strength, the women workers seems to flood in to every industry on a par with men. But this has absolutely become a tough challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of duties in home and office as well. As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities and when they become mothers, they have to manage the primary care of children and extended family and are thus, under greater pressure to continue on a career line. Working mothers of today fulfil family responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their careers battle with the competing demands of their multiple roles. The caring responsibilities that working mothers have lays a hectic stress on them when it is combined with their professional duties. The attempt of working women to co-ordinate , organize and balance the various

problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously put them under enormous pressure. As a result, the family becomes an organisational supporter and this powerful social trend marked the beginning of the work or life balance paradigm shift.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-life-balance is viewed as a form of inter role conflict wherein pressures from family and work are mutually incompatible. According to Duxbury work-life-balance involves role overload, work to family interference and family to work interference. Work to family conflict occurs when there is participation in a competing family activity. Family work conflict occurs when family and work responsibilities are mutually incompatible. Work-life-balance is considered as the lack of conflict between work and family roles. But mere absence of conflict will not capture the positive aspects that contribute to the work-family balance. A comprehensive definition given by Clarke consists of five dimensions.

1. Work satisfaction
2. Family satisfaction.
3. Work functioning
4. Family functioning and
5. Role conflict.

It can be concluded that work-life-balance is nothing but a successful management and juggling of multiple roles. Work-life-balance includes proper prioritization between career and ambition on the one hand, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development on the other hand. Striking a balance is a real fulfilment to life. Paid work and personal life should be seen less as competing priorities rather than complementary elements of a full life. In order to achieve this, the needs of employers and needs of employees should be considered.

Sonal Sharma (2016), in her article perspectives of women domestic workers the voice of women workers enrich the theoretical understanding of home and outside emanating from caste and religious bothering. The women's are work in an organisation after looking after their family members. They work very effectively than others in the particular organisation.

Sudha Narayanan, Upasak das, (2014), in their article women participation and rationing in the employment guarantee scheme. At the all India level there are indicates that, on an average, work allocation is progressive in sense that women face a lower administrative rationing rather than men. In states where women participation is weak and rationing indicates some sort of administrative discrimination, policies have to focus on enabling women to access work and sensitising the staff implementing the scheme.

Sudhadeshpande (1996), conducted a study and pointed out the country point to the awful conditions of women workers. Ignorance , traditional bound attitudes, illiteracy, lack of skills, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work of different types, long hours of work with limited payment, sex discrimination in wage structures, lack of guarantee of minimum wages/ comprehensive legislation/ minimum facilities.

Sudhadeshpande's A study of three slums in Mumbai showed a positive impact on women workers in the post reform period in terms of better employment opportunities study of sales girls of Ernakulum in Kerala indicates the gap between the working conditions of men and women as well as their wages.

Sumitmazumdar and M. Guruswamy conducted a study on female work participation rate 2006 and according to their study: economic activity among women has only increased in tertiary sector. Kerala economy shows a declining trend in work force participation among female besides widening the gender gap unemployment during the last decade. In the initial stage of development, when society is primarily agrarian, increased demand of female labour leads to higher work force participation among women. It is only in the later stages of development, as consequences of the emergence and expansion of the tertiary sector; demand for women labour is renewed.

Sunny Jose (2012), women's participation in paid work is likely to bring them certain benefits lends partial support to the claim that women's participation in paid work can possibly enhance their well- being; Partial because mere participation in paid work may not ensure such benefits are extend to other, more aspects of well- being , such as freedom from spousal violence, to all women under all circumstance

K. Susi , K. Jawaharrani , an effectiveness of work life balance policies and practices must incorporate the effects of workplace culture and supervisor support of employee's efforts to balance work and family responsibilities.

S.R Syeda Tabassum., (2015), work life balance does not mean an equal balance, trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of various work and personal activities which is usually unrewarding and unrealistic.

Tanmayee Banerjeeand Chandhralekha Gosh, (2012), (explained about the women empowerment and employment. it is also isolated the socioeconomic demographic factors influencing the joint probability of a group member being both empowered and employed. Training significantly influences various dimensions of empowerment.

The National Commission for Enterprises in unorganised Sector (NCEUS) was set up in 2004 to review the status of unorganised/informal sector in India including the nature of enterprises, their size, spread and scope, and magnitude of employment. There has been of course some growth of employment during this period, but that

seems to be almost entirely of informal employment of workers of casual and contract nature and informal regular low wage workers.

Thompson, (2002), formal organisational initiatives and formal work place practices: link to work – family conflict and job related outcomes, journal of management. They classified the work life initiative into 5 categories , namely (1)time based strategies like flexi time(2)information based strategies like relocation assistance(3) money based strategy like leave with pay(4)direct service like on site children’s care(5)culture change strategies like training or focus on employees performance not office face time.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To study the reason behind the family conflict of women employees.
- ❖ To find out the job characteristics of women employees in the organisation.
- ❖ To measure the significant work environment of organisations which impact on employees

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary information and data.

The main sources of secondary data are the annual reports and bulletins of the respective enterprises. The HRD/personnel departments of the select units have been used as the potential source of information relating to work life balance aspects. The seminar papers presented and articles published by executives of the enterprises have been found useful to get the information and data for the study. A structured questionnaire has been used as an important tool to collect the primary data from the sample respondents.

Data Editing

The collected questionnaire were checked for its completeness and edited as required. Since most of the questionnaire were collected personally by the researcher, it is possible to check and edit the questionnaire in front of the respondent, if required. But in the case of indirect questionnaire collection approach, the editing of data was able to done in a limited way, because all the respondents were not able to contact directly again.

Coding

Once the editing of data has been completed, next stage was the coding of the responses. Each item in the questionnaire was given unique code using number. For example, items in the questionnaire 1 are coded as 1 for ‘poor’, 2 for ‘fair’, 3 for ‘good’ and 4 ‘excellent’. The demographic responses were also coded with numbers. For example, the variable, male is coded with 01 and 02 indicates a female respondent. In the same manner, the variables like company, experience, category, age and place of residence were coded using

numbers. The responses were then keyed to a SPSS program.

Data analysis method

The method used in the study is exploratory as it utilizes scoring of the variables. The collected data contains both the qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, the study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques for the analysis of data. The statistical analysis comprised of two stages. The first stage examined the descriptive statistics of the measurement items and assessed the reliability and validity of the measure applied in this study. The second stage tested the proposed research model and this involves assessing the contributions and significance of the manifest variables path coefficients (Grimm, 2000).

The computer program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 17) is used to analyze the data. In the case of the ranking questions, the researcher has adopted the weighted average techniques with values starting from the highest possible rank to the lowest and weight as the number of respondents. The weighted mean is calculated for each category and ranks are assigned on the basis of the values of the weighted mean. The mean, standard deviation, percentage and frequencies were first calculated to get the initial reaction of the respondents to each item in the questionnaire. Thus all the items were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

A one sample Z test was used to investigate the level of quality of work life. To explore the significant difference in response between two companies, an independent Z-test was utilized. ANOVA test was applied to find out any difference in responses caused by demographic variables. Later, the Chi square tests were adopted to realize the dependency of the personal satisfaction level and the demographic factors (Yuan and Bentler, 2004). The acceptable level of significance was $P < .05$.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to explore the relationships between independent and moderating variables and to describe the construct of the theoretical frame work. This was done using the software AMOS 7 (Arbuckle, 2006 a). In the confirmatory factor analysis, first a theoretically supported model was developed for each factor, a path diagram of casual relationships was constructed and, the parameter estimated in the model were examined based on the goodness of fit measures available in AMOS output (Byrnes, 2006).

By using SEM, it is a common practice to use a variety of indices to measure the model fit. In addition to the ratio of the χ^2 statistic to its degree of freedom, with a value less than 5 indicating acceptable fit, researchers recommended a handful of fit indices to assess model fit (Kline, 2005). These are the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR), and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI). According to the usual procedures, the

goodness of fit is assessed by checking the statistical and substantive validity of estimates (i.e. no estimates lie out of the admissible range, as the case for negative variances or correlations larger than one and, no estimates lack a theoretical interpretation, as the case for estimates of unexpected sign), the convergence of the estimation procedure, the empirical identification of the model, the statistical significance of the parameters, and the goodness of fit to the covariance matrix. Since complex models are inevitably misspecified to a certain extent, the standard χ^2 test of the hypothesis of perfect fit to the population covariance matrix is given less importance than measures of the degree of approximation between the model and the population covariance matrix.

FINDINGS

1. In this study out of 200 samples, 52% of the people come between the ages 20-30. 34% people include 31-40, 14% people above 40.
2. According to this study it has been found that 80% of the respondents were married and 20% of the respondents were unmarried.
3. It is found that out of total respondents, 22% people have no children, 16% people have one children, 38% of have two, 22% have three and 2% of the respondent have 4 children.
4. Almost 50% of the respondent have a family size between 3-4, 22% of them have between 1-2, 16% of them have 5, only 12% of the respondent have a family size above 5.
5. In the case of educational qualification 96% of the respondent have UG and above. Only 4% of the respondent has below UG.
6. The survey depict that 24% of the people were cashier, 28% of them were accountant, 26% of them are managers, 12% of them are assistant manager and only 10% of the people belongs to other jobs in bank.
7. The analysis describe that 50% of the respondents work experience between 1-5, 34% of the respondents have work experience between 6-10, 12% of the respondents have between 11-15. 4% of the respondents have work experience between 16-20.
8. The study shows that 16% of the respondents have a monthly salary 10,000 or below, 36% of them have between 10,000 to 20,000, 10% of them have between 20,000 to 30,000, 34% of them have between 30,000 to 40,000 and 4% of the respondents have work experience between 40,000 to 50,000.

9. In the case of type of family 32% of the people have a joint family, 68% of the people have a nuclear family.
10. The present study reveals that 36% of the people have only one earning person in the family, 38% people have two persons, 20% have three and only 1% has 4 persons earning in the family.

CONCLUSION

Work-life-balance is an important issue in every working sector. The study was able to measure women employees work-life-balance and found that frequently extended work schedule, frequent changing requirement of clients, role overload, lack of flexible options and unrealistic deadlines are some important determinants which influenced women employees work-life-balance. The analysis also reveals that five factors namely, Job Nature, Work Load, Job Environment, Organizational Support, and Family Domain constitute work-life-balance of women employees. The result of correlation analysis also confirms the positive correlation among the above five factors. The project based nature of work, high reliance upon technology, overwork, job insecurity and contract work breed undesirable consequences of work-life conflict. The organizations may be sensitized to work-life-balance issues at all levels. In modern days, dual career couples are found in large number. There is a need for systematic research in order to gain relevant insight into the work-life-balance practices implemented by many organisations as „organizational intervention“.

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**A STUDY ON FINANCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF SELF HELP GROUP BANK
LINKAGE PROGRAMME WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CANARA BANK
IN THRISSUR DISTRICT**

Josbeena Jhonson

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's college for women Aluva

INTRODUCTION

Women are an integral part of every economy. All round development and harmonious growth of a nation would be possible only when women are considered as equal partners in progress with men. Empowerment of women is essential to harness the women labour in the main stream of economic development. Empowerment of women is a holistic concept. It is multi dimensional in approach and it includes economic, political, social, cultural and family aspects. Of all these facts of women development, economic development is of utmost significance to achieve a lasting and sustainable development of society. Precision of microfinance through self-help groups is an important means for attaining women empowerment.

Self-help group bank linkage program started in the year 1992 as an experiment with a non-government organization (NGO). It is based on NGOs and banks motivating poor people to form groups, mobilize their savings, and finally link them with banks for credit support to start income-generating activities/micro-enterprises. Its emergence develops the micro finance program in the world. The objective of the program is to allow formal banking services to provide financial services to the rural poor through the procedure of savings and credit linkage of Self Help Groups. The program is most cost effective and fast-growing system, and it cover all over the world. The beginning of the self-help group-bank linkage program will help the rural poor. They enjoy free banking service in cost effective manner. The massive numbers of rural poor families cover this program and they obtain financial service. The Self-Help Group--Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP) of micro-finance for poverty alleviation in India is the largest micro-finance programme in the world.

Self-help group (SHG) is small voluntary association of people, who comes from the same socio-economic background. The main purpose of self-help group is solving the member's problem by mutual help and coordination. In other words, the persons having same problem, while they cannot solve individually, they decide to form a group and solve their problems by joint action.

Statement of the problem

Many banking reforms have been undertaken with the aim of poverty reduction and poor upliftment. The nationalized bank aimed at expanding the neglected sector through

financial service program. Both the state government and central government support the rural-poor with financial services which include the credit package program and to meet the needs of the poor.

With the rapid presence of co-operative bank and public-sector bank and local association's majority of the small and middle-class people are depending on money lenders. The village men and women are engaged in seasonal business, daily wage workers and construction workers. Some people are active in business like selling vegetables, fish, flower, and road side marketing. However, the people are required a stable income pattern and pride place in the society. The peoples require financial service from the bank and other sources to meet their requirements they adopt service in the form of loans without collateral security.

Significance and scope of the study

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) play today a major role in poverty alleviation in rural India. A growing number of poor people (mostly women) are members of SHGs and actively engage in savings and credit, as well as in other activities (income generation, natural resources management, literacy, child care and nutrition, etc.). The saving and credit focus in the SHGs is the most prominent element and offers a chance to create some control over capital. The SHGs system has proven to be very relevant and effective in offering women to be a best and important economic partner of family.

Review of literature

Review of literature is a summary of previous research on topic. The literature review surveys scholarly articles, books, and other sources significant to a particular area of research or interest. Within the review the other provides a explanation, summary and critical evaluation of each source, i.e, strength and weaknesses. The literature review may also identify gaps or controversies in the literature and topic needing further research.

Kappa Kondal (2014) has observed that self-help group will encourage the woman. The author observed the problems of woman in self-help group. Through self-help group life style and pattern of woman will changed. The woman empowerment through self-help group will help the family, community and society. For the mutual help of the members the problems should be solved.

Krishna Kumari (2014) explained the self-help group with tourism and woman entrepreneurship. The author focuses rural tourism project that will develop the rural area and also development of rural woman. The tourism project will change the social condition of the rural poor. Rural tourism project with self-help group will improve the social and economic status of the rural woman. The tourism project will provide job opportunity for rural woman.

Research gap

From the review of literature, many scholars, researchers were done study on women empowerment, woman education and their self-employment, micro finance etc...There is no comprehensive study was made on financial behaviour on self-help group bank linkage programme through Canara bank. Hence this study is intends to study the self-help group bank linkage programme in Thrissur district.

Objectives of the study

1. To measure the level of psychological empowerment of self-help group members.
2. To measure the level of economic empowerment of self-help group members

Hypotheses of the study

- H₁: The Psychological Empowerment of SHG member is average.
- H₂: The Economic Empowerment of SHG member is average.

Research methodology

Methodology for the present study is being designed and the study was done according to the objectives. The collected data contains both the qualitative and quantitative data. The study use quantitative techniques for the analysis of data.

Data Collection

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected through structured questionnaire with close ended questions through direct interviews and involve discussions with group members.

The secondary data is collected through various published documents such as journal, website, books, and news papers.

Area of the study

The study was conducted by collecting data from Canara bank in Thrissur district.

Sample design

In conducting a study, it is not possible, practical and sometimes expensive to gather data by considering entire population. So that four branches were chosen out of 47 branches for data collection that is situated in Mala, Chalakudy, Kodungallur and Irinjalakuda. These branches were chosen by lottery method from a pool of all branches in Thrissur District. 60 samples were selected from each branch for the study. Multi stage sampling technique is applied in the study for selecting the sample.

Sample Size

The data was collected from 240 respondents in self-help group members of Canara bank.

Tools and Techniques adopted for data analysis

The method used in the study is exploratory as it utilizes scoring of the variables. The collected data contains both the qualitative and quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the properties of the mass of data collected from the respondents. Parametric statistics like independent sample Z test and the one-way analysis of variance were used for comparison of the factors considered between different levels of the demographic variables. A level of 0.05 was established a priori for determining statistical significance. A one sample Z test was used to investigate the level of empowerment.

Reference Period

The study was conducted during the period of June 2017 to October 2017.

Limitations of the study

Time constrain is the main limitation of the study

ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the statistical analysis used to examine the research objectives. It deals with the analysis, hypothesis and interpretation of collected data, employing appropriate statistical tools and techniques. The data used in the present study for analysis are collected from the different self-help group in Thrissur district.

Measure the level of psychological empowerment of SHG members in canara bank of thrissur district.

This objective to study the level of Psychological Empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district the respondents are asked 7 questions on 3-point Likert scale regarding Psychological Empowerment. This score is classified into one of the four groups as poor or low if the mean % score is less than 35%, average if the mean % score is between 35 to 50 per cent, good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%. A one sample Z test is carried out to test the significance.

Mean, SD and z value for Psychological Empowerment of SHG members

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % score | CV | Z | P value |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Psychological Empowerment | 240 | 15.37 | 1.47 | 73.17 | 9.60 | -4.027 | <0.001 |

The mean percentage score Psychological Empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district is 73.17% which indicate that Psychological Empowerment of

SHG members are good

H₀: The Psychological Empowerment of SHG members is average

H₁: The Psychological Empowerment of SHG members is good.

The p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So, it is concluding that the Psychological Empowerment of SHG members is good.

Measure the level of economic empowerment of self-help group members in Canarabank of Thrissur district

This is the second objective of the study to Measure the level of economic empowerment of self-help group members. In order to study the level of Economic Empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district the respondents are asked 4 questions on 3-point Likert scale regarding Economic Empowerment.

Mean, SD and Z value for Economic Empowerment of SHG members

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % score | CV | Z | p value |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Economic Empowerment | 240 | 8.77 | 1.20 | 73.06 | 13.74 | -3.000 | 0.003 |

The mean percentage score Economic Empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district is 73.06% which indicate that Economic Empowerment of SHG members are good.

H₀: The Economic Empowerment of SHG members is average

H₁: The Economic Empowerment of SHG members is good

The p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So, it is concluding that the Economic Empowerment of SHG member is good.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

Findings chapter explains the various findings of the research done by conducting data collection and analysis.

Level of psychological empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district.

The mean percentage score Psychological Empowerment of SHG members in Canara bank of Thrissur district is 73.17% which indicate that Psychological Empowerment of SHG members are good.

To use one sample Z test for measure the psychological empowerment. The p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it is concluding that the Psychological Empowerment of SHG member is good.

Level of economic empowerment of self-help group members in Canara bank of

Thrissur district

The mean percentage score Economic Empowerment of SHG members in canara bank of Thrissur district is 73.06% which indicate that Economic Empowerment of SHG members are good.

To use one sample Z test for measure the level of economic empowerment. The p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it is concluding that the Economic Empowerment of SHG member is good.

Suggestions

The present study helps to produce the socio-economic, political and managerial status of self-help group members. On the basis, a few suggestions are put forward for the smooth working of the self-help group.

1. More supportive attitude on the part of the Government, NABARD, NGOs and Banks are highly essential for the members to develop their entrepreneurial abilities and skills. The government provide frequent training programme.
2. Recent technological know-how must be provided to SHGs to increase the quantity and quality of their products.
3. More active involvement of private sector enterprises is needed.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the self-help group work is one of the most effective schemes for the upliftment of rural masses especially women micro entrepreneurs. Through the self-help group programme the women increase the standard of living conditions. Self-help group involve women who work together to bring a positive shift in their socio-economic status. In this speeding world, modern man's life is thoroughly connected with Banks and its modernized events which force persons to keep step along with the present dealings, Since the financial scheme effect all the actions of day-today life, a modernized information in this area becomes essential. SHG bank linkage programme has been fruitful in activating a worthy sequence of evolution and expansion of the poor.

Scope for further research

Based on the findings of the findings of this current study, the scope of the additional research is highlighted below.

1. The improvement of the product marketing of self-help group members can be taken as thorough study. It will supportive for self-help group to explore and utilize world-wide market and opportunity of online marketing can also be studied.

2. Government have numerous schemes for self-help group. Schemes of Government and non-government institutions are not being increasingly used by the self-help groups. The motive for this condition can be further studied.

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**A STUDY ON ROLE OF ESAF SWASRAYA MULTI STATE CO-OPERATIVE
CREDIT SOCIETY LIMITED FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO THRISSUR DISTRICT**

Ragin Davis

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

INTRODUCTION AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Nowadays women's empowerment is a multidimensional and multi-level concept. The study of women's empowerment is also context specific. Empowerment refers to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender or spiritual strength of individuals and communities. Real empowerment occurs only when girls can be legitimately claimed and are universally acknowledged. Empowered women and girls have truly transformative role to play in their communities but they are rarely afforded the opportunities that will allow them to fulfil their enormous potential. "Around the world, healthy, educated, employed and empowered women break poverty cycles – not only for themselves, but for their families, communities and countries too".

ESAF Co-operative Credit Society

Evangelical Social Action Forum (ESAF) started in a small house named 'Little' at Thrissur in 1992. Mr. K Paul Thomas took idea to set up ESAF as an NGO in Thrissur as a response to the social and economic wants of public. Evangelical Social Action Forum is a registered charitable society. ESAF is registered under Travancore Cochin Literal and Scientific Charitable Societies Act of 1995 and also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1976. The success of Grameen bank in Bangladesh reinforced the vision of K. Paul Thomas the Founder and Managing Director of ESAF. In 1995, he launched Micro Enterprises Development (MED) services and it resulted in the formation of ESAF Microfinance and Investments Pvt. Ltd., in 2008. The increased focus on microfinance was unavoidable as the founder was clear in his understanding of the significance of financial element in holistic economic development of the poor. Gradually, ESAF Microfinance achieved its place among the top ten Microfinance institutions in India.

As Micro Finance Institution, ESAF was distinctive in various ways. Community ownership, higher fraction of woman field staff, incorporated approach etc. were few of the characteristics, which distinguished the entity as a publicly focused organisation. The business model of the institution combined the unique methodology of selecting and servicing consumers at the front end with technology, processes & disciplines of modern retail banking at the back end.

They have an outstanding growth and consolidation phase in the past few years. As on 31st October 2011 ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society was started and 31st March 2016, they have approximately 2500 workforce and a customer outreach of over 1.2 million. In 2015, the Reserve Bank of India has approved in-principle license to ESAF to start a Small Finance bank. ESAF Small Finance Bank was one amongst the ten NBFCs to receive an 'in principle' authorization from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a Small Finance Bank in the private sector. In November 2016, the final license was issued by the RBI. ESAF Small Finance Bank was incorporated on May 05, 2016, with its registered office situated in Thrissur.

Now ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society would be a perfect medium to offer the much visional economic and non-economical services in a sustainable approach for financial inclusion. They could be involved in local development and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities, as their members and management board usually belong to the communities in which they exercise their activities. Here in this study a small effort has been made on the empowerment of women in Thrissur district through the ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society.

Significance and scope of the problem

Empowerment of women is considered as a significant responsibility of government. Till in recent times very little attention has been given to empowerment problems or ways in which both empowerment and sustainability aims could be accommodated. Women's access to savings and credit gives them superior economic role in decision making through their decisions regarding investments and credit. When women have control over decisions concerning credit and savings, they optimise their own and the household's wellbeing. In addition to the influence of the mission in increasing incomes and developing poor households to enter the market economy, it also serves as an entry point for comprehensive community and human development. The study is conducted in Thrissur district in Kerala state focussing on ESAF strategies for empowering women in the district. The main intention of the study is to assess the level of empowerment achieved by women through ESAF.

It is significant to consider how far the women empowerment programmes adopted by ESAF, are able to make changes in the lives of its beneficiaries by empowering them economically and socially. Women empowerment has great relevance in a district like Thrissur which is one of the developing district in Kerala where the literacy level of women is considerably high.

Statement of the problem

For the last few decades the aspect of women empowerment was one of the most

important problem and a large amount consideration was initiated at international level to decrease the gender gap and wipe out the discrimination among sexes. In this background, the government of India has launched a force for women's development and empowerment, generally known as the Self-Help Group Movement based on Micro-Credit and more significantly encouraging the women to inculcate the tendency of thrift and investments, as a result contributing to their emancipation and empowerment and obtaining an equivalent position on par with the humanities in terms of socioeconomic and political evolution. Undoubtedly that it has arrived at the doorstep of deprived women. But the question here is, have they utilised it for income generating purposes and is it useful for them to develop into financially independent. In this perspective, the present work is intended to analyze the change in the economic condition of women with the intervention of co-operative credit society. Therefore the study is "Role of ESAF Swasraya Multi State co-operative Credit Society Limited for Women Empowerment with special reference to Thrissur District".

Literature review

Review of literature is prerequisite to actual planning of any research work. It allows researcher to acquaint themselves with current knowledge in the field or area in which they are going to conduct their research. Some of the important related literature and study report to the topic empowerment of women are depicted here.

Srinath and Thangamani (1993) in their study on empowering women through extension reported that majority of the participants had higher scores for all the selected characteristics of empowerment than that of non-participants. The score for communication was observed to be the lowest and the highest scored determinant for both the groups was attitude towards action. The study clearly indicated that participation in the programme will manifest in higher scores for the features of empowerment.

Snehalatha (1994) in her study on the impact of thrift and credit groups in improving the status of rural women observed that, lack of co-operation among group members mismanagement of accounts and difficulties in repaying credit within stipulated time were the major problems of the rural women.

Everett and Savara (1994) in their study on empowerment of women of four different occupational categories revealed that the women played a larger role in household decision-making. Married women tended to practice family planning after they had reached their desired family size of 3-4 children and they had high occupational aspiration for their daughters. Only 23 per cent of the respondents felt that paid work had made a positive impact on their lives. The respondents participated as voters and as users

of ration cards.

Batliwala (1994) writes, "Empowerment must be externally induced, by forces working with an altered consciousness and awareness that the existing social order is unjust and unnatural. They seek to change other women's consciousness; altering their self-image and their beliefs about their rights and capabilities; creating awareness of how gender discrimination, like other socio-economic and political forces, is one of the forces acting on them; challenging the sense of inferiority that has been imprinted on them since birth; and recognizing the true value of their labour and contributions to the family, society, and economy". An outside agency or NGO can perform definite roles in self-help groups. One is to act as facilitator, mainly in the early stages of group formation and by giving support to the leaders and members to work out its role and modalities. Social mobilization (in this case provided by NGO) is necessary for organizing women into SHGs, bringing about banks SHG linkage and organizing training programmes. NGOs, especially with local staff, are the most apt agency for this.

Everett and Savara (1994) examined the personal factors influencing the empowerment in the household work and community. Age, her position in the household was found to be associated with variation in decision making scores of women. Variations in empowerment in work and in participation levels in organizations were observed across different occupations. Organization participation was found to be associated with increased empowerment in the household and at work. Similarly, education was found associated with same indicators of household empowerment.

Reddy and Rao (1995) analysed the various issues and components of empowerment and reported that there was marginal difference in self perception of women's role. While, there was absolutely no difference between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on socio-cultural aspect. The area of education and training was second lowest among the five components of empowerment for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The economic aspect was one of the strongest among the five components of empowerment followed by public cooperation with considerable difference between the scores of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Research Gap

There have been many academic attempts conducted by scholars in India and abroad on women empowerment. But, so far, no comprehensive study was made on women empowerment through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society. Hence this study is intends to study the empowerment of women in Thrissur district.

Objectives of the study

The study covers the following objectives.

1. To compare the Economic Empowerment of women before and after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.
2. To measure the level of Personal Empowerment of women in Thrissur district through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd.

Research Question

1. What is the level of women in Thrissur district are economically empowered through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd?
2. What is the level of women in Thrissur district are personally empowered through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: The mean Score of Economic Empowerment of women are same before and after joining the ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

H₀₂: The Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is high.

Research Methodology

The present study is both exploratory and analytical in nature. The study is conduct by scoring of the variables like economic empowerment, personal empowerment and satisfaction. The collected data contains both the qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, the study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques for the analysis of data.

Data collection

This study tries to reveal the empowerment of women through ESAF co-operative credit society. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the respondents of different branches of ESAF co-operative credit society in Thrissur District. The questionnaire consists of three parts; the first part tries to reveal the personal information of the respondents. The second and third part of the questionnaire tries to bring the economic and personal empowerment details of the beneficiaries through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd in Thrissur district.

The major secondary source of data includes published articles, journals, and other publications.

Area of study

The study was conducted by collecting data from ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society in Thrissur district.

Sample design

In conducting a study, it is not possible, practical and sometimes expensive to gather data by considering entire population. So that 4 branches were chosen out of 141 branches for data collection that situated in Chalakkudy, Perinjanam, Thrissur and Mannuthy .These branches were chosen by lottery method from a pool of all branches in Thrissur District. 55 samples were selected from each branch for this study. Multi stage sampling technique is applied in the study for selecting sample.

Sample size

The survey was conducted among the 220 women's who are the beneficiaries of ESAF. 55 samples are selected from each branch located in Chalakkudy, Perinjanam, Thrissur and Mannuthy. Sample size to be taken was determined by applying sample size calculator. power analysis is used with 5% level of significance(p value) and 95% power using software Sigma-plot 11. The result of the analysis is given in the following table.

| Type of test | Minim Sample | Maximum Sample |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| t test | 19 | 103 |
| Chi-square test | 51 | 141 |
| ANOVA | 17 | 132 |
| So required Sample Size | 141 | |

The result gives the minimum sample required for the study is 141. So the study conducted with 220 samples selected 55 each from Chalakkudy, Perinjanam, Thrissur and Mannuthy from ESAF beneficiaries.

Methods adopted for Data analysis

Tools adopted

The computer program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 17) is used to analyze the data.

A one sample Z test was used to investigate the level of quality of work life. To explore the significant difference in response between two companies, an independent Z-test was utilized. ANOVA test was applied to find out any difference in responses caused by demographic variables. Later, the Chi square tests were adopted to realize the dependency of the personal satisfaction level and the demographic factors (Yuan and Bentler, 2004). The acceptable level of significance was $P < .05$.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to explore the relationships between independent and moderating variables and to describe the construct of the theoretical

frame work. This was done using the software AMOS 7 (Arbuckle, 2006 a). In the confirmatory factor analysis, first a theoretically supported model was developed for each factor, a path diagram of casual relationships was constructed and, the parameter estimated in the model were examined based on the goodness of fit measures available in AMOS output (Byrnes, 2006).

One Sample Z-Test

One sample Z- Test is a statistical procedure used to examine the mean difference between the sample and the known value of the population mean. In one sample t-test, the population mean is known

Two Sample Z- test

The Independent-Samples Z Test procedure compares means for two groups of cases. Ideally, for this test, the subjects should be randomly assigned to two groups, so that any difference in response is due to the treatment (or lack of treatment) and not to other factors.

One-Way ANOVA

The One-Way ANOVA procedure produces a one-way analysis of variance for a quantitative dependent variable by a single factor (independent) variable. Analysis of variance is used to test the hypothesis that several means are equal. This technique is an extension of the two-sample t test. Besides, for determining that differences exist among the means, researcher wants to know which means differ. For this purpose, a post hoc test (multiple regression) was adopted. Contrasts are tests set up before running the experiment and post hoc tests are run after the experiment

Reference period of study

The study was conducted from the month of June 2017 to November 2017

Limitations of the study

The major limitation of the study was constraint of time.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature gives a broad outlook of the various research studies made in the past. The detail of such studies throw light on the existing work pertaining to a particular issue and pave way to future studies to be made in this regard. The review of literature also helps in identifying the research gap in the existing studies. It also strengthens the theoretical base of the research study.

Gain and Satish (1995) in their study, described the factors affecting group dynamics and group functioning such as, feeling of solidarity and pervasive benefits from group formation, increased awareness of group members, self reliance and transparency. They felt that dependence on outside source either in material or human terms exists and

so the group autonomy is not attained in many cases.

NABARD (1995) in a study in "Linking Self Help Groups with Banks" examined the method of formation and the functioning of Self Help Groups in the country. They observed that most of the Self Help Groups have been able to successfully promote a regular saving habit among the poor households. SHGs promoted by many NGOs could generate large funds from their regular savings sufficient enough to meet the demands for loans of their members.

Singh and Gain (1995) in their working paper, "Evolution and survival of SHGs: Some theoretical and empirical evidences", explained that there are four stages of group formation - forming, storming, norming and performing. They identified certain factors like full participation of members, leadership quality, homogeneity among members and transparency in the functioning of the groups which have an impact on group formation.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

The Concept of Empowerment

In simple words, empowerment means giving power. Power is the keyword of the word empowerment. According to the International Encyclopedia, power means having the capacity and the means to direct one's life toward desired social, political and economic goals or status. Power means control over material assets, intellectual resource and ideology. In Webster's English Dictionary, empower means to give the means, ability and authority. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that helps people to achieve control over their own lives and in their society, by acting on issues that they consider as important. Empowerment occurs within sociological, psychological and economic spheres and at various levels such as individual, group and community and challenges our assumptions about the status-quo, asymmetrical power relationships and social dynamics.

Types of Empowerment

It is evident from the above discussions that different authors and organizations have tried to define the term 'empowerment' from their own perspectives. It ranges from self-strength to efficiency building of women. However, empowerment of women now can be categorized into five main parts – social, educational, economic, political and psychological.

Social Empowerment: Social Empowerment refers to the enabling force that strengthens women's social relations and their position in social structures. Social empowerment addresses the social discriminations existing in the society based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Educational Empowerment: Traditional concepts recognize higher education as an instrument of personal development. It helps in growing an individual's intellectual horizons, wellbeing and potential for empowerment. It is considered as the single most important instrument of socio-political and economic transformation.

Economic Empowerment: Economic empowerment is the crying need of this hour. Wage employment means economic power. Through employment women earn money and it enables women and girls to become 'bread earners', contributing members of households with a strong sense of their own economic independence. "Economic empowerment is a powerful tool against poverty".

Political Empowerment: Participation of women in the political field and in various decision-making bodies is an important tool for empowerment. The participation of women at all levels of governance structures is the highest need of this hour for women's actual empowerment.

Psychological Empowerment

Through psychological empowerment women not only transgress the traditional and patriarchal taboos and social obligations, they also transform their selves and subjectivities. When women join educational institutions, political parties or decision-making bodies; hold white collar jobs, take decisions and travel different places; occupy land and wealth they feel psychologically powered and build their self-confidence, recognize their self-worth and take control of their own income and body.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the statistical analysis used to examine the research objectives. It deals with the analysis, hypothesis, testing and interpretation of collected data, employing appropriate statistical tools and techniques.

Comparative analysis of Economic Empowerment of women before and after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is the capability of women and men to contribute in, give to an advantage from development processes in ways that identify the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer allocation of the profit of growth.

The first objective of the study is to compare economic empowerment of respondents before and before joining the ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd. For this the response are collected in five point likert scale to measure the level of Economic empowerment before and after joining the ESAF Co-operative credit society. Based on these responses the total score of Economic empowerment each of the

220 respondents is calculated. An independent sample Z test is conducted to test whether there is any significant change occurs before and after joining ESAF Co-operative credit society and the result is exhibited in Table 4.1. In other words use independent sample z test to test the hypothesis

H0: The mean score of Economic Empowerment of women are same before and after joining the ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

H1: The mean score of Economic Empowerment of women is more after joining the ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

Table 4.1 Means, SD and z value for comparison of economic empowerment

| Variable | Level | Mean | Standard Deviation | Z | p value |
|----------------------|--------|-------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| Economic Empowerment | Before | 12.71 | 1.18 | -137.078 | <0.001 |
| | After | 28.75 | 1.08 | | |

(Source: Survey data)

The result of the z test exhibited in Table 4.1 indicate that a significant increase in score exist for the Economic empowerment as the p value in this case is less than 0.05. So reject the hypothesis *H0* and conclude the empowerment scores increased after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

Measure the level of Personal Empowerment of women in Thrissur district through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd.

Personal Empowerment

Personal Empowerment of women refers to the formation of an environment for women where they can build decisions of their own for their individual benefits in addition to the society also. It refers to an environment where there is no gender bias and has the same rights in community, society and workplaces. The empowerment of women would effect in general development of society both at micro and macro level. A woman is said to be personally empowered, when she has the authority to increase her own self-reliance and self-strength. The means of achieving personal empowerment are economic self-determination, freedom of action, capacity and participation in decision making, self esteem, gender equality, improvement in health and knowledge etc.

This objective is to study the level of Personal Empowerment of women in Thrissur district through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society the respondents are asked 26 questions on five point Likert scale regarding personal empowerment. The responses are

scored as 1 for ‘Strongly Disagree’, 2 for ‘Disagree’, 3 for ‘Neutral’, 4 for ‘Agree’ and 5 for ‘Strongly agree’. The total score of the 26 questions for all 220 respondents is found out, based on which calculate the mean % score $\left[MPS = \frac{MeanScore \times 100}{Maximum\ possible\ score} \right]$ of the participants. This score is classified into one of the four groups as poor or low if the mean % score is less than 35%, average if the mean % score is between 35 to 50 per cent, good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%. A one sample Z test is carried out to test the significance. The following table gives the Mean, SD, Mean % Score and Z value of the variables considered.

Means, Standard deviation and z value for Personal Empowerment

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean % score | CV | Z | p value |
|----------------------|-----|-------|----------------|--------------|------|--------|---------|
| Personal Empowerment | 220 | 91.96 | 9.11 | 70.74 | 9.91 | -9.010 | <0.001 |

(Source: Survey data)

The mean percentage score of Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society is 70.74% which indicate that Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is good. The

$CV = \frac{Standard\ deviation * 100}{Mean}$ indicate that this score is stable as the value is less than

20%. To test whether the sample information that observe exists in the population or to verify that the Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society is good or not, so formulate the hypothesis

H₀: The Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is high

H₁: The Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is good

To test the above hypothesis use one sample Z test and the result is exhibited in Table 4.2. From the table the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it can be concludes that the Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society is good.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter is a summarisation of the study. It consists of findings, suggestion and conclusion of the study. Findings chapter explains the various findings of the research done by concluding data collection and analysis. Next part includes suggestions of the

study based on the analysis and findings of the research to improve the socio-economic conditions of ESAF members in Thrissur District. The conclusion part is the summarisation or result of the study conducted.

Major findings of the study

The major findings from the results of the research, based on data collected from various sources we can arrive at a conclusion. Respondent's views are analyzed by using statistical tools for achieving the objectives.

Economic Empowerment of women before and after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

Z test is conducted to test whether there is any significant change occurs before and after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd. The result indicate that a significant increase in score exist for the economic empowerment as the p value is less than 0.05. So reject the hypothesis H_0 and conclude the empowerment scores increased after joining ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative credit society Ltd.

Level of Personal Empowerment of respondents

The mean percentage score of Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is 70.74% which indicate that Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Co-operative Credit Society is good.

Use one sample Z test for measure the level of personal empowerment. The result shows that the p value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the test is significant. So it is concludes that the Personal Empowerment of women through ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is good.

Suggestions

ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd is one of the NGO with the objective of rural development and specially women empowerment. Loan and loan products are distributed to women for making women as enterprising women and build confidence in them to stand on their own feet. Based on above findings, the following suggestions are made.

1. Some respondents started economic activities with the use of ESAF loan. But now there is no further trainings given by ESAF. It is suggested that give training programs on economic activities such as beautician training, training on bakery unit, ornaments making, etc. For this purpose, ESAF should open a entrepreneurship development cell. And through this cell training is given to its members. Chances should be given to all the members by rotation to attend the training programs. In this way, the

ESAF members are able to know innovative ideas for income generating activities and all the members can develop their skills.

2. It is suggested that motivational campaign maybe conducted for inculcating saving habit in the minds of the members. The campaign should give exposure to savings, its future benefits, how the savings of members are utilized rotation among the member.

3. Education plays a major role in administrating the affairs of the business. Majority of ESAF beneficiaries are from rural areas. They are not well educated. Hence it is suggested that adult education system may also be adapted to the members of the ESAF to upgrade their educational status.

Conclusion

The new millennium has thrown many challenges subjecting many nations to undergo transformation cutting across their established tradition and culture. New issues have to be addressed to effect social and economic progress of our nation. The most important one is women's empowerment. Nowadays co-operative credit societies play an important role in rural development especially in women empowerment. They provide financial assistance to its members especially in rural areas. ESAF Swasraya Multi State Co-operative Credit Society Ltd. is one of the leading such institution. ESAF have undoubtedly begun to make a significant contribution in empowerment of women in our society. Women are the vital infrastructure and their empowerment would hasten the pace of social development. Investing in women's capabilities and empowering them to achieve their choices and opportunities is the definite way to contribute to the economic growth and overall development. The empowerment of women leads to benefit not only to individual women and women groups, but also to the families and community as a whole. The present study is attempts to analyse the economical and personal development of the members through ESAF in Thrissur District. The performance of ESAF was good. The greater percentages of women are impacted positively by being member of ESAF and they are satisfied with the services of ESAF co-operative credit society. Women's membership in the ESAF enabled them to discover inner strength, gain self confidence, social, economical and personal empowerment and capacity building.

Scope for further research

Based on the findings of the present study, the scope for further research is highlighted below.

1. Comparison of performance of ESAF with other NGO and also with other Government credit institutions.
2. There is a wide scope for a comparative study on ESAF with different districts and states of our country.

3. There is scope for a comparative analysis between Kudumbasree units with ESAF sangam members.

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SOCIETY FOR RURAL IMPROVEMENT AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Ankitha baby

MPhil Scholar

St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva

ABSTRACT:

Women who were the most dormant segment of India population have now become active participants in all walks of life. Till now, they were the only unit of the family organization. Now, women are becoming not only a significant unit of the society but also influencing the course of social change in the society. Women are an important element of our Society. The modern society has started recognizing the individual identity of the women. She is believed to have her aspiration, abilities and qualities as a man does have and it also agreed that should have the opportunity to develop her facilities and to express them according to her own choices. Women can help the society in various ways. They can engage in social activities and work for the betterment of the society. SRI (Society for Rural Improvement) is a registered, non profit, tax exempt organization committed to provide Socio- economic support to the poorest rural women. While the short term goals are to supplement the merger recourses for subsistence, long term objectives are poverty alleviation, economic independence and social emancipation of the poor rural women.

INTRODUCTION:

Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for the women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society and also refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal right to the women and to make them confident enough to claim their rights, such as:

1. Freely live their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity,
2. Have complete control of their life, both within and outside their home and workplace.
3. To make their own choices and decisions,
4. Have equal right to participate in social, religious and public activities,
5. Have equal social status in the society
6. Have equal rights for social and economic justices,
7. Determine financial and economic choices,
8. Get equal opportunity for education,
9. Get equal employment opportunity without any gender bias,
10. Get safe and comfortable working environment
11. Women have the rights to get their voices heard.

Why women empowerment is important?

1. Under- employed and unemployed: Women population constitutes around 50% of the world's population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of the unequal opportunity for the women at work places.

2. Equally competent and intelligent: Women are equally competent, now-a-days; women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities.

3. Talented: Women are as talented as men. Previously, women were not allowed higher education like men and hence their talents were wasted. But now-a-days, there are also allowed going for higher studies and it encourages women to show their talents which will not only benefit her individually but to the whole world at large.

4. Economic benefits: Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Unlike earlier days when they stayed at home only and do only kitchen stuffs, now a days, they roam outside and also earn money like the male members of the society. Women Empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family which grows country's economy.

5. Reduction in domestic violence: Women Empowerment leads to decrease in domestic violence. Uneducated women are at higher risk for domestic violence than educated women.

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7. Reduction in corruption: Women Empowerment is also an advantageous in case of corruption. Women empowerment helps women to get educated and know their rights and duties and hence can stop corruption.

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9. National Development: Women are increasingly participating in the national development process. They are making the nation proud by their outstanding performance almost every sphere including medical science, social service, engineering etc.

10. Irreplaceable in some sectors: Women are considered irreplaceable for certain jobs.

SRI endeavours to focus on the socio economic development aspects of the poor women. On the social side, the emphasis is on education, health, sanitation, access to drinking water, eradication of social evils such as Dowry, Childhood labour etc on the economic

side. SRI is committed to provide collateral free micro credit for a meaningful income generating activities and micro entrepreneurship economically viable and environmentally sustainable and eventually guide them to the independent and be masters of their own destiny, breaking the age old dependency syndrome.

SRI has completed 31 years of journey in empowering youth, women and girl children from vulnerable backgrounds in the area of education, health and awareness programmes. SRI has played a crucial role in the betterment of the under privileged people by preparing them for employment, are planning to work for the aged, orphans widows and needy children with vocational training courses and life skills to empower them.

The mission of the organization is to empower community through education, provide basic amenities and create awareness programmes to support the women and the youth and through vocational and life skills training and have the passion to help the poor vulnerable aged regardless of ethnicity, gender and religion. Due to poverty many aged are neglected suffering and lacking with vital basic human needs such as food and medical care, etc as a result many have gone to their graves earlier.

SRI has been campaigning and researching for the issues related to Globalization, movement for social justice, environment, employment, education and natural resources of the society for the people who live in the communities, who depend on it and the business that makes the difference. But, still it requires improving the socio economic conditions of the society. SRI will undertake and implement many programmes on the issues related to social development.

METHODS :

DIMENSIONS OF EMPOWERMENT:

Economic empowerment is nothing but making women aware about their role / importance in economic development and provide them space for attaining financial independence and account their significant contributions to the production process. Economic empowerment is a process as well as a stage which is to be reached by designing strategies focusing on building credit worthiness and financial independence among women by removing all the gender-specific barriers which prevent women from gaining access to their rightful share in every spheres of life.

Social empowerment means a more equitable social status for women in society because the primary responsibility of any human society is to ensure human dignity to all members. It is often argued that facilitating women's access to money is not an effective means for achieving women's empowerment unless it is linked to other kinds of activities like training on awareness of the impact of women's subordination, concept of self-esteem

and on the meaning and benefits of empowering women.

Women education refers to every form of education that aims in improving the knowledge, and skills of women and girls. It includes general education at schools and colleges, vocational and technical education, professional education, health education, etc. Women education encompasses both library and non literary and non literary education. Educated women are capable of bringing socio-economic changes. The constitution of almost all democratic countries, including India, guarantees equal rights to both men and women. Primary education is now a fundamental right. When a woman (or a girl) is ensured for her rights, the society at large is ensured of its sustainability.

SRI AND ITS ACTIVITIES:

The name of this organization shall be Society for Rural Improvement (SRI), hereafter referred to as a SRI. It is a Voluntary, non-governmental, non-political, non-sectarian and non-profit making organization. The society can function anywhere in Andhra Pradesh. But its head quarters will always remain at Door No.1-1478(Old No.1-788), Rudrampeta, Beside Nirmala Nursing College, Ramnagar Ext, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh, India.

The Four fold reconstruction model incorporating literacy. Livelihood, health and leadership development services as the basis for the work of the society.

SRI emphasis on Micro credit instead of Macro credit. The following salient features of Grameen Banking system with necessary modifications are incorporated in this project.

1. Collateral Free Micro Credit is advanced exclusively to the poor and needy rural women. Micro credit is taken to their door steps
2. Beneficiaries are considered regardless of caste, colour, creed, religion or political affiliation.
3. Micro credit provided must be utilized for an economically viable and environmentally sustainable income generating activity.
4. Freedom and flexibility is given to select the income generating activity depending upon individual choice and the local socio economic, labour, marketing conditions etc.
5. Micro credit is rapid within a year in weekly instalments, with a repayment record of 100 percent.
6. Women form groups of like minded people who act as mutual collateral.
7. Teach the beneficiaries group binding, group dynamism, problem solving skills, individual and collective responsibility, accountability, leadership and skill up grading.

8. Inculcate the habit of thrift and savings.
9. Motivate them about the significance of building social assets along with economic assets in the empowerment process.
10. Simplicity, efficiency and transparency in all transactions and operation.

SRI ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN MICRO FINANCE

Free Tuition and Computer Training Centres:

As lack of Education is an important factor in poverty, SRI conducts free tuition service and Computer training to the poor and needy children. Financial assistance and scholarships are provided to the deserving and needy students. Besides, students are taken on outdoor Education cum entertainment trips to expose them to the realities of the life.

SRI Vidhyalaya

The two decades of experience indicate lack and in-adequate quality education is one of the important reasons for poverty. From this perspective, SRI committed to provide quality education to the poor rural children. As opposed to the commercial trend of present education, our focus shall be on quality education at affordable cost. Of course, loss shall be incurred in the process, but it is mitigated by the educational empowerment of the poor rural children.

Vanitha (Ladies) Canteen:

To enable the poor women to stand their own feet, Vinita Canteen (Women's Refreshment Stall) owned and operated by women, serve clean and healthy food at affordable price. This unique Canteen serves the twin purposes. While servicing the employees as well as beneficiaries with homemade tasty food in a family environment, it is a vital source of subsistence for a group of women beneficiaries with reasonable income.

Rural BPO Centre:

SRI is in the process of establishing the first BPO (Non-voice) Centre in Kerala to be operated round the clock by rural girls. Selected rural girls, mostly second generation of SRI Beneficiaries, with minimum qualifications of Xth STD will be trained in Basic English grammar, Data Entry skills, customer service, professionalism and personality development before assigning as BPO Operators. Objectives are, at least the second generation of beneficiaries should not depend upon Micro-credit, but to be self-dependent and be masters of their own destiny

Driving Empowerment

As part of women empowerment, young rural women beneficiaries are being trained to be safe and responsible drivers in their community. They shall be given financial assistance to buy vehicles to operate as local Taxi. SRI and SRI Vidhyalaya can be a meaningful source for business. Safe transportation of children at SRI Vidhyalaya can be entrusted to these women.

CONCLUSION

Society For Rural Improvement is one of the most the most popular Non profit Organization functioning for the upliftment of rural masses especially the rural women in Palakkad district. Majority of the population lives in the rural areas the challenges for the women living in rural area are more severe as compared to their urban counterparts. In rural societies, gender discrimination reduces economic opportunity for girls and young women. Society for Rural Improvement (SRI) is a Voluntary Organization, integrating programmes and consciously working towards the development and long term sustainability in rural communities for empowerment, capacity building and social transformation to sustain them and to improve their economic status, social sensitivity and a culture in which all are self-reliant.

SRI has been recognized as an effective strategy for the empowerment of women in rural areas as they bring together women from all walks of life to fight for their cause. SRI works on a variety of issues like health, nutrition, agriculture, forestry, income generation activities, seeking micro credit and so on.

Since the overall empowerment of women is vitally dependent on economic empowerment, SRI is involved in the following activities to empower women:

- Promotes the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for empowering women
- Instils leadership qualities among women and ensures their participation in their empowerment.
- Represents the problems faced by rural women to the concerned authorities and carries out impact assessment of the policy decisions affecting women.
- Mobilizes optimum resources and plans and implements the projects that have bearing upon women empowerment.

As Women are the most marginalized people in rural areas and they nurture them to achieve better livelihood for the community at large.

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