

DOES ROLE CONFLICT AND ROLE AMBIGUITY UPSURGE EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY? STRESS AS THE MODERATOR

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ABSTRACT

Every organization should prioritize human capital because the success of a company greatly depends on the creativity of all managerial-level employees. Specifically, the creativity of the upper management is a critical element that influences the growth of the public banking sector. A pilot study conducted at several public sector banks in Colombo District concluded that upper-level management staff members lack creativity. Additionally, the researcher identified that stress exacerbates confusion regarding managerial roles in a dynamic world. An empirical research gap was also noted through a comprehensive literature review; hence, this study was carried out among 155 management-level staff of selected public sector banks in Colombo District, chosen using a stratified sampling method. This study adopts a positivistic, deductive, and quantitative approach, in which a survey is conducted as the research strategy. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 21 using descriptive statistics. Significant multiple regression coefficients were found for role ambiguity (H1: $\beta=.257$, $p=.005$) and role conflict (H2: $\beta=.402$, $p=.000$) on employee creativity. The moderating effect of stress on the relationship between role conflict and creativity was not supported (H3: $\beta=-.125$, $p=.062$), whereas it was reported that stress moderates the relationship between role ambiguity and creativity (H4: $\beta=-.133$, $p=.043$). Thus, H1, H2, and H4 were accepted, whereas H3 was rejected. Regarding managerial implications, this research suggests that top management in the public banking sector should take numerous measures to minimize role conflicts, employee stress, and role ambiguity to foster creativity among managers. Recommendations include establishing proper survey and feedback mechanisms, training programs, a supportive working atmosphere, balanced and flexible workload management, and stress reduction workshops. Future researchers are encouraged to study managerial decision-making in relation to role theory, with some methodological advancements to produce more practical and generalizable findings and enrich the existing body of knowledge.

Keywords: Employee creativity, role ambiguity, role conflict, stress