

A Comparative Study of the Status of Role Ambiguity in Male and Female Faculties in Private Higher Education Institutions in Lucknow

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Abstract

Education Sector has undergone tremendous changes in the past decade. Specifically, with the emergence of several institutions, the higher education sector has witnessed significant changes in its working pattern and atmosphere in general which has led to the complexities with regard to the role of faculties further leading to the Role Ambiguity. Role ambiguity can be defined as the discrepancy between the defined role and perceived role. This study aims at examining the status of Role Ambiguity in Male and Female Faculties in Private Higher Education Institutions in Lucknow and comparing the same. It is based on primary data. A sample of 500 faculties from 14 higher education institutions is taken which includes 250 males and 250 females faculties. Chi Square and Mann Whitney U tests are applied for the research. The results of the study suggest that there is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties in private higher education institutions. Besides, the analysis based on the demographic factors also reveals almost same results.

Keywords: Role Ambiguity, male faculties, female faculties, demographic factors

1.Introduction

Role ambiguity is the lack of clarity of one's role where role is a position with certain authority and responsibilities. Extreme role ambiguity may lead to chaos at work place, absenteeism and an imbalance in one's personal and professional life. Job description and design, contradiction in the orders passed by different authorities and lack of clarity on individual's part may result into role ambiguity.

Further, male and female faculties may have different status regarding role ambiguity and the demographic factors including age, marital status, type of family, having children, designation, salary, nature of employment, employment status of spouse, work experience, qualification, number of working hours, number of working days and travelling time.

2.Literature Review

Katz and Kahn (1978) state that role ambiguity is a situation of uncertainty about what the occupant of a particular job or position is supposed to do. It is defined by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964) as the single or multiple roles that confront the role incumbent, which may not be clearly articulated (communicated) in terms of behaviors (the role activities or tasks/priorities) or performance levels (the criteria that the role incumbent will be judged by). It may result from a lack of (or vague) policies and procedures, a boss who is unable to communicate effectively or uncommon events for which there are no precedent (Kemery, 2006). Briggs (2005) concludes that lack of clarity about roles lead to role ambiguity that has significant impact on the achievement of personal and organisational goals, resulting in employee anxiety, dissatisfaction and lack of organisational effectiveness. Banton (1965) defines a "role" as a set of norms or expectations applied to the incumbent of a particular position by the role incumbent and the various other role players (role senders) with whom the incumbent must deal to fulfil the obligations of their position. Role ambiguity takes place when an individual does not have clear information about the expectations at the work place or how the reward system works (Kahn, et al., 1964). Gupta and Jenkins, 1985 emphasize that role ambiguity implies a lack of information required to perform a particular role or a lack of clarity and hence, uncertainty concerning the expectations connected with the role. Work demands, role ambiguity, and job distress are positively related to work-to-family conflict (Bernas& Major, 2000 and Grzywacz& Marks, 2000). Naylor, Pritchard, and Ilgen (1980) state that role ambiguity exists when focal persons (role incumbents) are uncertain about product-to evaluation contingencies and are aware of their own uncertainty about them. Kahn et al. (1964) further state that the role model by stating that to adequately perform his or her role, a person must know (a) what the expectations of the role set are (e.g., the rights, duties, and responsibilities), (b) what activities will fulfill the role responsibilities (means-end knowledge), and (c) what the consequences of role performance are to self, others, and the organization.

3. Research Objectives: i. To find out whether there is a difference between the status of role ambiguity in the male and female faculties in private higher education institutions in Lucknow
ii. To find out whether the status of role ambiguity in the male and female faculties in private higher education institutions in Lucknow is different with regard to demographic factors

4. Research Methodology- Sample size of 500 faculties (250 male and 250 female faculties) is taken for the research. Purposive Sampling Technique is adopted. The study is descriptive and analytical in nature. Primary data is collected through Questionnaire. Five Point LIKERT scale is undertaken for the study. Pearson Chi-Square, Mann Whitney “U” Test are applied for the data analysis.

5. Data Analysis

I. Data Analysis on the basis of Gender (Mann Whitney U Test)

Null Hypothesis	Significant Value	Decision
<i>H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties in private higher education institutions in Lucknow.</i>	0.546	Retain null hypothesis

II. Data Analysis on the basis of Demographic Factors

i. Age *H_{02.a1}: There is no association between age category and Role Ambiguity.*

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig. value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	3.423	0.490	Accept

H_{02.a2}: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties of different age groups. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	21-30 yrs. (Sig. Value)	Decision	31-40 yrs. (Sig. Value)	Decision	Above 40 yrs. (Sig. Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.887	Retain null hypothesis	0.591	Retain null hypothesis	0.662	Retain null hypothesis

ii. Marital Status *H_{02.b1}: There is no association between marital status and Role Ambiguity.*

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig. value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.043	0.979	Accept

H_{02.b2}: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their marital status. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Married (Sig Value)	Decision	Unmarried (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.134	Retain null hypothesis	0.266	Retain null hypothesis

iii. Employment Status of Spouse *H_{02.c1}: There is no association between employment status of spouse and Role Ambiguity.*

Factor	Pearson Square	Chi-	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	4.115		0.128	Accept

$H_{02.c2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering the employment status of their spouse. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Yes (Sig. Value)	Decision	No (Sig. Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.434	Retain null hypothesis	0.402	Retain null hypothesis

iv. Having Children $H_{02.d1}$: There is no association between faculties in terms of having children or not and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Square	Chi-	Sig. value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	2.641		0.267	Accept

$H_{02.d2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties whether they have children or not. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Yes (Sig. Value)	Decision	No (Sig. Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.676	Retain null hypothesis	0.649	Retain null hypothesis

v. Family Type $H_{02.e1}$: There is no association between family type and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig. value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	2.445	0.294	Accept

$H_{02.e2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their family type. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Nuclear Family (Sig Value)	Decision	Joint Family (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.271	Retain null hypothesis	0.710	Retain null hypothesis

vi. Educational Qualification

$H_{02.f1}$: There is no association between educational qualification and factors of Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	1.662	0.436	Accept

$H_{02.f2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their educational qualification. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Technical (Sig Value)	Decision	Non-Technical (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.589	Retain null hypothesis	0.147	Retain null hypothesis

vii.Designation $H_{02.g1}$: There is no association between designation and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	10.352	0.035	Reject

$H_{02.g2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their designation. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Assistant Professor (Sig. Value)	Decision	Associate Professor (Sig. Value)	Decision	Professor (Sig. Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.411	Retain null hypothesis	0.126	Retain null hypothesis	0.929	Retain null hypothesis

viii.Nature of Employment $H_{02.h1}$: There is no association between employment type and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	4.693	0.096	Accept

$H_{02.h2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their employment type. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	Full Time (Sig Value)	Decision	Part Time (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.984	Retain null hypothesis	0.003	Reject null hypothesis

For the factor Role Ambiguity, the median value for male faculties (2.20) is less than that for female faculties (3.20). Thus among faculties who work part time, males do not find their roles as ambiguous as females.

ix.Number of hours devoted at work place $H_{02.iu1}$: There is no association between number of working hours and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	5.712	0.057	Accept

$H_{02.i2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their number of working hours. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	4-8 (Sig Value)	Decision	8-12 (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.628	Retain null hypothesis	0.768	Retain null hypothesis

x.Work Experience (years) $H_{02.j1}$: There is no association between working experience and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	10.487	0.399	Accept

xi.. number of working days

$H_{02.k1}$: There is no association between number of working days and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	5.398	0.067	Accept

$H_{02.k2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their number of working days. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	5 days (Sig Value)	Decision	6 days (Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.267	Retain null hypothesis	0.473	Retain null hypothesis

xii. Travelling time $H_{02.l1}$: There is no association between travelling time and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	9.108	0.168	Accept

xiii.. current salary $H_{02.m1}$: There is no association between current salary and Role Ambiguity.

Factor	Pearson Chi-Square	Sig value	Decision
Role Ambiguity	6.431	0.599	Accept

Gender * Current salary (Rs. per month) Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Current salary (Rs. per month)					Total
		10,000-20,000 (i)	20,000-30,000 (ii)	30,000-40,000 (iii)	40,000-50,000 (iv)	above 50,000 (v)	
Gender	Male	70	37	56	48	39	250
	Female	86	68	40	29	27	250
Total		156	105	96	77	66	500

$H_{02.m2}$: There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their current salary. (Test Applied-Mann Whitney U Test)

Factor	(i)(Sig Value)	Decision	(ii)(Sig Value)	Decision	(iii)(Sig Value)	Decision	(iv)(Sig Value)	Decision	(v)(Sig Value)	Decision
Role Ambiguity	0.874	Retain	0.684	Retain	0.976	Retain	0.014	Reject	0.185	Retain

The median value of the fourth category of salary (40,000-50,000) for female faculties is calculated as 3.00 and 2.40 for male faculties.

6. Major Findings of the Study

- i. There is no significant difference between the status of Role Ambiguity in male and female faculties in private higher education institutions in Lucknow.
- ii. Role Ambiguity is not affected by age, marital status, employment status of spouse, having children, type of family, educational qualification, nature of employment, number of working hours, number of working days, travelling time, work experience and salary.
- iii. Role Ambiguity is affected by designation.
- iv. There is no significant difference between the status of role ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their age groups, marital status, employment status of spouse, having children, type of family, educational qualification, nature of employment (full time), number of working hours, number of working days, salary (10,000-20,000/ 20,000-30,000/30,000-40,000 and above 50,000) and designation.
- v. There is a significant difference between the status of role ambiguity in male and female faculties considering their nature of employment (part time- among faculties who work part time, males do not find their roles as ambiguous as females) and salary (40,000 to 50,000) on the basis of Role Ambiguity.

7. Conclusion

It may be concluded that nature of employment (part time) and salary, to some extent affect the status of role ambiguity in male and female faculties; however, the overall status of role ambiguity in male and female faculties is all the same. This may be due to the similar work conditions and challenges for both the male and female faculties at the workplace.

8. Limitations of the study

- Only private institutions are undertaken for the study.
- The sample is taken from Education Sector only. Therefore, its findings may not be fully applicable on other sectors.

9. Suggestions

- i. The study can be replicated to the Government educational institutions.
- ii. A comparative study of private and government institutions can be undertaken.
- iii. The study can be replicated to the other sectors too.

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