

Impact of ergonomized workplace on the Quality of work performed with special reference to Banking Sector

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Abstract

In today's competitive world, everyone wants to be the best and to keep up the job people need to spend more time at work place for better growth in terms of better earning and performance. And that is the time when people just start getting physical issues, it could start with a head ache or back ache which people usually ignore at the age of 20s and 30s. For a quicker solution they start taking medicines on their own and if problems still persist, they consult different doctors just to know that they need to change the sitting posture, standing posture and walking style. The present study is conducted to analyze the employee satisfaction keeping various areas in mind – it can be the working hours, office furniture etc. Workplace is becoming one of the assessing point for the branding. As we earlier would say work place ethics is mandatory. The paper has more emphasis on the socio-technical and quality of work. Employee participation in the development and improvement of their own work activities and daily production tasks has been strongly emphasized by the "quality movement". From this point of view, the quality perspective, and in particular development work, are supportive of improved working conditions and ergonomics. Ergonomics is a kind of science that specifically focuses on designing and creating an environment where people experience least amount of stress. Further, the introduction of development work was found from a theoretical point of view to be consistent with improvement in the characteristics that represent good and rewarding work. The study of ergonomics doesn't just stop at how good the furniture and fixtures are? But above that, the stress level too is taken into consideration. In this study survey is conducted of employees working in banks irrespective of Private or Public Banks. The objective of the study is to know the importance of ergonomics in work place and impact of technically designed tools on the quality of work performed by the employee.

Main key words – ergonomics, work place, quality of work, Bank, ergonomized furniture's, quality movement, work stress

Introduction

Everybody is concerned about the working style they adopt. The way one person tries to avoid the physical stress, which has a term known as Ergonomics but not aware of it. The name ergonomics officially proposed at a 1949 meeting of the British Admiralty (July 12), by Prof. Hugh Murrell. The name 'Ergonomics' officially accepted in 1950. The name Ergonomics was derived from the Greek words: Ergon - means work; Nomos –means natural law.

Ergonomics helps employees function better by humanizing their workplace, stopping their pain and improving their ability for task performance. Its prescriptions can be

applied to both white and blue collar workstation environments. It reduces lost time, time loss, absenteeism and saves hard rupee.

Ergonomics literally means the "science of work". Because of the inadequate designs of hand tools have long been at the root-cause of lost efficiency, poor quality of products, and permanent injuries that have caused excessive malingering in the work force. Ergonomics comes into everything which involves people. Work systems, sports and leisure, health and safety should all symbolize ergonomics principles if well designed. Ergonomics (say "er-guh-NOM-iks") is the study of the kind of work you do, the environment you work in, and the tools you use to do your job. The goal of office ergonomics is to set up your office work space so that it fits you and the job you are doing. Ergonomics is the science of designing and arranging your workplace, home or office, to be comfortable, safe and efficient for working. An ergonomic workplace can save your time and money and can help you stay healthy and fit. It is concerned with the 'fit' between people and their technological tools and environments. It takes account of the user's capabilities and limitations in seeking to ensure that tasks, equipment, information and the environment suit each user. It is employed to fulfill the two goals of health and productivity. It is relevant in the design of such things as safe furniture and easy-to-use interfaces to machines.

The best way to reduce pressure in the back is to be in a standing position. However, there are times when you need to sit. When sitting, the main part of the body weight is transferred to the seat. Some weight is also transferred to the floor, back rest, and armrests. Where the weight is transferred is the key to a good seat design. When the proper areas are not supported, sitting in a seat all day can put unwanted pressure on the back causing pain.

To make sure that the body is not compromised at all in the work place. Ensure your body position and posture is conducive to comfort and that you have minimal distraction from physical discomfort. **This correct use of the body in the workplace is simply called 'correct ergonomics'.**

Introduction to Banking Sector in India

The financial system of our country consists of organized and unorganized sector. The organized sector represents the structure nationalized banks, co-operative banks, and development banks; this includes the private sector also. The Reserve Bank of India controls this sector. Commercial Banks play a dominant role in the process of financial intermediation which credit and monetary policies are transmitted to the economy, with the privatization, liberalization and globalization processes have been introduced in our country in the early 90's the banking sector has undergone a drastic change. India moved from a closed financial system to open financial system. These changes tried to improve the efficiency of the banking sector. New norms were suggested to tackle the internal deficiencies as well as external environment of the banking sector. But these changes are creating some challenges.

Banks have been around since the first currencies were minted, perhaps even before that, in some form or another. Currency, particularly the use of coins, grew out of taxation. In the early days of ancient empires, a tax of on healthy pig per year might be reasonable, but as empires expanded, this type of payment became less desirable.

Additionally, empires began to need a way to pay for foreign goods and services, with something that could be exchanged more easily. Coins of varying sizes and metals served in the place of fragile, impermanent paper bills.

Banks have come a long way from the temples of the ancient world, but their basic business practices have not changed. Banks issue credit to people who need it, but demand interest on top of the repayment of the loan. Although history has altered the fine points of the business model, a bank's purpose is to make loans and protect depositors' money. Even if the future takes banks completely off your street corner and onto the internet, or has you shopping for loans across the globe, the banks will still exist to perform this primary function.

Ergo – Tech Banking

The current phase of the banking cycle appears to be driven by the downturn in economic activity rather than financial distress. Significantly, the largest financial institutions are among those affected by credit concerns. Worldwide financial systems have undergone structural changes. The global factors driving these changes have been advancements in technology and computing external financial liberalization and organizational changes in corporate world. Globalization and banking operations and expansion of financial activities as a result of technology advancements, in an increasingly market-driven environment have redefined the business models and changed the way the banks used to do the banking business. The International Banking scene has undergone drastic changes, with the introduction of computer and tele-communication technology, which have led to geographical and financial integration of international financial market in recent years. Banks are coming out with more and more features to add value to retail banking products and services.

As the Indian Banks have adopted the Techy style of working system and services more bend on online services. It's not only the services provided by the bank had a tremendous change but also the organization structure too. If just gone back to olden days, the banks were just having one focus to debit or credit a customer's account or services like Demand Draft or Locker systems. But as the time changes the change is a need for the banking sector too. Now it's not just what services you provide but the customer's also observe the workplace as a whole. Earlier the employees can work in their know style but now they have to be vigilant, alert and need to be quick responder. To be active and energetic the employee need to have a proper working condition. Fine take the example the bank is air conditioned but if AC is not placed at the right place it will not have impact not working condition of employees. As now it is cabin system which employee prefer but if the cabin is not of proper size and employee is not able to comfortably work it is again wrong ergonomics.

Poor Ergonomics to Right Ergonomics

As said earlier also the right ergonomics is the one which gives benefit to the employee and employer. With poor ergonomics the employee can have problem of Back ache, wrist problem, Neck and Shoulder pains, twisting of waist. Employees having sitting jobs can also have all these problems if proper chair and table is not provided. Now we can see the change of set up in banks as earlier it was the wooden furniture having no polished ends which can give injury to the employee and discomforts in working.

Literature Review

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Association in the US, nearly 1.8 million work-related injuries reported have occurred within the confines of the humble office cubicle. These work-related injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome, lower back pain, and tendonitis are considered to be among the leading causes of long-term disability among employees. **[Occupational Health and Safety Association, US]**

According to U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) , The study of human factors examines how humans interact with machines and other people (pilots, air traffic controllers, or design and acquisition personnel) and determines whether procedures and regulations take into account human abilities and limitations. **[U.S. General Accounting Office]**

According to Prabu Jaba, Today, a product might be designed in one country, manufactured in the second country, purchased by a wholesaler (buyer) in the third country and used by a customer in the fourth country. The designer might not know who are the end users and the buyer cannot influence the design of the product. Ergonomics is the only link between these four actors. He also added "Good ergonomics is good economy, Happy workforces make a happy bottom line" The aim of ergonomics is to enhance and preserve human health and satisfaction and to optimize the human performance in a system perspective. Ergonomics is concerned with both employees' well-being as well as organization well-being. Ergonomics aims to ensure that human needs for safe and efficient working are met in the design of work systems. **[Prabu, J. (2010)].**

According to Pritchard, to help relieve tension, stress and to correct posture for better health, ergonomists take into consideration certain important key factors. These key factors can include how a person sits, stands or moves about in an area. This would also include the length of time for these activities. Range of motion and how humans normally move are also taken into consideration. Ergonomists try to discover what makes certain situations more stressful on the body and how they can relieve this stress. The study of ergonomics exists to help improve the work life of people. With applied techniques, people have found their work comes easier and they are more able to relax during and at the end of the day. The application of ergonomics improves the overall quality of life for most individuals. **[Pritchard, B. 2005 -10]**

Impact of ergonomics in the work Place

1. Ergonomics reduces costs. By systematically reducing ergonomic risk factors, the banks can have more efficient work and more over less absenteeism. When the ergonomized office is formed it will surely have huge cost on the employer but if taken the ROI the return is more as the better working conditions will spread a positive vibes to the team and the customers coming in.

2. Ergonomics improves productivity. The best ergonomic solutions will often improve productivity. By designing a job to allow for good posture, less exertion, fewer motions and better heights and reaches, the workstation becomes more efficient.

3. Ergonomics improves quality. Poor ergonomics leads to frustrated and fatigued employees that don't do their best work. When the job task is too physically taxing on the employees, they may not perform their job like they were trained.

4. Ergonomics improves employee engagement. Employees notice when the company is putting forth their best efforts to ensure their health and safety. If an employee does not experience fatigue and discomfort during their workday, it can reduce turnover, decrease absenteeism, improve morale and increase employee involvement.

5. Ergonomics creates a better safety culture. Ergonomics shows your company's commitment to safety and health as a core value. The cumulative effect of the previous four benefits of ergonomics is a stronger safety culture for your company. Healthy employees are your most valuable asset; creating and fostering the safety & health culture at your company will lead to better human performance for your organization.

Impact of ergonomized workplace on the Quality of work performed

The impact of ergonomized workplace has an influence on employees' work quality. As we can say, when a person is planning for lunch in a restaurant, he will not only look at the food but also the ambience of the place. The same is the case with the bank too, it must be the top-rated bank, but if the workplace is not comfortable or the employee is having more health issues, the productivity of individual employees will come down. The banking sector is a place where employees have to be on the seat for longer durations and be alert, and they are dealing with money. The office furniture will have to be designed keeping in mind the employees, like the chair must be height adjustable, equipped with wheels, the table must be spacious, edges well polished, the drawer must be at the correct side. The various other materials used by the employee frequently must be easily approachable.

When these things are kept in mind, the employee feels valued and gives their best to the organization. Comfortable jobs are what everybody loves.

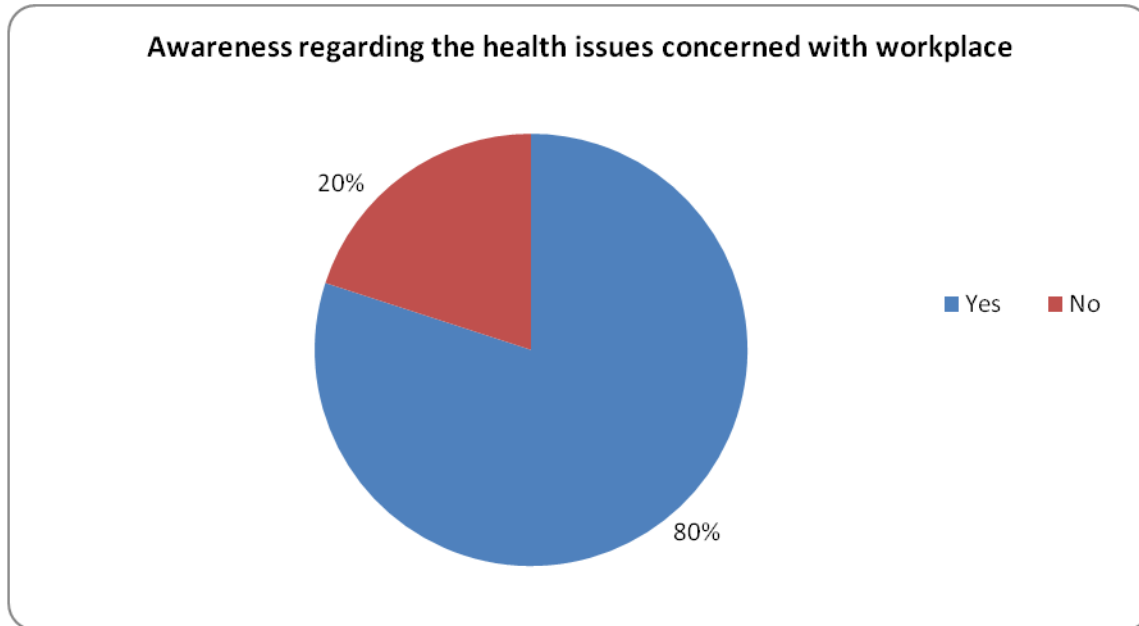
Employee satisfaction also has a correlation with ergonomized office furniture. The stress is not only because of work pressure but if the furniture or the employee sitting is not comfortable, it will surely be accountable for not performing the work appropriately.

In the banking sector, the work is like sitting for longer durations, stress on eyes and money transactions being the major role. In this condition, if your chair and table are not proper, the cash counting machine is not working properly, materials required by you in your work are not nearby, then, this will have an impact on your performance, which will directly come as a quality of work.

Survey Analysis and Interpretation

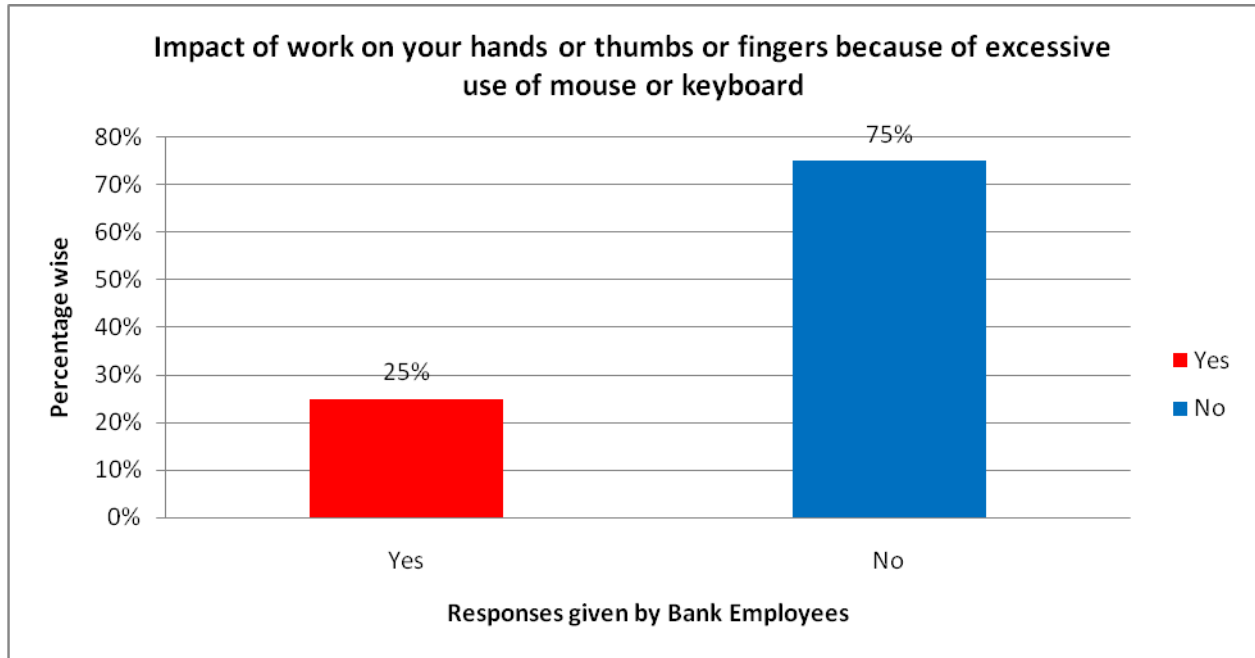
Awareness of Ergonomics - As per the survey, the term ergonomics is not familiar to the employees. As 100% of the respondents have told that they don't know what this term is. But if we ask about health issues because of work, they were able to respond like 80% of employees responded that they are aware that few health issues are due to the work performed by them. So with this, it can be interpreted that more awareness

regarding the technical term has to be initiated by the banks. The knowledge of ergonomics has to be shared with the employees, so that they can work without pain and stress. As it will result in upgrading the employees to the modern standards and concern from employer for their employees.



Stress on eyes - According to the survey, 100% employees say that they have stress on eyes due to their area of work. As Bank employee they have to be connected with the desktop. As said being a tech banking, the employees work on the accounts of the customer or the services needed by them. So while working any digit entered wrongly will surely put the customer into trouble and in today's scenario where customer is king, bankers need to work cautiously. So when asked respondents, do they have any vision rest. 100% employees said they take short vision rest in between, which is one way allowing them to perform efficiently in their job. Many of the respondent also said that they have anti glare screen which reduces the stress.

Impact of work on your hands or thumbs or fingers because of excessive use of mouse or keyboard – According to the survey, 75% of the employees say that they don't have any problem with their hands or fingers because they use the mouse pad and the keyboard is again tech savvy which gives comfort to the employees while working. Only 25% employees said that they have problem in their hands and fingers because of the work, the reason can be that they are not provided the mouse pad and better keyboards.



Conclusion

Job satisfaction includes the comfort level of an employee to work. The comfort level when said it comes to the work place. In this paper some basic ergonomic problems were taken into consideration like the height of the chair and table must be proper if it's not the employee has to stretch themselves. If the chairs are not height adjustable then it may hinder the performance. Through this survey it was concluded that the ergonomized furniture has impact on the efficiency of the work performed. But the awareness regarding ergonomics was not known to the employees. As we have entered the tech world there need to be awareness regarding the technical terms too. Ergonomics seeks ways to make the job fit the person, rather than the other way around. That means it is, by definition, a very individualized approach to designing tools, tasks and work areas. As to have a positive working environment employees need to have appropriate working conditions. As once a employee is free from various pains and injury during work, they start giving their best output.

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