

CHAPTER FIVE



CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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In this Chapter, an attempt is being made to derive definite conclusions from the primary and the secondary data presented in the earlier Chapters and also to offer some meaningful suggestions.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS:

The personnel interviewed for the purpose of this research comprised both managers and non-managers of the Kolhapur Maratha Cooperative Bank Limited (the Bank). In the Bank, the ratio of managers to non-managers is 1:13.

The profile of an average manager that emerges from the analysed data is that of a mature, professionally-qualified, 15-20 years' experienced individual; the average non-managerial employee of the Bank is young, educationally-qualified and experienced upto 10 years. The Bank thus has at its disposal immense human resource potential, primed for its multi-dimensional development.

The avowed social objective of the Bank is to provide economic opportunities to the local people. Employing local suitable talent is one way of fulfilling this objective. But the Bank has not followed any proven and systematic recruitment-and-selection procedure so far in selecting its personnel.

At present, the banking industry as a whole, is standing at a crucial juncture. As the economy becomes increasingly complex, banking personnel would be expected to perform in highly competitive situations. In fact, only the specialists in particular banking fields would be needed.

The present personnel training policy of the Bank appears to be of ad-hoc nature and there is a complete lack of systematization. Training constitutes an integral part of the human resources development.

As already stated, satisfaction over salary is a relative expression and it seems that the Bank has so far been able to keep its employees satisfied. But as the workforce becomes increasingly professional, their salary expectations too would rise correspondingly. If left unfulfilled, it would certainly give rise to a sense of work alienation. Such a situation can partially be avoided by publicising the Bank's salary-policy in advance, where each employee would know where he would stand at a particular point in time in future.

At present, the Bank has adopted a rather unorthodox working-hours policy, dependent on the needs of its business. However, as an organization, the Bank should present a non-partisan face over working hours to its employees; in other words, it may regularly rotate employees to work in all the three time-schedules. An indirect benefit of this rotating would be that all the employees would become familiar with

the Bank's operations at different business hours and in different branches.

All the respondents were found to be uncomplaining about the Bank's transfer policy and conceded that effecting an employee's transfer was the management's prerogative. More than one-third (40%) employees, however, stated that transfers affect their work-performance. Probably, they were referring to the initial adjustment problems at the new place and the stress of coping with unfamiliar work routine when transferred inter-Departmentally.

The level of satisfaction over promotion policy among the respondents is extremely high, which is an asset in itself to the Bank. Conversely, it becomes the duty of the Bank towards its employees to maintain this satisfaction in future also by introducing timely changes in its promotion policies.

The respondents have recorded a reasonable level of satisfaction over the Bank's leave policy. The leave policy is based on statutory provisions and some degree of disagreement will always be present among the employees.

The Bank has provided adequate insurance cover on-the-job and a social security cover to all its employees and the respondents were found to be reasonably satisfied with these. Of course, there is always the possibility of increasing the in-house safety provisions.

By way of recreation, the Bank offers only the local newspapers as reading material to its employees at branches. The head-office complex indeed has a recreation room offering limited facilities for relaxation. The Bank's amateur football team and its Art-Circle are active throughout the year, but these accommodate only a few employees. Overall, there is a need to provide sizeable recreational facilities to the Bank's employees, particularly in view of the typically mentally fatiguing nature of their job.

The Bank follows almost a text-book method of grievance settlement. The respondents agreed that the time taken for the grievance redressal depends on the nature of the grievance. Further enquiries with the managers revealed that a grievance may reach as high as Chairman; still, the final decision will always be communicated to the aggrieved employee by the manager to whom it was first reported. This is an ideal system of handling the grievance, which is evidenced by the near-perfection level of the employee satisfaction over grievance redressal.

Overall, the discipline in the Bank is above-average. Enquiries with the management revealed that in the Bank's history so far, services of only one employee were terminated for violent behaviour, as well as the number of warnings and memos issued to the employees for non-punctuality, poor-department, etc., is quite insignificant.

On the count of employees' inter-se relations, it was found that these are warm and friendly. This, coupled with a keen sense of discipline, has helped in the generation of a positive attitude among the employees towards the Bank as their employer, their work and their social obligations.

Strike indicates a total breakdown of industrial relations within the organization and usually is preceded by a history of industrial conflict and workplace disorder. Informal discussions with the management and the employees brought out that both sides are forever vigilant over possible conflict situations and clear them earnestly and expeditiously before tension builds up. The policy has served them well upto this time and should be encouraged.

On the whole, the manpower of the Bank belongs to the occupationally active age-group of 25-45 years. Educational level-wise also, manpower is well qualified. Job-wise classification, however, shows that the organization is middle heavy which may necessitate provision of adequate promotion and advancement opportunities in the near future. This also is borne out from the interpretation of Table 4.1.5.

All the managers were found to have a highly developed social conscience and actively participated in the Bank's various social-service and cultural activities. Many of them even viewed their managerial position as a social trusteeship responsibility.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS:

In recent past, particularly in the decades 1970s and 1980s, the Bank has recorded spectacular expansion of its business operations. The momentum of growth is strong enough to carry the Bank through to the dawn of the 21st Century. But obviously only those institutions that survive the buffeting pressures of social and economic changes in the intervening years would enter the next century. It is imperative that for meeting the unfolding challenges, the Bank should begin with imparting a degree of professionalism among its workforce and the right way to do is to start with a scientific recruitment procedure. If necessary, the Bank may seek outside help from a recruitment agency in this behalf.

The training procedure followed by the Bank has brought out several inconsistencies. The next logical step after scientific recruitment is a scientific training procedure to get the best out of the workforce. Initially, the Bank may start with refresher training for its present employees, preferably under the charge of a specially appointed training officer. For finalizing the training procedure and training material, the Bank may seek help from cooperative management institutes, business education institutes, expert lectures, etc.

The Bank needs to formulate its salary policy (gradation, payscales, monetary perquisites, et al.) and

communicate it to the employees to avoid the work alienation syndrome and its aftermath.

The variation in the working hours of individual employees necessitated by different business hours of branches could be turned to a greater advantage by rotating the employees regularly, so as to familiarise them with the Bank's operations at different hours and in different branches.

The analysed data has brought out that for a significant percentage of employees (40%), the work performance is affected consequent to inter-departmental transfers. Two solutions are possible in this situation. Firstly, inter-departmental transfers (but not inter-branch transfers) for short-duration logistics reasons be avoided; secondly, all the employees may be rotated through all the departments, as a rule. The first solution will create a battery of specialists in each department, who may or may not be much useful elsewhere; while the second solution will turn all the employees into generalists doing their jobs by rote. It is for the management to exercise its discretion in effecting transfers, taking into consideration the cost of lowered performance consequent to an inter-departmental transfers.

Despite this, the Bank would be well advised to devise a clear-cut grievance settlement procedure identifying therein the appellate authorities, time stipulation for appellate stages, nature of grievance and its respective

final deciding authority. Another important aspect of the grievance redressal is its settlement as soon as possible and as near to its point-of-origin as possible. This also needs to be particularly incorporated in the grievance settlement policy.

For a majority of the employees, the nature of their work is sedantary. Lack of exercise leads to very serious bodily disorders. As a long-range welfare measure for its employees, the Bank may introduce physical fitness exercises, including training in 'Yoga'. The Bank has already covered its workforce for various medical risks, but prevention is infinitely better than cure.

The staff recreation facilities set-up at the Bank needs serious reconsideration and overhauling. To begin with, the recreation room at the head-office complex may be provided with a television set and a video cassette player (VCP) as an audio-visual tool in the instructional material. Indoor sports like table-tennis, badminton, may also be introduced. Introduction of a reading-room/circulating library stocked with professional journals and general reading matter may also be considered.

Almost all the employees have reported work-overflows which they have occasionally attend to. Since the extra work has to be completed after office-hours, and also without monetary consideration, employees may eventually come to detest it, which in turn, may adversely affect their

productivity and participation. In order to check this problem, the management should consider work reorganization and work reallocation.

A serious implication of the statistics relating to the strike is that the respondents deem the strike as a potent weapon for forcing their demands. In fact, their staff union should make them aware of other tools like Collective Bargaining and Third-party Arbitration that more often settle the demands without undue conflict, sentimentalism and sensationalization. These two methods are also more conducive to maintaining workplace harmony and peace.