

**JOB STRESS AND ITS IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE EMPLOYEES WORKING IN
BPOS: A STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine what and how job-related and demographic variables are associated with performance of the BPO employees. This paper has made an attempt to find out the job stress factors affecting the performance of the employees. For this study 100 questionnaires has been issued to the employees working in various BPOs in Chennai city. Job stress is negatively related to performance. In other words, higher the stress, lower the performance. In India, the scenario of BPO sector is encouraging. Managing BPO employees in terms of creating fun at work, keeping them motivated towards organizational goals, increasing their job satisfaction, performance level and to retain them in order to sustain competitiveness in the markets are the major issues for any BPO organization. Stress at work is not a new phenomenon of modern lifestyles. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and it is still changing at whirlwind speed. They have touched almost all professions, starting from an artist to a surgeon, or a commercial pilot to a sales executive. With change comes stress will appear automatically. Job stress poses a threat to physical health. The business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in India has always been characterized by ungodly hours, monotonous job, low perceived value, dispirited efficiency resulting to high attrition level. Notwithstanding the ever rising attrition rate, it has become critical for the companies to satisfy their employees in order to retain them.

Key words: Job Stress, BPO, Job Satisfaction, Performance, Employees.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a biological term which refers to the consequences of the failure of a human or animal body to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats to the organism, whether actual or imagined. Stress refers to the strain from the conflict between our external environment and us, leading to emotional and physical pressure. In our fast paced world, it is impossible to

live without stress, whether you are a student or a working adult. There is both positive and negative stress, depending on each individual's unique perception of the tension between the two forces.

Stress at work is a relatively new phenomenon of modern lifestyles. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and it is still changing at whirlwind speed. They have touched almost all professions, starting from an artist to a surgeon, or a commercial pilot to a sales executive. With change comes stress will appear automatically. Job stress poses a threat to physical health. Work related stress in the life of organized workers, consequently, affects the health of organizations. Job stress is a chronic disease caused by conditions in the workplace that negatively affect an individual's performance and overall well-being of his body and mind.

Job stress is negatively related to performance. In other words, higher the stress, lower the performance. Before it was believed that moderate levels of stress would energize employees and enhance their performance. But this belief is not held to be true now. The assumption valid now is that performance will be disrupted even by relatively low level of stress. There are some valid reasons for this statement. They are,

- Even relatively mild stress distracts an employee. Individuals experiencing stress tend to focus on the unpleasant feelings and emotions rather than on the task at hand and as a result their performance suffers.
- Prolonged or repeated exposure even to mild levels of stress may have harmful effects on health and this may interfere with effective performance.
- Finally, a large body of research indicates that as arousal increases, task performance may at first rise, but at some point begins to fall.

Business Process Outsourcing

The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in the global scenario. India's BPO industry is known for its massive turnover and its huge employment base. Current environment is the business environment as it is giving birth to the corporate advancement in the country. BPO sector is also becoming the part Indian economy as the tremendous growth of the BPO sector over the past few years has resulted in considerable changes in the lives of its young workforce.

In India, almost 70 per cent of the total youngster population is doing job in the BPO.

Employment in the BPO sector has meant that young adults are reaching their career milestones and financial goals much earlier than before, surveys and evidence show that workers in the BPO sector experience high levels of stress as a result of working in closely monitored environments with pressure to meet.

BPO's are becoming increasingly popular in today's business, where many companies have centralized customer service and support functions. BPO's are generally large offices with representatives who either make or receive phone calls. Depending on the type of work, BPO's may have a single office employing a few people or large office with thousands of employees. The main activity in BPO's is answering inbound calls, such as a bank that gives out a toll-free number for customers needing help. At the same time there are some BPO's that focus on outbound calls too. With increase in outsourcing, BPO's are also becoming popular. By way of outsourcing, companies contract out some functions to other companies located mostly in cost effective destinations like India. In this field India enjoys several advantages over a number of developed countries. In India we have large pool of qualified people, English speaking graduates and IT professionals. In addition to this India have some other advantages like cheap labor, flexibility in working hours and time zone difference. This is the reason why a number of MNCs are outsourcing their business activities to India. BPO's are comparatively a recent introduction to the world of career options in India. The career avenues provided by BPO's is one of the best suited and growing option which even a fresher can opt for. With the opening up of the Indian economy and the advent of globalization more and more companies from abroad are basing or outsourcing their services to India.

FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Managerial Standards

Managerial standards can be a factor in motivating or de-motivating employees. Managerial standards should be in line with the job duties outlined in the job description outlined by human resources. The background of the employee, including their educational history, is also outlined in a job description. Managers should keep their expectations in line with the duties assigned to the employee. By expecting more from an employee, than he were hired for, or than their background has prepared them for, can diminish

employee performance.

Motivation

To get the best performance from employees, there needs to be some sort of motivation beyond the weekly pay check. Motivation can come in the form of financial incentives, the opportunity to get involved in company projects, a career path that leads to management and direct involvement from management into the daily tasks. Effective motivation can create a productive work force, but a lack of motivating factors can leave employees searching for reasons to give their maximum effort.

Commitment

Commitment means offering a competitive rate of pay and benefits package, offering assistance in paying for employee's higher education costs, developing a regular training schedule that keeps employees updated on company changes and gives pertinent information for employees to do their jobs and upgrading equipment to make sure that employees have the most efficient technology available to do their work. Commitment shown by the company is returned in the form of commitment from employees.

Employee Evaluations

An effective employee evaluation is an interactive process where the manager gives his input on the employee's performance, and the employee gets the chance to point out what she has learned throughout the year. Managers create a plan along with the employee for the coming year on how the employee can develop and improve their performance. Comprehensive employee evaluations are important to the ongoing performance of employees.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jungwee Park (2007) conducted a study on “work stress and job performance”. The outcome of the study reveals that work stress is having negative impact on job performance of the employee. The negative implications of work stress are recognized as a challenge to both employers and workers, with women, youth, shift, part-time, and nonwhite-collar workers being more likely to have high-strain jobs. Those with such jobs perceived their work to be physically demanding and less satisfying. Low personal incomes and low levels of education were also associated with higher stress.

Hardik Shah and Vinay Sharma (2007) conducted a study on “can job satisfaction enhances individual performance: empirical study from bpo sector” the result of the study showed that job satisfaction of the employees is enhancing the individual performance. It has been felt that such concerns which are directly affecting the performance of individuals in BPO sector must be addressed carefully and effectively which in turn brings the higher levels of job satisfaction with higher levels of individual output for the organizations.

Shazia Suhail Kazi, Ishak Mad Shah and Anwar Khan (2013) conducted a study on “Occupational Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence: A Critical Review”. The result of the study showed that it has been recommended that the organizations should seriously consider the problem of Work Stress by fully comprehending all the Stress contributing factors through learning and awareness. In this regard the employees should be given regular training for developing strong emotional competencies which will ultimately help them to boost up their performance and combat stress in a proactive way.

Rosman Bin Md Yusoff, Anwar Khan and Kamran Azam (2013) conducted a study on “Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in Academia”. From the study it was found that a negative relationship exists between Job Stress and Performance, whereas a strong positive was found between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance. The findings of study show that the faculty members in the Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan should focus not only on identifying the Job Stress factors but should also try to manage their emotional competences through a conducive work environment. In this way they can deal with the problem of Job Stress and boost up their Job Performance.

Ashfaq Ahmed, Dr. Muhammad Ramzan (2013) conducted a study on “Effects of Job Stress on Employees Job Performance .A Study on Banking Sector of Pakistan”. The results are significant with negative correlation between job stress and job performances and shows that job stress significantly reduces the performance of an individual. The results suggest to the organization that they have sustained a very health, cooperative and friendly environment within the team for better performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the factors causing job stress.
2. To explain how the job stress factors influencing the performance of the employees working in BPOs.

3. To find out the modern coping strategies followed by the employer and employee to overcome their stress for the purpose of improving their performance.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This conceptual study helps to know about the factors causing job stress and explains how the job stress factor affecting the performance of the employees. This study has made an attempt to bring out the modern coping strategies followed by the employee and the employers to overcome their stress and to improve their performance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are many factors affecting the performance of the employees. Job stress is one of the factors affecting the performance of the employees. In this study, only job stress factor alone taken for research. Likewise job stress is common in the entire field and in all the occupation, but in this study BPO field only considered.

SAMPLE SIZE

A sample of 100 employees working in various BPOs in Chennai city has been selected and primary data has been collected from those employees. Data has been collected from various secondary sources like journals, newspapers, Books, websites, conferences etc. Questionnaire has been issued to 120 employees but only 100 questionnaires was answered properly.

STATISTICAL TOOL USED (METHODOLOGY)

The collected primary data had been analyzed by chi-square test.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Based on the data collected analysis and interpretations were made to find out the result of the study.

Table showing opinion of the different age group employees saying that jobs stress is affecting their performance.

Data has been collected from employees coming under different age groups to know their opinion regarding whether their job stress is affecting their job performance or not.

Hypothesis

H_0 = There is no significant differences in the opinion of the different age group employees about impact of job stress on job performance.

H_1 = There is a significant difference in the opinion of the different age group employees about impact of job stress on jobperformance.

TABLE NO: 1

Age\ Opinion	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
20-25	9	20	4	1	34
26-30	7	19	2	2	30
31-40	8	18	2	1	29
>40	1	4	1	1	7
Total	25	61	9	5	100

Source: primary data

The above table shows that among the various age group employees majority 86% (25% and 61%) of the employees strongly agree and agree that their job stress is affecting their job performance.

CV	3.15 6
TV	16.9 2
DO F	9
LS	5%

$CV < TV \Rightarrow H_0$ accepted

There is no significant difference in the opinion of the different age group employee, that their job stress is affecting their jobperformance.

Irrespective of the age job stress is affecting the job performance of the employees.

Table showing opinion of the male and female employees, that they are having stress in their workplace.

H_0 =There is no significant differences in the opinion of the male and female employees regarding stress in the workplace.

H_1 = There is a significant difference in the opinion of the male and female employees regarding stress in the workplace.

Table No: 2

Gender\ Opinion	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Male	22	52	5	1	80
Female	6	9	4	1	20
Total	28	61	9	2	100

Source: primary data

The above table clearly indicates that among the collected sample 80% of the employees are male and 20% of the employees are female. Majority of the male and female employees agree that they are facing stress in the workplace. The table shows that stress is common to all.

CV	5.628
TV	7.81
DOF	3
LS	5%

CV < TV => Ho accepted

The result shows that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the male and female employees regarding their stress in the work place. Irrespective of the gender both male and female employees are experiencing stress in the workplace.

FINDINGS

- Majority of the employees agree that the job stress factors or job stress is affecting their performance. They cannot able to concentrate on their work properly.
- Majority of the employees agree that they are experiencing stress in the work place irrespective of the gender.
- Both the employer and the employee are following some stress coping strategies to overcome the stress.

SUGGESTIONS

The employer can control certain stress factors which affect the employees in performing their job. The employees also can try to overcome their stress through some exercises, yoga and meditation. The employers can extend their support to the employees to get rid of the job stress.

CONCLUSION

Stress is very common in day to day life. Now a day's it's become our part of life. We can overcome stress but we cannot avoid stress. Stress is not bad all the time. But it occurs during the work time it will affect our performance in work. The result of the study reveals that both the male and female employees are experiencing stress in their work place. Irrespective of the age majority of the employees agree that the job stress is affecting their jobperformance.

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