

## A STUDY ON IMPACT OF WORK LIFE STRESS ON JOB WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BPO EMPLOYEES IN VIJAYAWADA

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### ABSTRACT:

*The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector is one of the fast growing sectors in the global scenario after the liberalization, privatization, and globalization to increase job opportunities day by day. The sector is showing a remarkable growth even in the Indian context as major job providers through their activities relating to customer interaction and service. The BPO sector is developing the young generation not only by providing employment opportunities but also by building confidence in them. Indian BPO companies are even though they are playing great attention towards training the employees still most of the youngsters employees are facing a lot of problems as they are working on continuous night shifts, which affect their biological balance. Apart from this, excessive workloads, unreachable targets and pressurizing customers are creating stress among the employees. This ultimately results in physical, psychological and behavioural deviations which affects the employee's personal and professional life along with the organizational growth. The aim is to identify the problems in the BPO sector and the level of stress among the employees, to determine the cause and perception of the employees about their work life. First hand information regarding the problems, the sources of stress and the experience on stress situations is collected from various sources. A questionnaire is circulated to employees at different levels to measure the stress level of employees. It also identifies the various stressors prevailing among the employees. The research also helps to analyze the stress impact on job; working conditions, work life balance and workload which creates stress among the employees at BPO sector, Vijayawada.*

**Keywords:** Stress, BPO sector, Employee, Job satisfaction, Workload, Work life balance

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Today majority of people are in a state of stress and this century is called century of stress. Stress can be due to various reasons like depression, anxiety, tension, and pressure. A lot of research has been conducted over the last hundred years some of the theories are being accepted and others are still being researched and debated. **Hans selye** was one of the founding father of research on stress. He stated in 1956, that “**Stress is not necessarily something bad; it all depends on how we take it**”. Stress is a physiological and psychological imbalance as it arises due to the pressure on a person and person's inability to accept it. It is a condition or circumstances which can disturb the normal physical and mental health of an individual.

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 ambitious performance targets. Strict deadlines and ambitious targets have also resulted in employee “burnout”. Repetitive tasks, such as responding to telephone calls more than 100 times a shift have resulted in absenteeism and attrition among many young employees. A growing number of employees also experience physical and emotional problems such as panic attacks, depression, relationship problems, alcoholism and sleeping and eating disorders.

## **2. LITERATURE FRAMEWORK**

Kristiansen, Hellzen and Asplund, (2006) describe that leadership, education, supervision and reflection are very important variables to reduce the environmental violence, enhancing job satisfaction and helps to handle the moral stress. Burnout has been most prevalent among workers in the helping professions (Paton and Goddard, 2003). Brookins (1982) and Cooper and Marshall (1980) found that employees in the administration has high level of stress and low job satisfaction. During this study employees reported that “70 per cent of their total life stress resulted from their jobs” (Cooper & Marshall, 1980). Due to the changes in the global competitiveness, the pressure on workforce to produce maximum output and enhance competitiveness is also increasing day by day. Indeed, to perform better to their job, there is a requirement for workers to perform multiple tasks in the workplace to keep abreast of changing technologies (Cascio, 1995; Quick, 1997).

Hari (2004) described in his study that males have less emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment but higher depersonalization than the female counterparts. Females have higher job satisfaction than their male counterparts. Keenam and McBain (1979) suggested that Type a personality and tolerance for ambiguity moderate the relationship between role ambiguity and job satisfaction.

Demerouti, Bakkar, Nachreiner and Schanfeldi (2001), Yperen and Janssen (2002, 2003) studied that stress is always associated with demand and resources. He further elaborated that demands are the responsibilities, pressure, obligation that individual face in the workplace, on the other hand, resources are things within an individual control that can be used to resolve the demand.

## **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To identify the problems of employees in BPO's.
- To find the level of stress among the employees and the resulting behavioral deviations of the employees.
- To assess the perception of the employee about his work life.
- It also aims to identify the impact of job satisfaction and workload on stress.

## **4. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study conducted is descriptive and analytical in nature. Descriptive research includes

surveys and fact finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of facts as it exists at present.

## 5. **SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION**

The primary data have been collected through the method of interview schedule and structured questionnaire from the employees at BPO sector. It contains of five point scale questions. The extent of influence of different variables is measured on a 5 point Likert scale.

## 6. **SAMPLE DESIGN**

sample design is definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. The survey was conducted for a population of 900 employees of which 250 were taken for the study.

### **7.1..SAMPLE TECHNIQUES**

Here the sampling technique used is simple random sampling, it is used where the respondents are selected using the following formula

Where:

$n$  = sample size

$Z$  = level of confidence

$\sigma$  = population standard deviation

$E$  = acceptable amount of sampling error

If the value obtained by the above formula will be greater than 5 per cent of the total population then we will have to use another formula for the calculation of the final minimum required sample size.

### **7.2. SAMPLE SIZE AND AREA**

The sample size for the study was limited to 250; the geographic area of the study was BPO Sector, Vijayawada.

**Table 1: Reliability test**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.987	21

*(Data Compiled by using SPSS)*

### **Inference – Reliability Test**

The researcher has used Cronbach's Alpha reliability test to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire for the survey study. The analysis was done using SPSS. As statistics tells more the Alpha value near to 1 more will be the reliability.

The above table-1 reveals that the **Cronbach's Alpha value = .987**. Therefore based on the Alpha value it can be decided that the framed questionnaires are more reliable with each other and the

questionnaire survey can be conducted by using the questionnaire.

**8. TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF THE DATA**

The statistical analysis carried out in the study by using MS-Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) Software. The statistical technique like s ANOVA has been used for the analysis. Analysed & interpreted data have been presented in the form of tables, charts and figures.

**9. LIMITATIONS:**



The research has been restricted to BPO, Vijayawada.

Findings will be based on the respondent's information.

**10. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**

**Hypothesis – 1**

H<sub>0</sub>: Change in the salary has no influence on performance of employee. H<sub>1</sub>: Change in the salary has influence on performance of employee.

**Table 2: Correlation between salary and performance of employee**

		Salary	Performance
Salary	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	1	0.929**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		.000
	<b>N</b>	250	250
Performance	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.929**	1
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.000	
	<b>N</b>	250	250

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Data Compiled by using SPSS)

Note: If p-value is less than 0.05, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Null Hypothesis is Rejected as Pearson Correlation is 0.929, and p = 0.000 (p < 0.05) at confidence level of 0.01. Since the p < 0.05, the Change in the salary has influence on performance of employee.

**Hypothesis – 2**

H<sub>0</sub>: Increase in the Work load will not Increase blood pressure of employee. H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in the Work load will Increase blood pressure of employee.

**Table 3: Correlation between Work loads will and Increase Blood pressure of employee**

		Work Load	Increase Blood Pressure
Work Load	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	1	0.851**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		.000
	<b>N</b>	250	250
Increase Blood Pressure	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.851**	1
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.000	
	<b>N</b>	250	250

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Data Compiled by using SPSS)

Null Hypothesis is Rejected as Pearson Correlation is 0.851, and  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) at confidence level of 0.01. Since the  $p < 0.05$ , the Increase in the Work load will Increase blood pressure of employee.

**Hypothesis – 3**

H<sub>0</sub>: Late night shift in job will not Increase Heart decease of employee. H<sub>1</sub>:

Late night shift in job will Increase Heart decease of employee.

**Table 4: Correlation between Late night shift and Heart decease of employee**

		Late Night Shifts	Heart Disease
Late Night Shifts	Pearson Correlation	1	.892**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Heart Disease	Pearson Correlation	.892**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Data Compiled by using SPSS)

Null Hypothesis is Rejected as Pearson Correlation is 0.851, and  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) at confidence level of 0.01. Since the  $p < 0.05$ , the late night shift in job will Increase Heart decease of employee.

**Hypothesis – 4**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significance relationship between the employee performance and Salary, Job task, Work environment, Colleagues, Late night shifts, Targets, Autonomy and Work load.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significance relationship between the employee performance and Salary, Job task, Work environment, Colleagues, Late night shifts, Targets, Autonomy and Work load.

**Table 5: ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Salary	Between Groups	62.775	2	31.388	778.326	.000
	Within Groups	9.961	247	.040		
	Total	72.736	249			
Job Task	Between Groups	125.566	2	62.783	181.394	.000
	Within Groups	85.490	247	.346		
	Total	211.056	249			
Work Environment	Between Groups	110.322	2	55.161	128.440	.000
	Within Groups	106.078	247	.429		
	Total	216.400	249			
Colleagues	Between Groups	107.640	2	53.820	283.909	.000
	Within Groups	46.824	247	.190		
	Total	154.464	249			
Late Night Shifts	Between Groups	95.288	2	47.644	555.712	.000
	Within Groups	21.176	247	.086		
	Total	116.464	249			
	Between Groups	303.645	2	151.823	112.189	.000

	Within Groups	334.259	247	1.353		
	Total	637.904	249			
	Between Groups	70.961	2	35.481	523.053	.000
Autonomy	Within Groups	16.755	247	.068		
	Total	87.716	249			
	Between Groups	67.283	2	33.641	253.852	.000
Work Load	Within Groups	32.733	247	.133		
	Total	100.016	249			

(Data Compiled by using SPSS)

Table 5 shows the ANOVA between employee performance and Salary, Job task, Work environment, Colleagues, Late night shifts, Targets, Autonomy and Work load. Degrees of freedom between-groups is 2, degrees of freedom within groups is 247, F ratio from the F column is 778.326, 181.394, 128.440, 283.909, 555.712, 112.189, 523.053 and 253.852 respectively, the value in the Sig. column (the p value) is 0.000 for all the variables.

In these above cases, the p value equals 0.000 for all the variables which are lesser than the  $\alpha$  level (.05), so we can reject null hypothesis and say that, there is significance relationship between the employee performance and Salary, Job task, Work environment, Colleagues, Late night shifts, Targets, Autonomy and Work load.

**Hypothesis – 5**

H<sub>0</sub>: Meditation will not help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.

H<sub>1</sub>: Meditation will help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.

**Table 6: Meditation and Lack of Concentration**

Particulars	Meditation				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	

=	Strongly Agree	Count	113	22	0	0	135
		% of Total	45.2%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	54.0%
	Agree	Count	0	66	22	0	88
		% of Total	0.0%	26.4%	8.8%	0.0%	35.2%
	Neutral	Count	0	0	20	4	24
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	1.6%	9.6%
	Disagree	Count	0	0	0	3	3
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%
	Total	Count	113	88	42	7	250
		% of Total	45.2%	35.2%	16.8%	2.8%	100.0%

(Data Compiled from the primary questionnaire by using SPSS)

**Table 7: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	372.966 <sup>a</sup>	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	322.496	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	192.248	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	250		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

(Data Compiled by using SPSS)

From the table 6 showed the classification based on meditation and lack of concentration. It can be identify that, based on meditation majority of respondents fall under strongly agree category is 113 (45.2%) followed by agree category is 88 (35.2%) followed by neutral category is 42 (16.8%) and the lowest level of respondents fall under disagree category is 7 (2.8%). Based on lack of concentration majority fall under strongly agree category is 135 (54.0%) followed by agree category is 88 (35.2%) followed by neutral category is 24 (9.6%) and the lowest level of respondents fall under disagree category is 3 (1.2%). It can be inferred that majority of respondents falling under strongly agree category by believing Meditation will help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.

From the table 7 it can be identify that, the Pearson chi-square value is 372.966 and p-value is less than .05, (p = 0.00). So we can reject the null hypothesis, and say that, Meditation will help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.

**11. FINDINGS:**

- During the study, it was found that 74% of the total population was male and 26% of the total population was female, the percentage of the male during the study was more than double of the ratio of female. It indicates that number of male employees are working in BPO is much more than the female employees.
- The more respondent during the study was between 20-30 yrs. It shows that the ratio of young generation during the study was high as compare to others.
- The educational qualification for most of respondents was graduate i.e. 50% and on the other hand the 10% respondents were above post graduation.
- Most of the respondents under study were of experienced below 2-5 years; only few respondents were of 6-10 years experience.
- The Change in the salary has influence on performance of employee.
  - The Increase in the Work load will Increase blood pressure of employee.
  - The late night shifts in job will Increase Heart decease of employee.
- There is significance relationship between the employee performance and Salary, Job task,

Work environment, Colleagues, Late night shifts, Targets, Autonomy and Work load.

□ It is found that Meditation will help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.

## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure that the workload is allocated based on worker's capabilities and resources.
- Clearly define workers' roles and responsibilities.
- Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions and actions affecting their jobs.
- Improve communications-reduce uncertainty about career development and future employment prospects.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction among workers.
- Establish work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job.
- Combat workplace discrimination (based on race, gender, national origin, religion or language).

## 12. CONCLUSION:

Workplace stress is the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker as the competitive environment, technological advancements, HR Practices, economic development; social developments are taking place day by day. Even the employee is expected to work for long hours, perform multiple jobs in the organization which give a mentally as well as physical problems to the employees which ultimately leads to a pressure, strain, anxiety, tension to the employees and ultimately the productivity of the employee's decreases. In this case, the responsibility of BPO companies, that they must take proper initiative to reduce the stress level among the employees by adapting some of the technique like Muscle Relaxation, Bio feed Back, Meditation, Cognitive Restructuring, Time Management, Employee Assistance Programme, and Wellness Programme.

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**Annexure – 1: Reason for work life stress in the BPO sector**

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Salary	139 (55.6%)	52 (20.8%)	39 (15.6%)	9 (3.6%)	11 (4.4%)
Job task	152 (60.8%)	92 (36.8%)	6 (2.4%)	0	0
Work	159 (63.6%)	59 (23.6%)	12 (4.8%)	19 (7.6%)	1 (0.4%)
Colleagues	168 (67.2%)	59 (23.6%)	2 (0.8%)	16 (6.4%)	4 (1.6%)
Late night shifts	156 (62.4%)	70 (28%)	16 (6.4%)	6 (2.4%)	2 (.8%)
Targets	148 (59.2%)	77 (30.8%)	24 (9.6%)	1 (0.4%)	0
Autonomy	137 (54.8%)	73 (29.2%)	20 (8%)	11 (4.4%)	9 (3.6%)
Work Load	152 (61%)	85 (34%)	13 (5.2%)	0	0

**Annexure – 2: The Effect of Stress on Job in the BPO sector Factors**

Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Performance	127 (50.8%)	116 (46.4%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.4%)	0
Absenteeism	146 (58.4%)	79 (31.6%)	24 (9.6%)	1 (0.4%)	0
Turnover	152 (61%)	85 (34%)	13 (5.2%)	0	0
Poor decision making	129 (51.6%)	103 (41.2%)	18 (7.2%)	0	0
Lack of concentration	128 (51.2%)	85 (34%)	32 (12.8%)	5 (2%)	0
Increase blood	135 (54%)	88 (35.2%)	24 (9.6%)	3 (1.2%)	0
Heart disease	107 (42.8%)	129 (51.6%)	12 (4.8%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)

**Annexure – 3: The Study to implement the Work Life Stress Management Programs in the BPO sector**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
Muscle Relaxation	128 (51.2%)	85 (34%)	32 (12.8%)	5 (2%)	0
Meditation	116 (46.4%)	79 (31.6%)	49 (19.6%)	6 (2.4%)	0
Cognitive Restructuring	113 (45.2%)	88 (35.2%)	42 (16.8%)	7 (2.8%)	0
Time Management	121 (48.4%)	89 (35.6%)	28 (11.2%)	12 (4.8%)	0
Employee Assistance Programme	134 (53.6%)	81 (32.4%)	24 (9.6%)	11 (4.4%)	0
Wellness Programme	156 (62.4%)	81 (32.4%)	13 (5.2%)	0	0