

STRESS IN THE CONTEXT OF JOB SATISFACTION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF BPO SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Due to the globalization, liberalization, privatization, job opportunities are increasing day by day. Now, every employee in the organization is expected to excel in multiple jobs. In that situation, employees remain confused about their role in the organization, even management doesn't know that for particular job particular employee is responsible. It ultimately, leads to give a stress, strain, nervousness and anxiety to the employees. Yet previous studies indicate that stress leads to reduce the job satisfaction among the employees. But this study indicates that job satisfaction is the reason to raise the stress among the employees. The study has conducted a research on the 300 employees working in the call centres of the Mohali, Panchkula and Chandigarh. To conduct a survey non-probability cum convenience sampling techniques is used. The results are analysed with the help of descriptive, Pearson – correlation method. The result reveals that salary, job task, colleagues, sense of purpose, career path opportunity, work environment, autonomy and workload are the major variables to introduce the stress among the employees. The paper also discusses the relevance of the Stress management Programmes after conducting a face to face interview as well as filling up a questionnaire.

Keywords: Environment, Employee, Job Satisfaction, Stress, Workload.

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INTRODUCTION

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 of it. It is ranked as the most preferable source of employment for the youngsters. In India, almost 70% of the total youngster population is doing job in the BPO. But it would be surprised that they are not becoming remain in the BPO for a long time period. The reason of this is that BPO sector is providing 32% sleep disorder, 25% digestive disorder and 20% eye-sight problem to the employees. Jobs in the BPO sector are giving many gifts to the employees like high stress level, Number of other illness and broken marriages. Currently, near about 80% organizations are suffering from this disease, consequently the overall job satisfaction of the employees is demolish. Stress is becoming inevitable these days in every organization and ultimately it is establishing to the Burnout. Burnout, experienced as a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion (Pines & Aronson, 1988) as well as depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment, is the result of a process of attrition in which highly motivated and committed individuals lose their spirit (Freudenberger, 1980; Pines, 1993; Pines & Aronson, 1988).

Modern era is known as the “era of anxiety and stress” (Coleman, 1976). Every job whether that is in corporate, pharmaceutical industry, banking sector and education sector is becoming the main reason to give the stress to its employees. Thus, when this stress becomes excessive, employees develop various symptoms of stress that harm their performance and even threaten their ability to cope up with their environment.

LITERATURE FRAMEWORK

An ample of the studied has been conducted on the impact of the stress on the job satisfaction among the employees (Beehr and Newman, 1978; Bhagat, 1983 and Jamal, 1984). There have been many studies on the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction and these studies generally indicate that job stress and job satisfaction are inversely related (Sullivan and Bhagat, 1992). luthens (1998) define stress as “an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioral deviation for organizational participants”. Job satisfaction has been defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job (Locke et. Al., 2001) an affective reaction to one’s job (Cranny, Smith & Stone, 1992) and an attitude towards one’s job (Brief, 2002) Low stressed employees are considered more satisfied and possessed better mental health than the high stressed employees as compare to those employees who have more stress (Rahman, 1989,

Hollingworth et al., Abdul Halim, 1981; Keller et al., 1975; Leigh et al, 1988, Landsbergis, 1988). Ulleberg and Rundmo (1997) concluded that job stress mainly reduces the job satisfaction among the employees and ultimately it can lead to bring the strain among the employees. Studies have shown that these employees suffer from high stress levels (Freudenberger, 1974, 1981; Freudenberger & Richelson, 1980; Maslach, 1976; Pines & Maslach, 1978) and low job satisfaction (Freudenberger, 1975; Igodan, 1984; Maslach, 1978; Newcomb & Clark, 1985), (Hollingworth et. al. 1988; Keller, 1975). Moreover, Cummins (1990) have highlighted that job stressors are the main predictive of job dissatisfaction and greater propensity to leave the organization.

Literature shows that role conflict and ambiguity have been proposed as determining factors of workers' job satisfaction and their commitment towards the organization (Caplan & Jones, 1975; Kahn, 1974; Newcomb & Clark, 1985; Pines, Aronson & Kafry, 1981). Role stressors were negatively related to affective commitment mediated through job satisfaction (Anton, 2007). According to Beehr et al. (1976), Cordes & Dougherty (1993), Cooper (1991), Dyer & Quine (1998) and Ursprung (1986) role ambiguity exists when an individual lacks information about the requirements of his or her role, how those role requirements are to be met, and the evaluative procedures available to ensure that the role is being performed successfully. Jackson & Schuler (1985) and Muchinsky (1997) studies found role ambiguity to lead to such negative outcomes as reduces confidence, a sense of hopelessness, anxiety, and depression. Management role of an organization is one of the aspects that affect work-related stress among workers (Alexandros-Stamatios et. al., 2003).

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% 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). The ultimate results of this pressure have

been found to one of the important factors influencing job stress in their work (Cahn et al., 2000).

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.

Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) identified four categories of work stressors: physical environment, individual level (a mixer of role and career development variables), group level (primarily relationship-based) and organizational level (a mixture of climate, structure, job design and task characteristic) Schuler (1982) also identifies seven categories of work stressors in organizations: job qualities, relationships, organizational structure, physical qualities, career development, change and role in the organization. Quick and Quick (1984) proposed four categories of stressors: task demands, physical demands and interpersonal demands. However, the stress one experiences in the job vary from mild to severe depending one's physiological, psychological and social make up (French and Caplan, 1970, Margolis et al., 1974., Miller 1960 and Wardwell et al., 1964). Stressors at the individual level have been studied more than any other category. Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load, is widely examined individual stressors (Mc Grath 1976; Newton and Keenan, 1987).

Nevertheless, Beehr and Newman (1978) had defined stress as a situation which will force a person to deviate from normal functioning due to the change (i.e. disrupt or enhance) in his/her psychological and/or physiological condition, such that the person is forced to deviate from normal functioning. Vinokur-Kaplan (1991) stated that organization factors such as workload and working condition were negatively related with 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.

Spector et al. (2004) studied that long working hours in the organization increase the stress among the employees and in this situation, they can reduce their stress level by making conversation with their peers and family members. The results of this study is found true on

the workers of Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, U.S., Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

Cooper, Payee, Perasuraman and Alutto (1978); Hart and Cooper (1978) Discussed that there are three main sources of stress, which includes environmental factors (economic uncertainty, political uncertainty and technological changes), organizational factors (task demand, role demand and interpersonal demand) and Personal factors (Family problems, economic problems and personality).

Williams (1989) describes that hostility significantly increases a person's stress and risk for heart diseases. Cummings (1990); Manning, Jackson and Fusilier (1996); Bliese and Britt (2001) Stamper and Johske (2003) describe that collegial relationship with coworkers or supervisors can reduce the chances of stress among the employees. The job which provide a low level of variety, significance, autonomy, feedback and identity to incumbents creates a stress and reduce satisfaction and involvement in the job (Hackman and Oldman, 1975) Schler (1989); Kahan and Byosiere (1989) reviewed that high level of stress may develop high blood pressure, ulcers, irritability, difficulty in making routine decisions, loss of appetite and accident proneness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the Reason for stress in the BPO sector.
- To evaluate the Effect of stress on job satisfaction in the BPO sector
- To study whether stress is negatively or positively impacting the job satisfaction among the employees.
- To evaluate whether the employees want to implement a stress management programs in the organizations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Collection of data: - To conduct this study, total 300 questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in the call centers of Mohali, Panchkula and Chandigarh. This study is conducted during Dec. 2010- April 2011. But after the completion of the survey only 256 employees gave their response, but only 250 questionnaires are included in this study. So, the response rate was 83%. During this study, convenience sampling techniques was used.

Instrument development: - To conduct the study primary source is used. For this study questionnaire is used to collect the first hand information. This questionnaire is prepared with the help of literature and face to face interaction with the employees working in the call

centre. The questionnaire consists of three main categories. *First*, category includes that geographical description of the employees working in the call centre, which includes, gender, marital status, experience, education, salary and the nature of job. *Second*, category includes, Reason for stress in the BPO sector, third category includes, Effect of Stress on job satisfaction in the BPO sector, fourth category, includes Results of the Study to implement the Stress Management Programs in the BPO sector. In the questionnaire the respondent have to choose an option from the strongly agree to strongly disagree. The respondent who choose strongly agree were given '5' score and those who choose strongly disagree were given '1' score.

Statistical techniques:-

Results are discussed with the help of percentage, frequencies, mean and standard deviation

Discussion of the results

Geographical description: -During the study, it was found that 71% 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 call centre is much more than the female employees. The reason is that the parents in north India don't allow their girls to work in call centers. The more respondent during the study was between 20-25 yrs. It shows that the ratio of young generation during the study was high as compare to others, the respondents between the ages of below 20 years was very few. The educational qualification for most of respondents was graduate i.e. 40% and on the other hand the 5% respondents were above post graduation. It indicates that graduate students mostly prefer to do a job in the call centers; it helps them to not only earn good salary but also to get a job quickly. The study showed that mostly the number of respondents was during the study taking salary above 8000. Most of the respondents under study were of experienced below 2 years; only few respondents were of 3 years experience. In this study, major percentage of the employees was customer care executives.

Reason for stress in the BPO sector

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	S.D.
Salary	139(55.6%)	52(20.8%)	39(15.6%)	9(3.6%)	11(4.4%)	4.27	2.228

job task	186(74.4%)	63(25.2%)	1(0.4%)	0	0	4.97	2.333
Work environment	171(68.4%)	69(27.6%)	7(2.8%)	1(0.4%)	2(.8%)	4.86	2.247
Colleagues	168(67.2%)	59(23.6%)	2(0.8%)	16(6.4%)	4(1.6%)	5.71	2.388
Sense O.P.	71(28.4%)	109(43.6%)	50(20%)	17(6.8%)	3(1.2%)	4.79	2.374
C.P.O.	79(31.6%)	117(46.8%)	24(9.6%)	9(3.6%)	21(8.4%)	4.96	2.120
Late night shifts	125(50%)	101(40.4%)	16(6.4%)	6(2.4%)	2(.8%)	3.96	2.112
Targets	126(50.4%)	11(4.4%)	99(39.66%)	11(4.4%)	3(1.2%)	4.02	2.336
Autonomy	137(54.8%)	73(29.2%)	20(8%)	11(4.4%)	9(3.6%)	4.55	2.034
Work Load	169(67.6%)	59(23.6%)	12(4.8%)	19(7.6%)	1(0.4%)	5.00	2.092

(Table No.1) Result for Reason for stress in the BPO sector

Source: Primary Data

The present study indicated the reasons of stress among the employees working in the BPO. Table No. 1 shows the reasons of stress among the employees, there are given 10 reasons for the stress among the employees working in the call centre.

Results discussed that 68.4% employees agreed that working environment of the organization is the main source of the stress. They responded that they will have to work in the night shifts also. If these employees will not be given noise free and ventilated environment they it will reduce their satisfaction and ultimately it will lead to raise the chances of stress among the employees.

On the variable job task, 74.44% employees responded that Employee must be given a proper job task in the organization, if must be given a job task as per his knowledge, experience and interest, if proper job task is not given to the employee in the organization, then employee will be frustrate because every human being can excel in one field in the organization. On the other hand, 67.6% employees responded that job task and working environment is not the cause of stress among the employee they said that work load the reason to raise the stress among the employees. In the organization every employee have to achieve some targets, till the time when these targets are achieve, up to that time period that organization is good, but when employee feel unable to achieve those targets, then he become frustrate from that job.

But 67.2% employee assumed that bungling colleagues are the main source of stress, they believed that when the employees are corrupted, political and diplomatic in nature, then it is very difficult for an employee to work in that environment. Every employee wants hardworking, ambitious and friendly and reduced stress colleagues. Late middle aged employees are satisfied with their colleagues (Chandraiah et.al, 2003).

During the study, 54.8% employees replied that Salary is considered as a very important variable to raise a stress, because this is the main thing for which every employee does a job. As we know that man is a social animal, he has certain responsibility toward his family and society and if the organization is not able to give him that amount of salary which is required to survive then his job satisfaction will decrease and try to see some other opportunities. So, if the employer wants to increase the job satisfaction among the employees, then employees must be given a salary to satisfy employee's physiological need, and social need.

The result reveals that 50.4% employees targets are main reason of the stress among the employees, they said that they have to achieve the hefty targets throughout the day, which is very difficult for them to achieve.

(Table No.2) Results of the Effect of Stress on job satisfaction in the BPO sector

Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	S.D.
Performance	127 (50.8%)	116(46.4%)	1(0.4%)	6(2.4%)	0	5.00	2.117
Absenteeism	135(54%)	142(56.8%)	24(9.6%)	3(1.2%)	0	4.98	2.33
Turnover	152(60.8%)	92(36.8%)	6(2.4%)	0	0	5.65	2.19
Accident	145(58%)	94(37.6%)	11(4.4%)	0	0	4.15	2.766
Poor decision making	119(47.6%)	113(45.2%)	18(7.2%)	0	0	4.14	2.544
Lack of concentration	111(44.4%)	104(41.6%)	35(14%)	0	0	4.87	2.998
Forgetfulness	129(51.6%)	133(53.2%)	12(4.8%)	0	0	4.09	2.09
Increase	146(58.4%)	129(51.6%)	24(9.6%)	1(0.4%)	0	4.95	2.17

blood pressure				%)			
Heart disease	107(42.8%)	129(51.6%)	12(4.8%)	1(0.4%)	1(0.4%)	4.98	2.111
Burnout	128(51.2%)	121(48.4%)	1(0.4%)	0	0	5.00	2.03

Source: Primary Data

Table no. 2 reveals the effect of stress on job satisfaction among the employees. During the study, employees were asked how they evaluate stress in relation to the job satisfaction, in that 60.8% employees responded that stress is positively related to employee turnover, when the stress in the organization increase, the more employees show their tendency to leave the organization. This is the easiest way for the employees to escape from the stress.

50.8% employees in the organization reacted that stress badly impact upon the performance of the employees, but 2.4% employees said that when the stress increases, the performance of the employee also increase. They further more told that it work only up to the certain level. They also emphasized the application of inverse-U curve in the organization.

Where 42.8% employees reveal that due to stress not only psychological health suffers, but also physical health of the employees goes through, there 50.8%employees responded that it leads to increase the accidents. 47.6% employees believed that due to the stress, the decision making ability of the employee decreases. Most of the employers viewed that stressed employees are not able to handle the organizational issues in the time of crisis. Few employees are viewed that stress not negatively impact of the decision making ability of the employees, it only impact upon the learning ability of the employee, 51.6% employees believed that stressed employee usually forget the nitty-gritty things in the organization.

(Table No.3) Results of the Study to implement the Stress Management Programs in the BPO sector

PROGRAMME	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Muscle Relaxation	128 (51.2%)	85 (34%)	32 (12.8%)	5 (2%)	-
Biofeed Back	152 (61%)	71 (28.4%)	8 (3.2%)	19 (7.6%)	-
Meditation	116	79	49	6	

	(46.4%)	(31.6%)	(19.6%)	(2.4%)	
Cognitive Restructuring	113 (45.2%)	88 (35.2%)	42 (16.8%)	7 (2.8%)	-
Time Management	121 (48.4%)	89 (35.6%)	28 (11.2%)	12 (4.8%)	-
Employee Assistance Programme	134 (53.6%)	81 (32.4%)	24 (9.6%)	11 (4.4%)	-
Wellness Programme	152 (61%)	85 (34%)	13 (5.2%)	-	-

Source: Primary Data

Table No. 3 discusses that there are 51.2% employees in the organization, who wants that there must be a muscle relaxation exercise in the organization, so that they can reduce their stress level, this exercise It involves slow and deep breathing, a conscious effort to relieve muscle tension and an altered state of consciousness. On the other hand, 61% employees in the organization want to implement the Biofeed back exercise in the organization, in these employees say that this exercise will help the employees to maintain their mentally as well as their physical health also. 46.4% employees in the study reveal that meditation is the best way to reduce the stress among the employees. Results exposed that 45.2% employees says that cognitive restructuring, employees say that by this method they can reduce their stress by their own. Results reveal 48.4% of the total employees think that time management is the best method to reduce the stress. They think that if the employee is not able to management his time properly in his family and professional life then ultimately it can lead to raise the stress. In the study 53.6% employees emphasized that EAP should be implemented in the organization. Employee assistance programme tend to be based on the typical medical approach to treatment and involvement of Diagnosis, Treatment, Screening and Prevention of employee from the stress. During study it was found that 61% employees in the organization wants to implement the wellness program in the organization, Wellness programmes, often called Health promotion programmes, focus on employee's overall physical and mental health. This programme is mainly designed to identify and assist in preventing or correcting specific health problems, health hazards, or negative health habits which all fall under wellness programmes. The results indicated that the employees who were opposed of these

programmes, they responded that they don't have a time to attend these programs and on the other hand, management is also not going to bear the expenses incurred on these programmes.

CONCLUSION

It is been concluded that as the competitive environment, technological advancements, HR Practices, economic development, social developments are taking place day by day. Consequently, every employee is expected to work for long hours, perform multiple jobs, available for 24*7. These reasons give a mentally as well as physical problems to the employees. When these problems increase, then it gives a pressure, strain, anxiety, tension, trauma to the employees and ultimately the productivity of the employee's decreases. In this case, the responsibility of Top level management arises, that they must take proper initiative to reduce the stress level among the employees. They can adopt any technique from the available techniques, namely, Muscle Relaxation, Biofeed Back, Meditation, Cognitive Restructuring, Time Management, Employee Assistance Programme, and Wellness Programme. If these programmes will not be introduced in the organization, then organization will have to face very critical results, which will be very difficult to handle.

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