

# Job Stress Management Practices among Employees in Bpo Sector

V. Karthikeyani

Assistant Professor, Shri Krishnaswamy College for Women, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

## ABSTRACT

Stress is a part of day-to-day living of every individual. The students may experience stress in meeting the academic demands, people on the job and business men may suffer stress to reach office in time and to complete the projects on time and even the house hold ladies may experience stress in managing the home affairs and to look for the maid servant. The reasons for the stress differ from person to person. The stress people experience should not be necessarily treated as harmful. An optimum amount of stress can always act as an energizer or motivator and propel people to apply the efforts and complete the work. But a high level of stress can be serious threat to the personality traits of the individual and can cause physiological and social problems.

A very pedestrian definition of stress goes something like this “stress is feeling bad due to troubles beyond our control.” This includes the only two ideas about stress that are almost universal, that stress is Unpleasant and that it is something that happens. Stress has been defined as the arousal of the mind and body in response to demands made on them. When stressed, the body single mindedly prepares for battle. The adrenal gland speeds up the secretion of adrenaline and the body closes down the ‘unnecessary’ functions of digestion, tissue repair, and immune system work. There is no single level of stress that is optimal for all people and they are all individual creatures with unique requirements. As such, what is distressing to one may be a joy to another. And even when they agree that a particular event is distressing, people are likely to differ in physiological and psychological responses to it.

**KEYWORDS:** Stress, Individual, Job, Psychological

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In India, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is the fastest growing segment of the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) industry. Factors such as economy of scale, business risk mitigation, cost advantage, utilization improvement and superior competency have all lead to the growth of the Indian BPO industry. Business process outsourcing in India, which started around the mid-90s, has now grown by leaps and bounds. India is now the world's favored market for BPO companies, among other competitors, such as, Australia, China, Philippines and Ireland. The BPO boom in India is credited to cheap labor costs and India's huge talent pool of skilled, English-speaking professionals. Research by the National Association of Software Services and Companies (NASSCOM) has revealed that quality orientation among leading BPO companies, 24/7 services, India's unique geographic location and the investor friendly tax structure in India have all made the BPO industry in India very popular.

The term Business Process Outsourcing or BPO as it is popularly known, refers to outsourcing in all fields. A BPO service provider usually administers and manages a particular business process for another company. BPOs either use new technology or apply an existing technology in a new way to improve a particular business process. India is currently the number one destination for business process

outsourcing, as most companies in the US and UK outsource IT-related business processes to Indian service providers.

Stress typically describes a negative concept that can have an impact on one's mental and physical well-being, but it is unclear what exactly defines stress and whether or not stress is a cause, an effect, or the process connecting the two. With organisms as complex as humans, stress can take on entirely concrete or abstract meanings with highly subjective qualities, satisfying definitions of both cause and effect in ways that can be both tangible and intangible. Some of the stress coping strategies identified by this study includes stress management programs, physical activities planned in job design, life style modification programs, finding triggers and stressors, supportive organization culture, stress counseling programs, and spiritual programs.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the nature of stress faced by the BPO employees.
- To measure the impact of job stress on the performance of the employee.
- To measure the impact of job stress on the personal life of the employee.
- To draw an empirical understanding on the nature of stress management practices advanced by the BPO employees.

**How to cite this paper:** V. Karthikeyani "Job Stress Management Practices among Employees in Bpo Sector" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-4 | Issue-4, June 2020, pp.1690-1694, URL: [www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd31678.pdf](http://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd31678.pdf)



IJTSRD31678

Copyright © 2020 by author(s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



### 3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study has carried out to define how the BPO sector should work in terms of managing stress and where the company is lacking for doing the same. In addition what all techniques should be used so that they manage the stress effectively. For conducting the study help of certain tools were taken such as journals , net search, one-on-one interactions with the senior managers of the organizations.

#### 3.1. INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE INDIAN BPO INDUSTRY

- The BPO sector in India is estimated to have reached a 54 per cent growth in revenue
- The demand for Indian BPO services has been growing at an annual growth rate of 50%
- The BPO industry in India has provided jobs for over 74,400 Indians. This number is continuing to grow on a yearly basis. The Indian BPO sector is soon to employ over 1.1 million Indians
- 70% of India's BPO industry's revenue is from contact centers, 20% from data entry work and the remaining 10% from information technology related work
- Indian BPOs handle 56% of the world's business process outsourcing

#### 3.2. THE TOP FIFTEEN BPO COMPANIES IN INDIA

NASSCOM recently conducted a survey and evaluated the leading BPO service providers across India. The top fifteen business process outsourcing companies in India are:

- A. WNS Group
- B. Wipro Spectramind
- C. Daksh e-Services
- D. Convergys
- E. HCL Technologiess
- F. Zenta
- G. First Source
- H. Mphasis
- I. EXL
- J. Tracmail
- K. GTL Ltd
- L. vCustomer
- M. HTMT
- N. 24/7 Customer
- O. Sutherland Technologies

#### 3.3. CAUSES OF STRESS

Stress is usually caused by too much pressure being put on us by others or in some cases by ourselves and if stress is left unchecked, it can lead to an inability to function effectively and cope under pressure.

##### ➤ Not having enough time:

Frequently you can be running around all day trying to balance all your tasks at work and at home, yet still not manage to tick everything off your list. Sometimes this can be due to the demands that are placed upon you being unrealistic, but often it simply comes down to poor time management and not setting your priorities.

##### ➤ Unhealthy lifestyle:

While some people might adopt an unhealthy lifestyle due to lack of time for example by turning to fast food because they haven't time to eat properly others may have an unhealthy lifestyle because they are already stressed by turning to smoking as coping mechanisms. Whatever the reason, an

unhealthy lifestyle can reduce your ability to cope with stress, and in some circumstances it may actually increase your stress levels.

##### ➤ Conflicts in the workplace:

If relationships are strained at home or in the workplace, then it's more than likely that you'll be stressed about them. Conflicts might occur due to disagreements about how things should be done and so you might feel that you have to stand your ground to make progress but ultimately a lot of hot air will only contribute to your stress levels.

##### ➤ Lack of participation in decision making:

Some people don't have the ability to accept things as they are or realize that certain situations are out of their control. If you try to change something that you really can't change, then you'll just be creating unnecessary stress that you can do without. Plus, all that time spent stressing about it means you'll be unable to concentrate on the other things that you could be doing — which may make you even more stressed.

#### 3.4. STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH STRESS

After understanding the sources of stress and the effects of stress on individuals, let us discuss some strategies to fight stress.

##### ➤ Prioritize work

Multi-tasking is the buzzword these days. An individual requires special skills to perform multiple tasks simultaneously. One way to minimize stress while multi-tasking is to plan, prioritize, and perform. Planning involves preparing a list of activities that need to be performed. This involves considering the time factor. Prioritizing involves ranking the activities based on their importance and performing these activities in that order. Prioritizing activities each day is the simplest way to tackle stress. The next step is to schedule time for tasks depending on the priorities.

##### ➤ Delegate work

Some individuals prefer doing all the work themselves. This adds to their stress. They should learn to delegate routine work to others. For instance, a manager can delegate the work of preparing a report on a project to a subordinate.

##### ➤ Laughter

Laughter is a good de-stressor. An individual can relax and de-stress by watching a humorous movie, reading comics, etc. A sense of humor allows an individual to perceive and appreciate the imbalances of life and provides moments of delight.

'A day without laughter is a day wasted for life'. This is very true. Laughter is the best outlet for stress. It is a great stress buster. Laughter is a no cost, no side effect medicine. A person with a sense of humor is less likely to be under stress. A sense of humor allows an individual to perceive and appreciate the imbalances of life and provides moments of delight.

##### ➤ Exercise

Exercise is another good stress-buster. It keeps an individual physically and mentally alert. When a person is nervous, tense, or angry, exercise is the best outlet for giving vents to his/her emotions. Regular exercise lowers blood pressure, lowers pulse rate, boosts blood circulation in the body,

increases artery suppleness, lowers cholesterol, and reduces fatigue and tension. These benefits help an individual to tackle the physiological changes that occur during stress. Exercise should increase blood circulation to the heart.

#### ➤ **Relaxation**

The best strategy to reduce stress is to relax. Relaxation is not being idle. It is doing what one wants to do, rather than what one should do. It is very important for a person to schedule some time for relaxation. This relaxation time should disconnect the person from all his/her tensions, worries. This is the time when the person rebuilds his/her energy levels. Relaxation techniques vary from person to person.

#### ➤ **Sleep**

Sleep is a weapon. During sleep, a person prepares himself/herself to face another day. Stress makes a person sleepless or very sleepy. A stressed person may feel sleepy throughout the day and awake during nights. On an average, everyone needs at least 7-8 hours of sleep per day. Some may need more sleep or some less. After a good night's sleep, a person feels fresh. An individual must adopt a bedtime routine that induces sleep like reading a book that is soothing, and listening to music that is relaxing. One must go to bed at the same time every day.

#### ➤ **Meditation**

Meditation is one of the most effective techniques in reducing and avoiding stress. Regular meditation helps in stress reduction. It

- enables one to control the thought process
- enables one to take effective decisions
- helps in physical and mental relaxation
- Improves concentration

Meditation is a technique to achieve a thoughtless or mindless state. In this state, a person has no thoughts. This kind of state thus acts a stress reliever and a great rejuvenator.

#### ➤ **Yoga**

Yoga is another important stress reliever. Yoga has been tried and tested since ancient times. According to Patanjali Maharishi, yoga is the cessation of mind. It is a state of no-mind. Yoga is not for bodybuilding. It simply focuses on gentle postures that improve circulation of blood to vital parts of the body. The increase in blood circulation rejuvenates the organs and releases stress.

#### ➤ **Maintaining work-life balance**

Work-life balance means a harmonious balance of work and domestic life. It allows an employee to fulfill all the roles in his/her life effectively and efficiently. Researches have proved that employees are at their best when they are contented and motivated both at work and at home.

Achieving a work-life balance is not as easy as it seems. In the corporate world, change is constant and imminent. The impact of globalization has further fuelled these changes. The corporate world signifies uncertainties, too many responsibilities, and long work hours. These changes in the environment disturb the balance between domestic and work-life of employees. The increasing competition and demands of society further aggravate the situation. All this adds up to stress.

#### ➤ **Importance of Work-life balance**

The corporate world is realizing the importance of the work-life balance. Companies are realizing the fact that the work-life balance of employees has a direct effect on the productivity of their organizations. Exhibit 5 explains the various practices that companies follow to maintain work-life balance.

### 3.5. TECHNIQUES OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

#### ➤ **Reduce job stress by taking care of yourself**

When stress at work interferes with your ability to perform in your job, manage your personal life, or adversely impacts your health, it's time to take action. Start by paying attention to your physical and emotional health. When your own needs are taken care of, you're stronger and more resilient to stress. The better you feel, the better equipped you'll be to manage work stress without becoming overwhelmed.

Taking care of yourself doesn't require a total lifestyle overhaul. Even small things can lift your mood, increase your energy, and make you feel like you're back in the driver's seat. Take things one step at a time, and as you make more positive lifestyle choices, you'll soon notice a reduction in your stress levels, both at home and at work.

#### ➤ **Get Moving**

Regular exercise is a powerful stress reliever even though it may be the last thing you feel like doing. Aerobic exercise activity that raises your heart rate and makes you sweat is a hugely effective way to lift your mood, increase energy, sharpen focus, and relax both the mind and body. For maximum stress relief, try to get at least 30 minutes of heart-pounding activity on most days. If it's easier to fit into your schedule, break up the activity into two or three shorter segments.

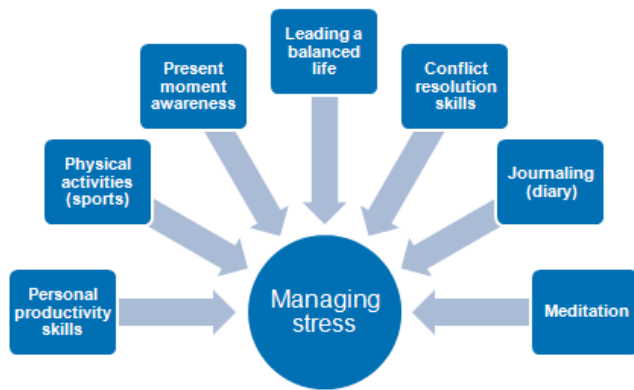
#### ➤ **Get enough sleep**

Not only can stress and worry can cause insomnia, but a lack of sleep can leave you vulnerable to even more stress. When you're well-rested, it's much easier to keep your emotional balance, a key factor in coping with job and workplace stress. Try to improve the quality of your sleep by keeping a sleep schedule and aiming for 8 hours a night.

#### **Time management tips for reducing job stress**

- **Don't over-commit yourself.** Avoid scheduling things back-to-back or trying to fit too much into one day. All too often, we underestimate how long things will take. If you've got too much on your plate, distinguish between the "shoulds" and the "musts." Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.
- **Try to leave earlier in the morning.** Even 10-15 minutes can make the difference between frantically rushing to your desk and having time to ease into your day. Don't add to your stress levels by running late.
- **Plan regular breaks.** Make sure to take short breaks throughout the day to take a walk or sit back and clear your mind. Also try to get away from your desk or work station for lunch. Stepping away from work to briefly relax and recharge will help you be more, not less, productive.





#### 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

**TomislavHernaus, RokSkrinjar and Indihar Stemberger (2007)<sup>3</sup>** stated that the extensive literature on business process management suggests that organizations can enhance their overall performance by adopting a process view of business. It has been shown in previous studies that the companies which have reached higher business process maturity level consistently outperform those that have not reached them.

**N Kathirvel (2008)<sup>2</sup>** A Study on Stress among Employees Working in BPOs shows that the BPO industry is dependent on knowledge workers, they may be considered as the 'raw material' of the industry. While there are several problems that affect the workforce in the BPO industry, stress has emerged as the most significant problem, causing the employees to underperform and thereby leading to productivity loss.

**Michael R. Frone (2008)<sup>3</sup>** the relationship of work stressors, those work over load and job insecurity, to employees alcohol use illicit drug use resulted, support the relation of work stressors to alcohol and illicit drug use before work, during the workday, and after work.

**Murali Raj (2009)<sup>4</sup>** Depression is usually related to work and stress these people undergo because of the pressure to perform better, compete with other colleagues and meet tight deadlines. Most of their work is target-oriented and if targets are not met, it can lead to anxiety. Peers are not very supportive as they also competing in the same field.

**Subramanian S. and M. Vinothkumar (2009)<sup>5</sup>** "Hardiness Personality, Self-Esteem and Occupational Stress among IT Professionals" published in Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology. (Vol. 35, Special Issue, 48-56). This paper said that the preoccupation with tight work schedules, offering time bound business solutions to varied and complex problems within deadline are a typical work life characteristic of IT professionals.

**Lakshminarayanan R (2010)<sup>6</sup>** in his paper "An Overview of Strategic Planning to Combat Occupational Stress - Need of the Hour in the Present Indian Context" aimed at job or occupational stress is something we all face as employees or employers and we all handle it differently. It is a mismatch between the individual capabilities and organizational demands. Also it is a mismatch between the expectations of both individual and organization.

**Leemamol Mathew (2010)<sup>7</sup>** of University of Calicut found in - "An Exploratory Study on Occupational Stress and Coping

Strategies of Special Educators" (those who teach the disabled) in South India as the sources of stress as i) school structure and climate, ii) home/work interface, iii) relationship with other people, iv) intrinsic job factors. The common effect of stress on special educators was found to be health related problems - both physical and mental - and job dissatisfaction. There was no organized method to redress the problem rising from occupational stress.

**Khera S, J. Khandekar (2011)<sup>8</sup>** "Computer Related Health Problems Among Information Technology Professionals in Delhi" - A publication in Indian Journal of Community Medicine found more on visual stress and musculoskeletal symptoms, initially being mild and temporary and later with increasing years assuming more intense and permanent nature. It also found that computer related morbidity had become an important occupational health problem and of great concern.

**Muhammad Umer, Muhammad Akram Naseem (2011)<sup>9</sup>** "Employees Retention (Human Capital) in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Industry" published in Global Journal of Management and Business Research (Volume 11 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Pg 90 -98). This paper aims to investigate the impact of variables career development, supervisor support, work environment, work life balance on employee retention. Graphical Analysis is indicating that these variables have significant and positive impact on employee retention.

#### 5. RESEARCH DESIGN

The presents study is completely based on secondary sources of data collection such as electronic resources, books, journals, magazines, with the objective of successfully completion of ongoing study data are collected from published and unpublished sources.

#### 6. FINDINGS

In the study the researcher found that the employees adopted various coping strategies to cope up with stress in their workplace Employees tend to cope by using submissive coping, functional coping, diversion coping, relaxation coping, third-party support coping, cognitive Restructuring coping and transitory reinforcement coping.

#### 7. SUGGESTIONS

- If stress management techniques are initiative then the average health of the employees will be better and they will be able to better cope with stress, then by the level and degree of performance of the employee will improve.
- The employees should given one task at a time and sufficient time in meeting the targets so that the employee performs his best without any stress.
- The company should take appropriate measures in identifying and arresting the psychological problems, then the health related problems would also come down. As psychological has a direct impact on health, the performance of employee will improve.
- Frequent recreational programs like get together in departments concerned, parties on occasions like the birthdays of the employees, on the achievements of any particular department, cultural activities, sports pleasure trips etc.
- The organization should organize frequent camps or programs on meditation, yoga, transcendental meditation and stress management.

## 8. CONCLUSION

From the study it is concluded that work stress can be measured by several indicators. As a result, some can be used to find out the stress. 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 hours in seven days. 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. More ever women get high stress than men.

The study says about the stress level and its coping mechanisms in the BPO industry. The researcher concludes by surveying the employees in the BPO industry through questionnaire method based on certain parameters like health issues, frequency of breaks, anger management, eating habits and work culture.

From the above findings, the stress level in the BPO industry is very high but the stress can be reduced by taking suitable steps.

These steps include:

- Timely breaks
- Employee incentives and appraisals
- Introducing recreational activities such as yoga, gym, stress busters etc.
- A good working environment
- Regular health checkups.

Stress is unavoidable. But sometimes stress can be harmful health and productivity but at the same time stress can be positive, beneficial and stimulating. Therefore, it is said that, stress should prevail at the workplace but shouldn't exceed the required level. Stress cannot be avoided but it can be mitigated.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Khanka, S. S. (2009). Organizational Behaviour, S. Chand, New Delhi, 319
- [2] Chowdhury, N. and Menon, S. (1997), Beating Burnout, India Today, 9 June, 86] Dayo,
- [3] Garg P., (Sep 2010), Case Study, Vol 3, Punjab, 52-58]
- [4] Kathirvel N,(2009), The IUP Journal of Management Research, Vol. VIII, No. 11, 28-44]
- [5] Neelamegam R and Asrafi S,(2010), The IUP Journal of Management Research, Vol. IX,] No. 5, 57-69
- [6] Bhatti, Nadeem; Shar, Amir Hussain; Shaikh, Faiz M.; Nazar, Muhammad Suhail (2010), "Causes of Stress in Organization, A Case Study of Sukkur", International Journal of Business and Management, Vol. 5,
- [7] Ahmady, Soleiman; Changiz, Tahereh; Masiello, Italo; Brommels, Mats (2007), "Organizational Role Stress among Medical School Faculty Members in Iran: Dealing With Role Conflict", BMC Medical Education, Vol. 7, No. 14.
- [8] IUP journal of management. Coping strategies adopted by banking employees Uma devi 2012. Human Resource of Management –VSP.RAO.
- [9] Research Methods for Business- Sree Vastava