

JOB STRESS AND ITS IMPACT ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF THE EMPLOYEES WORKING IN BPO'S

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Abstract

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-life balance is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and the other important aspects of their lives. Work-life balance is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. Work-life balance can increase the productivity in the workplace and improve the work environment in general. Work stress affects both men and women. This paper has made an attempt to find out the modern trends and development strategies adopted by the BPOs to overcome stress and bringing employees work-life balance.

Introduction

The term "stress" was first used by the endocrinologist Hans Selye in the 1930s to identify physiological responses in laboratory animals. He later broadened and popularized the concept to include the perceptions and responses of humans trying to adapt to the challenges of everyday life. In Selye's terminology, "stress" refers to the reaction of the organism, and "stressor" to the perceived threat. Stress in certain circumstances may be experienced positively. It includes a state of alarm and adrenaline production, short-term resistance as a coping mechanism, and exhaustion. It refers to the inability of a human or animal body to respond. Common stress symptoms include irritability, muscular tension, inability to concentrate and a variety of physical reactions, such as headaches and accelerated heart rate. 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 is an individual's response to a disturbing factor in the environment and the consequence of such reaction. Stress obviously involves interaction of the person and the environment. Stress is body's biological response mechanisms. But the body has only

limited capacity to respond to stressors .The work place Makes a variety of demands on employees and too much stress over too long period of time will that exhaust their ability to cope with the stressors. It is necessary to realize that stress is an inevitable part of life and it cannot be avoided. Stress may be physical or mental. Stress may be arising either personally or officially, but the outcome of the Stress will affect both the work life as well as the personal life at the employees. Work life is balance is balancing both the work life and personal life.

Review of Literature

1. Mrs. Shilpa R, Mr. A. Asif Ali, Mr. N. Sathyanarayana and Ms. Roopa Rani (2013) conducted a study on “Impact of Work Life Stress on Job with Special Reference to BPO Employees in Bangalore”. The outcome of the study revealed that the Change in the salary has influence on performance of employee, increase in the Work load will Increase blood pressure of employee, 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 and it is found that Meditation will help to reduce Lack of Concentration in employees.
2. Mrs.Vanishree (2012) conducted a study on “Work-Life Balance in the BPO Sector” The result of the study revealed that BPO companies are trying to bring in work life balance of the employees by taking care of the factors like working from home, flexi time and swap in order to retain talent, enhance quality of work and to keep the employees happy.
3. Smita R. Chavan and Balkrushna Potdar (2011) conducted a study on “Work-life Balance of BPO Employees in India”. The study revealed that employees are suffering from suffer most from headache, digestive disorder, behave erratically, feel irritated and suffer from short temper and have a complete sense of exhaustion.
4. Mrs. A.Meenakshi, Dr.Metilda Bhuvaneshwari (2013) conducted a study on “ Work Organization and Work-Life Balance in the BPO Sector”. The study revealed that Results showed that most BPO companies employ high-caliber compensation and benefits packages for its workers and may be perceived as pioneer in work-life balance advocacy.
5. Dr.Sunil Karve and Prof.Harshada mulay (2012) conducted a study on (Quest for work-life balance”. The outcome of the study showed that, their work-life balance is good because they can able to manage their time according to their family commitments.
6. Ramazan Erdem and Turgut Karakose (2008) made a study on “importance of Work-life Balance in todays information age”. The study revealed that the employees should allocate the required time for every aspect of life duly and not to reflect the problems in one part of life to another. It means that he has been able to achieve work-family balance; there will be positive reflection on the individual himself, on his family, on the organization and the society as well.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the factors causing job stress.
2. To find out the job stress factors influencing work life balance of the employees.
3. To analyze how the job stress factors influencing the married and unmarried employees work-life balance working in BPOs.

Limitations of the Study

There are many factors affecting the work life balance of the employees. Job stress is one of the factors affecting the work life balance 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.

Sources of Data

A sample of 100 employees working in various BPOs in Chennai city has been selected and primary data has been collected from those employees.

Job Stress Factors Influencing Work-Life Balance of the Employees

1. Nature of Job
2. Salary
3. Work overload
4. Promotion
5. Job task
6. Feed back
7. Work environment
8. Politics in the work place
9. Role Ambiguity
10. Role conflict
11. Interpersonal relationship

Table 1 Table Showing Opinion of the Married and Unmarried Employees that they are not getting Enough Time to Spend Time with their Family

S.No	Opinion	Married	Percentage	Unmarried	Percentage	Total
1	Strongly Agree	9	13%	2	7%	11
2	Agree	28	40%	9	30%	37
3	Not decided	12	17%	4	13%	16
4	Disagree	14	20%	12	40%	26
5	Strongly Disagree	7	10%	3	10%	10
Total		70	100%	30	100%	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that among the 100 sample, among the 70% of the married employees 53% (13%&40%) of them agreed and strongly agreed that they not finding enough to spend with their family. Among the 30% of the unmarried employees majority of them 50% (40% &10%) disagree and strongly disagree the statement. In overall the table reveals that 47% of the employees even though they are married or unmarried agree that they are not getting enough time to spend with their family. And more or less 46% of the employees

agree that they are finding enough time to be with their family. So it is concluded that both the individual and the organization should take some measures to bring work - life balance. **The BPOs and the Employees Working in BPOs can Follow Some Strategies to Overcome Stress for Work-Life Balance.**

- **Organizational Coping Strategy**
 1. Supportive organizational climate:
 2. Job Enrichment.
 3. Organizational Role clarity.
 4. Career planning and counseling.
 5. Stress control workshops and employee assistant programs.
 6. Flex time.
 7. Job sharing.
- **Individual Coping Strategies**
 1. Physical exercise.
 2. Relaxation.
 3. Work - home Transition.
 4. Cognitive Therapy.
 5. Networking.

Conclusion

Stress is one of the factor affecting both the work life and personal life of the employees. In BPOs this problem is on the peak. Work-life balance can increase the productivity in the workplace and improve the work environment in general. Work stress affects both men and women. Work-life balance requires cooperation and coordination at national, governmental, organizational, family, as well as the individual level. Previously most of the companies followed six sigma strategy i.e. production oriented. But now the BPOs started giving importance to Human sigma also i.e. importance to employees also to avoid absenteeism, conflict, employees exit etc. in this context work-life balance of the employees come to light. To overcome this problem both the employer and employee should contribute equally in avoiding or minimizing the factors raising stress in the work place.

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