

Work Stress and Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCBs) in Call Centers Employees

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between organisational stress and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) in employees of call centers. The study also further explored as how stress at work set-up has negative impact on OCBs. A sample of 250 employees working in call centre of Gurgaon belonging to an age group of 25-30 years were selected on availability basis. All were working married couples living in nuclear families. Job stress survey (Spielberger & Vagg, 1999) and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (Bateman & Organ, 1983) were administered. Data was analysed by using simple correlation and multiple regression. Results showed the negative relationship between organisational stress and OCBs. Results of regression analysis also exhibited the negative impact of stress on OCBs. The implications for the employees are discussed.

Keywords: *Organisational stress, Organisational Citizenship Behaviours.*

Human beings have many biological, social and psychological needs. When these needs are not satisfied they experience stress. Stress is a word derived from the latin word ‘stringer’ means to draw tight. Stress is a consequence of or a general response to all action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands, or both on a person. *Stress involves an interaction of the person and the environment. The physical or psychological demands from the environment that cause stress are called stressors.* Medical researcher Hans Selye (1956) first used the word ‘stress’ to describe the body’s biological response mechanisms. He defined stress ‘as any external events or internal drive which threatens to upset the organismic equilibrium. However, the body has only a limited capacity to respond to stressors. The workplace makes a variety of demands on people and too much stress over too long a period of time, exhausts their ability to cope with those stressors. Selye has described three stages that an individual encounters in stressful situation, i.e., Alarm reaction, Resistance and Exhaustion.

Stress may be acute or chronic in nature (Akinboye and Adeymo, 2002). It occurs in different forms, i.e., may be psychological, emotional, social or occupational. Job related stress

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experienced by workers at work is called job stress. There are number of factors, i.e., poor working conditions, excessive work load, shift work, long hours of work, role ambiguity, role conflict, shifting hours, role conflict, poor relations with boss, colleagues or subordinates, risk and danger in work set up etc. that lead to stress.

Health and Safety Executive (2004) defines job stress in terms of adverse reactions of people to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. Studies have shown that workers suffering from stress exhibit decreased productivity, absenteeism, have a higher accident rate, low morale, more interpersonal conflict with supervisors and colleagues (Cranwell & Abbey, 2005; Health and Safety Executive, 2004). Some jobs are highly demanding and stressful by virtue of their demands. Long working hours, night shifts, high work targets, lots of identity are some of the major demanding features of operators working in the call centre industry. Such strenuous and stressful job profile has its linkage with Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCBs) as the work stress causes negative effect on performance and OCB's (Bragger, Sreduichi, Indovicro and Rosner, 2005).

Organisational citizenship behaviour is the technical psychological term that can be simply defined as the compilation of individual behaviours in a group setting. It was first defined by organ in 1988 as an individual behaviour which is not rewarded by a formal reward system... but that when combined with the same behaviour in a group results in effectiveness. It deals with five common types of behaviours when grouped together results into effectiveness in the group. It encompasses altruism (desire to help or otherwise assist another individual, while not expecting a reward in compensation for that assistance), courtesy (a behaviour which is polite and considerate towards other people), sportsmanship (exhibiting no negative behaviour when something does not go as planned or when something is being perceived as annoying, difficult or frustrating), conscientiousness (behaviour that suggests a reasonable level of self control and discipline which extends beyond the minimum requirements expected in that situation) and civic virtue (behaviour which exhibits how well a person represents an organization with which they are associated and how well social support system is there in colleagues). As OCB is a construct comprising of various dimensions and in current scenario where maximum of people are working in private world. There is a great job stress and how these two variables correlate and have cause and effect relationship is a matter of investigation. Taking this perspective in mind, the present study focuses on following objectives:-

OBJECTIVES

- To study the relationship between work stress and organisational citizenship behaviours in employees of call centres.
- To study the role of work stress on the organisational citizenship behaviours of call centre employees.

METHOD

Sample

The sample for this investigation was obtained from the population of all the operators of call centre organisations located in Gurgaon as this considered a major hub of the call centre industry. The total sample of 250 call centre employees whose major task was to receive and answer the international calls of their customers. These employees were working under 24×7 conditions with different shifts. All belonged to an age group of 24-30 years, married and atleast Graduates. Their minimum work experience was 4-5 years and it was in corporate sector only.

Measures

- (I) ***Job Stress Survey (Spielberger & Vagg, 1999)*** : It assesses the perceived severity and frequency of occurrence of 30 stressful work related events encountered by employees in wide variety of occupations. It consists of 3 subscales, job stress index, job stress severity and job stress frequency. Job stress index scale provides an estimate of the overall level of occupational stress. The higher the score, the more is the work stress.
- (II) ***Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB)***: The measure of organisational citizenship behaviour was assessed by revised questionnaire of original work of Boxerman & Organ (1983), Morman and Blakely (1995) and Chattopadhyay (1999). Earlier scale had 11 reliable factors and 48 items. Further it was adopted and revalidated by Jain in 2003. The earlier questionnaire dealt with 5 factors, i.e., civic virtue, conscientiousness, altruism, courtesy and sportsmanship. But the revised questionnaire deals with Emotional support (ES), Concern for Organisational Resources (COR), Conservation of Time (COT), Organisational Pride (OP), Work mindedness (WM), Civic Virtue (CV), Social and Functional Participation (SFP), Altruism (AI), Sportsman spirit (SS), Individual Initiative (II) and Generalised Compliance (GC).
It is a 6 point likert type scale as ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). It has high reliability and high validity. The higher the score, the higher is the organisational citizenship behaviour is there in the employee.

Procedure

After establishing proper rapport with the subjects, they were handed over the questionnaires of both the measures. The confidentiality of information was also assured. After their completion of these questionnaires, both were taken back. After that item wise scoring was done for each subject as per the procedure laid down in the manual. Then the statistical analysis was done by using correlational and regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of study was to explore the relationship between work stress and organisational citizenship behaviours in employees of call centers. The organisational citizenship behaviour was investigated in the light of eleven dimensions, i.e. ES, COR, COT, OP, WM, CM, SFP, AI, SS, II and GC. The job stress was studied in the light of one sum total score, i.e. JS. For all these parameters, the product moment co-efficient correlation was calculated.

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Table No. 1

	JS	ES	COR	CT	OP	WM	CV	SFP	AI	SS	II	GC	OCB
JS	-	.16*	.32**	.24**	.21*	.30**	.11	-.06	-.02	.35**	.12	.03	-.20**

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table I clearly revealed that job stress has significant negative relationship with emotional support (-.16), concern for organisational resources (-.32), conservation of time (-.24), organisational pride (-.21), Work Mindedness (-.30), Civic Virtue (-.11), Social and Functional Participation (-.06), Altruism (-.02), Sportsman Spirits (-.35), Individual Initiative (-.12) and Generalised Compliance (-.12) and Overall OCB (-.20) respectively. Jain and Cooper (2012) investigated the direct effects of organisational stress and OCBs in Indian Business Process Outstanding Organisations. Negative relationship was found between these two variables. These findings are in congruence to our obtained findings. The present obtained findings can be interpreted in the lines of organisational role theory and social exchange theory. As we know that the construct of OCBs is multiconstruct and having number of dimensions. An individual in normal life has various virtues, i.e. inclination towards work, prosocial behaviour, compliance etc. But in call centers working since morning and till late evening creates lot of stress which hampers in the OCB that show indirectly make employees not in the good books of their managers. Their in-role behaviours are not taken appropriate. In conclusion, the need of an hour of today’s organisations is to make stress free work set-up, so that the employees do co-operate at interpersonal level and enhance OCBs which would be fruitful for organisation’s outcome.

Table No. 2 : Multiple correlation and % of variance accounted for OCB

Variable	Multiple R	R square
JS	-.321**	.103

As per the second objective, i.e. to study the role of job stress on the organisational citizenship behaviours, regression analysis was done. In this, job stress was the predictor and OCB was taken as criterion. The obtained beta value of -.321 was significant at .01 level of confidence. It shows significantly higher association between two constructs, i.e. job stress predicts OB negatively explaining 10% of variance.

LIMITATIONS

The study would have brought more meaningful results if the comparative analysis would have been made between males and females. Some more demographic variables would have been selected to make the study more fruitful.

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