

Towards Overcoming Role Stressors Amongst Business Process Outsourcing Agents

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ABSTRACT

The study was to establish the significant differences in the assessment of the respondent in ways of overcoming role stressors of BPO agents when grouped according to their gender, age, work shift, and length of service. The methodology used was a descriptive survey. The respondents of this study consisted of business process outsourcing agents. The researcher made use of a Web-based survey known as harvested emails. Samples were derived from harvested e-mail lists which are non-probability samples because they were based on a convenience sample of e-mail addresses. This study used the well-known Role Theory as the underlying foundation to establish the significant difference in ways of overcoming role stressors with the Brief-Coping Orientation to the Problems Experienced Inventory (COPE) based on selected demographic variables. The researcher found that there are no significant differences in the ways of overcoming role stressors among business process outsourcing agents when grouped according to mentioned demographics. The researcher advised BPO management to reduce role stressors by clearly defining work responsibilities, enhancing employee engagement, granting agents some degree of independence, providing suitable facilities and equipment to their agents, teaching agents time management skills, and providing agents with a little excitement on the job. The researcher, on the other hand, advised BPO agents to form a network of coworkers, set aside time during a busy day to focus on themselves, use mindfulness techniques to calm down, and possibly take a break from work to reduce job stress.

KEYWORDS: role stressors, Role Theory, Brief-Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (COPE), harvested e-mail lists, business process outsourcing agents

INTRODUCTION

Work in business process outsourcing (BPO), particularly for an agent, can be taxing. While guaranteeing high levels of customer satisfaction, they must manage numerous calls, handle customer complaints, achieve targets, and more. Stressful circumstances may result from this, which lowers agent output.

Organizations that outsource business processes, or call centers, operate while most Filipinos are asleep. The majority of BPO businesses operate in accordance with American and British standard time zones. As a result, most BPO agents work night hours that begin somewhere between 10 and midnight. to 2 a.m. beginning at 6 a.m., and. to 10 a.m. The graveyard shift begins at four in the morning. Working such odd-hour hours has begun to have a negative impact on the health of young Filipinos.

One of the many ways that stress shows up is through changes in behavior, such as smoking more or drinking more, having trouble falling asleep, and altering eating routines. Or, an agent can get unfocused, impatient, furious, or worried, or he might start feeling exhausted and listless. Aching muscles, headaches, gastrointestinal issues, high blood pressure, and palpitations can all be symptoms of stress.

Long shifts at unusual hours can have a serious negative impact on the agents' physical and emotional well-being. The physical strains, such as insomnia, melancholy, unusual work hours, picking up foreign dialects, receiving abusive phone calls constantly, and high levels of stress increase the risk of heart attacks and hypertension in BPO workers. The results of numerous studies and polls on BPO agents indicate that depression is their most common issue. They now frequently experience

headaches, sensations of weariness, sleeping issues, and frustration.

The BPO industry is one of the most dynamic sectors in the Philippines and is now recognized as being its most promising one. This sector has great momentum and a very quick speed in terms of employment. Millions of jobs are created annually by the BPO business. Numerous BPO businesses have sprung up in the Philippines in recent years, capitalizing on the country's wealth of skills and affordable perks. However, there is still another aspect to the BPO picture. The group that has frequently brought attention to the BPO sector. This image addresses the BPO's lack of viability and how the younger Filipino population is being left out of the BPO. So, the researcher tried to investigate this issue.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the ways of overcoming stressors among business outsourcing process (BPO) agents. Likewise, there are some sub-objectives that were examined, such as:

1. To identify the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, work shift, and length of service.
2. To discover the role stressors that are experienced by the BPO agents in terms of role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, peer group relations, and working conditions.
3. To determine the ways of overcoming role stressors of BPO agents.
4. To find out if there are significant differences in ways of overcoming role stressors of BPO agents when grouped according to their gender, age, work shift, and length of service.

The study's findings can help the responding organization manage, administer, and provide agents with the proper counseling services, in addition to revealing the most effective ways for reducing role stress among BPO agents. Employers and employees of the BPO respondent company, the BPO industry, and future researchers could all benefit from the information provided by this study on workplace stressors and the strategies employed by BPO employees to manage them. BPO agents' productivity and job performance for the organization they work for will increase if they are aware of the numerous ways for

copied with workplace pressures. Additionally, the results of this investigation can help improve the condition of the agents' mental and physical health. This is to avoid a declining health condition that may reduce the effective rate and result in missed workdays from illnesses brought on by stressors from the workplace.

This research study focused on determining the significant differences in various ways of overcoming role stressors by BPO agents when grouped according to their gender, age, work shift, and length of service. The main intention was to recommend the best ways company leaders and management can ease the role stressors agents usually experience in their respective workplaces. This study may also provide some guidance for human resource management practices so they can use role stressor management techniques.

This study made use of role theory. The role theory states that in organizational contexts, roles are tied to recognizable social positions and are produced by normative expectations (Biddle, 1986; cited in Quian, 2018). According to the idea of roles, people behave in certain ways depending on "how their roles evolve and are defined" (Matta et al., 2015). The job holder may, however, lapse into a state known as "role ambiguity" when responsibilities and role requirements are not sufficiently outlined to direct conduct (Biddle, 1986; cited in Quian, 2018). According to role theory, role ambiguity will make a person more dissatisfied with their role, hesitant to make judgments, anxious, and confused, which will lead to inadequate performance. Besides role ambiguity, factors under the role typology role conflict, and role overload are also stressors as a result of frequent interactions between individuals who perform the same duty or other functions (Kahn et al., 1964; Rizzo et al., 1970; cited in Quian, 2018).

The data collection was limited to the distribution of self-administered survey instruments for the primary data. Secondary data consisted of books, journals, periodicals, as well as online materials. The researcher collected data for a period of two months that started from January to March 2023. The study utilized a quantitative descriptive survey approach for the research design. The researcher made use of sixty (60) respondents

that are conveniently chosen using harvested emails. For this study, the researcher sent emails directly from Google Docs and attached the link to the survey in Facebook and Messenger. The researcher made use of SPSS 28 in the data analysis.

The researcher encountered several challenges while carrying out the research investigation. Due to distributional constraints brought on by the researcher's online survey, there was less variation in the data. Even if an online survey had a better possibility of increasing the ease of response among the target audience, some of the target demographic may not have participated because they were uncomfortable with online interactions. Other significant constraints included a lack of time for data collection, the respondent's unwillingness to cooperate and reveal some information, and the obsolescence of some secondary data.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Stress is inevitable and, to a certain degree, is a common occurrence. Everyday life events contribute to stress and many of which are difficult to avoid. The causes and levels of stress differ from one individual to the other. No individual is free from stress, in any case of how advantaged, sensible, intelligent, and clever he may be. Every individual encounter frustration, losses, changes, and conflicts (Mazo, 2015). Stress within business process outsourcing (BPO) agents is a rampant issue that impacts them severely.

Magazines and journals reveal those agents at BPO companies experience difficulties, including unreasonable workloads, unattainable targets, and pressurizing and hostile clients. They are working on a continuous night shift that creates a hormonal imbalance and eventually makes them stressed. In addition, it was found that the major problem for employees in the BPO sector is work stress and unrealistic targets. Even though incentives are provided for achieving targets but work stress increases when sometimes targets are not attained. Sometimes the social life is missed because the pattern of holidays is different compared to traditional organizations (Giridhar & Malyadri, 2019). Thus, stress is a crucial subject for BPO agents (Latha & Panchanatham, 2011).

BPO agents normally encounter role stressors from customers, colleagues, managers, and the company's objectives. They perform in a distracting environment; face intense customer demands and feel pressure to reach company goals. This burden exacerbates by the constant requirement to meet output metrics as managers always scrutinize their service efficiency. Employees working in every industry must deal with stress. BPO agents are among those workers under a great deal of stress due to many stress antecedents. Stress may affect BPO agent's health and their job performance, as graveyard shift workers.

Some BPO agents reportedly get calls from clients who are verbally abusive on a regular basis. As a result, call center workers handle emotionally taxing calls with little to no time to recuperate due to the constant requirement to make or answer calls. The result of ongoing verbal abuse is an increase in stress, mental exhaustion, and absenteeism. The opposing needs to improve operational performance (response speed, waiting time, efficacy, and quality of service), optimize customer loyalty, and achieve superior knowledge collection all lead to stress in the BPO environment Geraghty (2017).

Role ambiguity-prone agents usually struggle to finish the assignment that has been handed to them. Role ambiguity built on by employee dissatisfaction frequently causes job burnout. It's because the person's capacity to execute the assignment is examined. When an employee is unable to do the task assigned to them, it commonly results in anxiety at work. Due to role ambiguity, a person is unable to carry out the required task (Tang & Chang, 2014; referenced in Alblihed & Alzghaibi, 2022). According to Zhao and Rashid (2010), referenced in Alblihed & Alzghaibi 2022, role ambiguity is a problem that arises when a person's position is not clearly defined and when the employee is not fully aware of the expectations, protocols, and requirements.

According to Anand and Vohra (2020), role conflict, another role stressor is the unpleasant feeling a person experiences as a result of juggling the demands of many social positions and statuses. When employees are assigned multiple, incompatible jobs at once or when their duties overlap with those of another individual or workgroup, a conflict arises. If

there is greater workplace conflict, a worker is more likely to experience stress at work (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov>). Role conflict was discussed in the study of web-care agents, who are typically unaffected by negative emotions and who view them as an essential component of their work (Widdershoven et al., 2021).

Another study that included BPO agents as responders, caring for family members, working nights and weekends, having to be adaptable, and balancing conflicting demands from work and life generate job stress for employees who feel role overload. According to Kavitha and Venugobal (2017), employees are having a hard time adjusting to the excessively demanding duties or expectations that are placed on them.

All these aspects add to the tension of BPO agents. When these role stressors become severe, morale, employee satisfaction, and well-being diminish, significantly impacting the company. The overall turnover rate of full-time agents in the Philippines is 18%. The mean part-time agent turnover rate is 24 percent. (Solutions, 2020).

There are, however, several ways of overcoming stress that may help BPO agents to break the stress in their work experience to be happier, healthier, and more productive. The goal is to balance life with time to work, relationships, relaxation, and fun using some ways of overcoming stress that is fundamental in daily life (Silorio, n.d.). Especially on rest days, BPO employees frequently go out at night to drink or hang out with their buddies.

Shopping and dining at their preferred establishments is another coping strategy, particularly during pay periods. In their spare time, several BPO employees enjoy seeing new areas, particularly if their long vacation is approved. Some call center employees choose to spend time with their loved ones while others prefer to sleep all day to make up for their sleepless nights (Silorio, n.d.).

BPO agents may be able to have happier lives if their well-being is strengthened and they gain the behavioral skills necessary for dealing with workplace stress. Career adaptability can be seen as a self-regulation technique in which people consider their options and come to sound conclusions by using developmental processes such as self-exploration, career preparation, and decision-making. In terms of adaptability, job transition control is considered when dealing with interpersonal reactions. Job adaptability is the most important resource for dealing with the BPO environment since it helps BPO agents be flexible and enjoy their careers (Harry, 2015).

The more successfully call center agents can handle pressure, the happier they will be at work, and the better they will be at answering customer requests. Therefore, call center agents need to be trained and inspired to regularly use stress-reduction practices (Geraghty, 2018).

The conceptual framework utilized in this study considers this paradigm:

Figure 1 Conceptual Paradigm of Overcoming Job Stressors in the BPO Industry

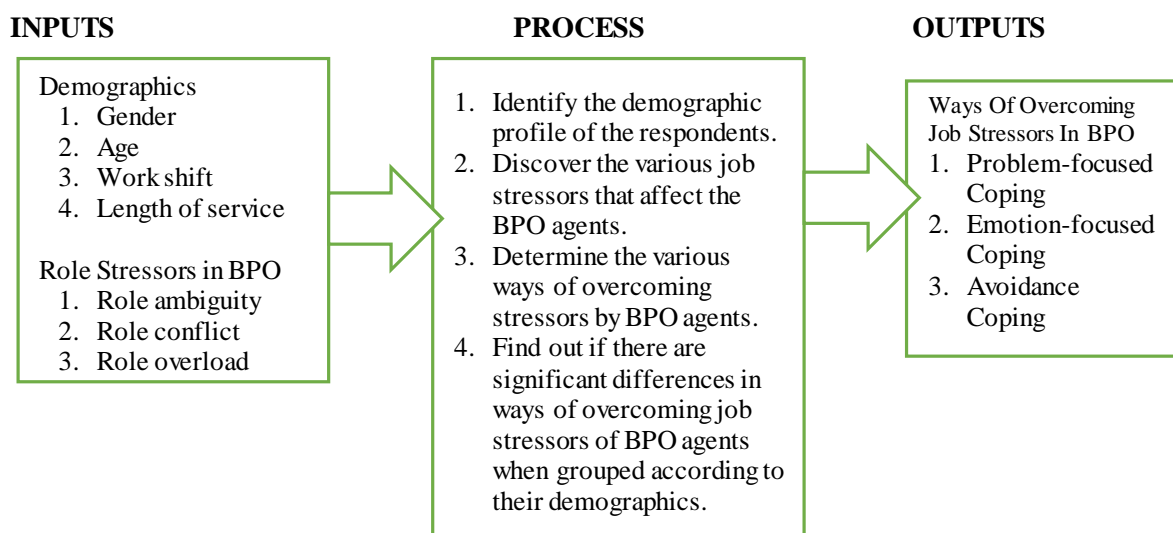


Figure 1 shows an INPUT-PROCESS-OUTPUT Model on ways to overcome role stressors experienced by BPO agents. On the input side, the researcher attempted to profile the agents via their gender, age, work shift, and length of service. Alongside the profiling of the respondents, the role stressors experienced by agents working for BPOs were tried to be identified under the categories of role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload. From the perspective of role theory (Kahn et al., 1964; Rizzo et al., 1970; cited in Tang & Vandenberghe, 2021), which holds that employees are organized to fulfill necessary roles, the trio of role stressors namely role overload, role ambiguity, and role conflict have emerged as a prominent typology among the various work stressors that have been studied. Role stressors are a result of recurrent contacts between people who work in the same function or across distinct functions. Role overload refers to circumstances where role demands exceed an employee's resources, such as time, energy, and capability (Eatough et al., 2011; cited in Tang & Vandenberghe, 2021). Role ambiguity and role conflict, specifically, refer to situations where the behaviors expected of an employee are unclear and incongruent, respectively (Rizzo et al., 1970; cited in Tang & Vandenberghe, 2021).

After processing the data, the researcher tested if there are significant differences in ways of overcoming role stressors among BPO agents. The researcher made use of Brief-COPE which categorized ways of coping as problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant. Brief-COPE was tried on athletes (Poulus et al, 2020) and customers receiving outpatient mental health services (Hegarty & Buchanan, 2021). A high score in problem-focused coping indicates the psychological strength of the individual to change the stressful situation. On one hand, being emotion-focused when high means the person can regulate his emotions associated

with the stressful situation. On the other hand, avoidant as a way of coping should be low to ensure adaptive coping (Carver, 1997; cited in Poulus et al, 2020; cited in Hegarty & Buchanan, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized quantitative research using the descriptive-survey approach for the research design. Serrano (2016) suggested using a descriptive survey when gathering data about the current conditions. Knowing the role stressors experienced by BPO agents and ways of overcoming them was done under this descriptive survey approach. The respondents of the study were agents of the BPO community who came from different BPO companies within the metro. The researcher used sixty (60) agents that were easily selected utilizing emails that were obtained.

Using the web platform, the researcher implemented the survey questionnaire. Sixty (60) agents responded to the researcher's inquiries using emails that were obtained. In order to conduct this study, the researcher used Facebook and Messenger to attach the survey link to the emails of respondents that were sent directly from Google Docs. Google Docs has improved the efficiency of data collection and information tally. The data that was already obtained just needs to be interpreted and analyzed by the researcher.

The instrumentation employed in this study contained three (3) parts. The first part of the research instrument consisted of items for demographic profiling of respondents which are gender, age, work shift, and length of service. The second part sought to discover the various role stressors experienced by BPO agents under the variables of role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload with 15 items of combined positive and negative entries.

Each item was scored on a four-point Likert scale according to the following:

Scale	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Highly experienced
3	2.51-3.25	Moderately experienced

2	1.76-2.50	Less experienced
1	1.00-1.75	Not experienced at all

The third part of the survey instrument was taken from the Brief -Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (COPE) with 28 items under the three subscales of

problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidant coping (Hegarty & Buchanan, 2021). A four-point Likert scale was applied to measure each item as follows:

Scale	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	I have been doing this a lot
3	2.51-3.25	A medium amount
2	1.76-2.50	A little bit
1	1.00-1.75	I have not been doing it at all

The survey instrument was validated using ten (10) respondents that represent the BPO agents to test the variables used by the researcher in this study. For inquiries using a Likert scale or

dichotomous options, a general interpretation of alpha is as follows: The Cronbach Alpha for role stressors revealed the following results:

Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha and Role Stressors

Job Stressors	Cronbach's Alpha Values	Internal Consistency Interpretation
Role ambiguity	0.87	Excellent
Role conflict	0.88	Excellent
Role overload	0.87	Excellent

All role stressor variables were higher than the alpha value of 0.70, according to Table 1. This demonstrates the strong correlation between all test items and the consistency that the topics being measured by the questions are

related. Therefore, it might be said that each question in the survey instrument can be used to gauge the stressors related to the BPO agents' jobs.

Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha and Ways of Overcoming Role Stressors

Ways of Overcoming Role Stressors	Cronbach's Alpha Values	Internal Consistency Interpretation
Problem-focused Coping	0.94	Excellent
Emotion-focused Coping	0.91	Excellent
Avoidance Coping	0.90	Excellent

All factors in ways for overcoming role stressors were greater than the alpha value of 0.70, based on Table 2. This indicates that the test's components were all highly correlated and consistent, indicating that the topics being measured by the questions were the same. Therefore, it might be assumed that each survey item could be interpreted as measuring the ways used by BPO agents to deal with workplace pressures in the context of their specific tasks.

For the statistical analysis sub-objective 1, the frequency and percentage were applied. Sub-objectives 2, and 3, the researcher employed mean. With sub-objective 4, the

research made use of a T-test to know the significant differences in ways of overcoming role stressors of BPO agents when grouped according to their gender, age, work shift, and length of service. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 tested the data collected for this study.

RESULTS

The results of this investigation are shown in tables along with analyses and interpretations that are backed by relevant research.

Table 3 Profile of the BPO Agents

Profile of Respondents		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	31	52%
	Female	29	48%
Age	15 to 20 years	2	3%
	21 to 25 years	23	38%
	26 to 30 years	32	53%
	31 to 35 years	3	5%
Shift	Day shift	32	53%
	Night shift	28	47%
Length of Service	1 month – 2.5 years	37	62%
	2.6 years – 4.5 years	13	22%
	4.6 years – 6.5 years	10	16%

N=60

The frequency and percentage of the respondent's demographic profile were shown in Table 3, with a total of 60 BPO agents (or 100%) responding. The data was obtained from 29 female respondents, or 48%, compared to 31 male respondents, or 51%. The age distribution of the respondents revealed that the majority, 32 out of 100, or 53%, were between the ages of 26 and 30. Thirty-two (32) respondents, or 53%, work primarily during the day, whereas 28 respondents, or 47%, work throughout the night. Most respondents, or 37, or 62% of them, have had their current employer's services for 1 month to 2.5 years. Second, 13 or 2% are employed for 2.6 to 4.5 years. Third, 10 people, or 16% of the total, have been employed for 4.6 to 6.5 years.

The elements that were found to be causing the role stressors that the BPO agents experienced are displayed in Table 4. Role ambiguity is a role stressor for the agents with an overall mean of 2.80 and moderately

experienced by BPO agents. Agents that struggle with role ambiguity frequently have trouble completing the task that has been given to them. Job burnout is frequently brought on by role ambiguity due to employee unhappiness. It's because the ability of the person to complete the task is tested. Anxiety at work is frequently caused by circumstances where an employee cannot complete the task that has been allocated to them. As a result, a person is unable to complete the prescribed duty due to role ambiguity (Tang & Chang, 2014; cited in Alblihed & Alzghaibi, 2022). The issue of role ambiguity comes when a person's position is not clearly defined and when the employee is not fully aware of the expectations, procedures, and requirements (Zhao & Rashid, 2010; cited in Alblihed & Alzghaibi, 2022).

Table 4 Role Stressors That Are Experienced by The BPO Agents

Job Stressors Experienced by BPO Agents		Mean per item	Verbal Interpretation
Role ambiguity	1. I have to do things that should be done differently.	2.80	Moderately experienced
	2. I have to buck a rule of a policy in order to carry out an assignment.	2.70	
	3. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	2.90	
	4. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	2.75	
	5. I work on unnecessary things.	2.95	
Role conflict	1. I know exactly what is expected of me (R)	2.70	Moderately experienced
	2. I know that I have divided my time properly (R)	2.65	

	3. The explanation is clear of what has to be done (R)	2.75	
	4. I know what my responsibilities are (R)	2.80	
	5. Clear, planned goals and objectives exist for my job (R) *(R) reversed score	2.60	
Role overload	1. In my profession, I have a lot of stuff to accomplish.	2.90	Moderately experienced
	2. I work extended hours.	3.10	
	3. I work increasingly bound by inflexible shift systems.	3.10	
	4. I work with ambitious answer rate goals.	2.90	
	5. I work under intensive control measures and rigid surveillance systems	3.00	

N=60

Role conflict is the unpleasant experience a person has because of having to contend with the competing demands of several social positions and statuses (Anand and Vohra, 2020). This conflict happens when employees are given multiple, incompatible roles at once or when their job overlaps with that of another employee or workgroup. A worker is more likely to experience stress at work if there is more job conflict (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov>). Still, in Table 4, role conflict was found to be moderately experienced by respondents with an overall score of 2.75. The result of this study is supported by the study of web-care agents who are generally not influenced by negative emotions which they see as an inherent part of their job (Widdershoven, et al, 2021).

In the case of role overload, this study discovered that BPO agents, moderately experienced role overload in their workplace with an overall mean of 3.00. In a study using also BPO agents as respondents, it was revealed that employees who experienced role overload

often experience work stress because of caring for family members, working nights and weekends, having to be flexible, and juggling competing demands from work and life. Employees are having trouble adjusting to the overly demanding roles or expectations that are anticipated of them (Kavitha & Venugobal, 2017).

Call center representatives that can manage the pressure well will be happier in their jobs, more effective at handling requests, and more successful. As a result, call center representatives need to receive training and motivation to frequently practice stress management techniques (Geraghty, 2018).

Some agents find it challenging to maintain motivation in BPOs because processes there are frequently repetitious. Poor performance results from low levels of motivation. Agents will need to develop a coping strategy to get through the boredom. Some agents participate in a variety of hobbies, sports, and social activities (Tomagan, 2018).

Table 5 Ways of Overcoming Role Stressors of BPO Agents

Ways of Overcoming Role Stressors Experienced by BPO Agents		Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Problem-focused Coping	1. I've been focusing all of my energy on trying to change the circumstance I'm in.	3.02	A medium amount
	2. I've been acting in an effort to improve the circumstance.	3.01	A medium amount
	3. I've been receiving assistance and guidance from others.	3.99	I have been doing this a lot
	4. To make it seem more uplifting, I've been attempting to view it from a new perspective.	3.97	I have been doing this a lot
	5. I've been attempting to think of a plan of action.	3.98	I have been doing this a lot
	6. I've been searching for a positive aspect of the current situation.	3.96	I have been doing this a lot

	7. I've been attempting to get guidance or assistance from others on what to do.	3.98	I have been doing this a lot
	8. I've been deliberating carefully on what to do.	3.88	I have been doing this a lot
Emotion-focused Coping	1. Others have been offering me emotional support.	3.85	I have been doing this a lot
	2. I've been speaking to let my negative emotions out.	2.50	A little bit
	3. I have been harsh on myself.	2.00	A little bit
	4. Someone has been giving me consolation and understanding.	3.87	I have been doing this a lot
	5. I have been laughing about it.	3.96	I have been doing this a lot
	6. I've been resigning myself to the fact that it actually did happen.	3.93	I have been doing this a lot
	7. I've been airing my unfavorable sentiments.	2.49	A little bit
	8. I've been attempting to find solace in my spirituality or religion.	3.92	I have been doing this a lot
	9. I'm becoming better at putting up with it.	3.96	I have been doing this a lot
	10. I've been holding myself responsible for events that occurred.	2.05	A little bit
	11. I've been meditating or praying.	3.96	I have been doing this a lot
	12. I've been mocking the circumstance.	3.95	I have been doing this a lot
Avoidance Coping	1. I've been resorting to other pursuits to divert my attention.	3.01	A medium amount
	2. This isn't real, I've been telling myself.	1.00	A little bit
	3. I've been abusing liquor or other substances to improve my mood.	1.02	A little bit
	4. I've stopped making an effort to handle it.	3.87	I have been doing this a lot
	5. I've been denying that it actually happened.	3.87	I have been doing this a lot
	6. Alcohol or other drugs have been used by me to assist me get through it.	1.04	A little bit
	7. I've stopped trying to deal with things.	1.05	A little bit
	8. I've been engaging in activities to reduce my thought process, such as watching movies, TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping.	3.00	A medium amount

N=60

To manage stressful events and change a problematic person-environment interaction to reduce or eliminate the sources of stress through personal behavior is problem-focused coping. All of the controllable measures taken to lessen the emotional effects of stressful circumstances fall under the category of emotion-focused coping (Schoenmakers, 2015). While avoidance coping, which is intimately related to discomfort and depression, entails cognitive and behavioral activities aimed at rejecting, minimizing, or otherwise avoiding dealing directly with demanding situations (Holahan, 2005).

The outcomes of this study are revealed in Table 5. The answer "I have been doing this a lot" garnered scores from 3.88 to 3.99.

Simply, with problem-focused coping, most techniques are done a lot by respondents which means that they have the capacity as individuals to change their difficult circumstances. Again, for emotion-focused most answers are "I have been doing this a lot" from 3.87 to 3.96. These numbers showed that the BPO employees in this study were able to control the emotions they felt throughout their stressful conditions. In the area of avoidant coping, most answered "A little bit" from the range of 1.00 to 1.05. Basically, it is a good indicator that respondents are into adaptive coping (Carver, 1997; cited in Poulus et al, 2020; cited in Hegarty & Buchanan, 2021).

Table 6 Significant Differences in Ways of Overcoming Role Stressors of BPO Agents Based on Demographics

Profile of Respondents		N	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Gender	Male	31	0.93 > 0.05	Not significant
	Female	29		
Age	15 to 20 years	2	0.81 > 0.05	Not significant
	21 to 25 years	23		
	26 to 30 years	32		
	31 to 35 years	3		
Shift	Day shift	32	0.72 > 0.05	Not significant
	Night shift	28		
Length of Service	1 month – 2.5 years	37	0.99 > 0.05	Not significant
	2.6 years – 4.5 years	13		
	4.6 years – 6.5 years	10		

N=60

A result is considered statistically significant if the p-value from the t-test is less than 0.05. The outcome is not significant if the p-value is higher than 0.05. In Table 6, the end results pointed to no significant differences in the ways of overcoming role stressors of BPO agents when they grouped in gender, age, shift, and length of service because all p-values are all greater than 0.05.

In the past, it is said that males and females respond differently to stressful life experiences. In this study, since both genders of respondents have almost the same numbers, the result has not been too much distinction. Although, one study disclosed that when it came to perceived coping mechanisms, females tended to use adaptive coping mechanisms, whereas males tended to use dysfunctional and avoidance coping mechanisms, still with no significant difference. The study suggested, among other things, that men be encouraged to use increasingly adaptable stress management techniques as well (Adasi et al, 2020). Therefore, the result of this study on gender differences in overcoming role stressors agrees with the previous study mentioned.

However, some studies revealed the opposite in terms of gender. The usage of emotion-focused coping methods predominated problem-solving strategies for both men and women, however, college men and women reported distinct coping mechanisms for various stresses (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009; cited in Adasi et al, 2020). While male participants reported using negative coping mechanisms like drinking and using

drugs, female participants reported good stress management techniques including asking friends and counselors for assistance (Misigo, 2015; cited in Adasi et al, 2020). Still, another study uncovered that male pupils are more likely than female pupils to employ better stress management techniques (Anbumalar, 2017).

Age is one of the elements of diversity, according to a (2012) study by Kaifi et al. This has an impact on the workforce because more competent millennials are replacing or displacing baby boomers. In coping with role stressors, younger people can physically handle stress with their young heart but may be more challenging to cope with stress mentally. Yet, the latest statistics from the American Psychological Association (APA) report that Americans between the ages of 18 and 33 experience the most stress. The current completed study revealed that within the age ranges utilized, no significant difference has been found.

Since BPO agents serve clients who are geographically dispersed across time zones, they typically run around-the-clock operations with staff on call to assist clients. Research demonstrates that due to disruption of the body's circadian rhythm, workers who work non-standard work shifts (such as night shifts) have higher levels of general burnout, emotional weariness, workplace stress, and health issues than workers who work a fixed day shift (Jamal, 2004; cited in Khalid & Ahmid, 2013).

The agents that are determined to have less than 2 years in the sector have not yet

sharpened in call monitoring skills, which is one of the population limits that plays a part. As a result, they have less impact on the organization's scores than those with tenure, and they are about to learn about its culture (Jayson-Polk, 2019).

DISCUSSIONS

This study was able to find out those role stressors amongst BPO agents and therefore may conclude the following:

1. The number of female and male participants is almost equal, mostly in the age bracket of 26 to 30 years, working either day or night shift and having been in the company for 1 month – 2.5 years.
2. The majority of the BPO agents have moderate experiences with the role's stressors namely role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload in their respective jobs.
3. Most of the BPO agents have been doing more problem-focused and emotion-focused coping and the least avoidant coping.
4. There are no significant differences that were discovered in the ways of overcoming role stressors when respondents were grouped based on their demographics.

As a result of the study's findings, the researcher suggests the following to improve the physical and mental health of BPO agents by beating their role stressors. Here are the most effective strategies for reducing the stress that employees typically encounter in the workplace.

For BPO Management

1. Management must explicitly define work responsibilities for its BPO employees. Agents might not have a complete comprehension of their roles until everything is communicated to them. If management can establish specific key performance indicators (KPI) to track and assess agents' performance, it can aid them more in terms of productivity and efficiency.
2. Employee engagement should be improved by management. BPO agents

must be pushed to interact more with one another in order to lessen the role pressures they experience. Employers can improve relationships with employees by organizing events like office parties, team-building exercises, and lunches for the whole company.

3. Give agents some degree of independence. As long as agents are responsible for the result(s), autonomy can take the form of making decisions in their field of work with little to no manager influence. Alternatively, agents could be given the flexibility to select the shifts during which they can operate more effectively and productively.
4. By providing suitable facilities and equipment, management should invest their resources in facilitating agents' efficient completion of their jobs. Management may spend money on ergonomic chairs, premium headsets, and modern call center equipment to lessen the daily stress experienced by workers.
5. Agents should receive time management training. To assist agents, work more efficiently and effectively to meet deadlines, this training should incorporate time management activities. The overall length of time an agent needs to execute a task should also be known to management. Management can set timelines and realistic benchmarks in this way.
6. The task of the agents might be given a little excitement by management. BPO agents perform repetitive activities and frequently deal with the same questions and problems. These agents may occasionally become frustrated with their typical work. To avoid this circumstance, management may give agents specialized jobs to which they can also provide their opinion and ideas, such as taking part in the company's CSR initiatives.

For BPO Agents

1. BPO employees should build a network of coworkers who can serve as a vital communication channel. Once agents

involve their teammates, role pressures become considerably easier to manage. Having teammates, they can lean on can go a long way toward reducing the stress of being an agent, whether they offer inspiration, solace, a different viewpoint, or even just a simple diversion.

2. BPO employees should remember to take some time throughout a busy day to focus on themselves. They ought to regard their bodily well-being. After all, there is a strong link between physical and mental health. Physical and psychological stress can both emerge physically and engaging in physical activity can help ease both. Stress management can be as simple as drinking enough water to stay hydrated. Being dehydrated can actually cause additional stress on the body and cause stress hormones to be released, which further increases the psychological toll of working stress.
3. The pace of life in the contact center can occasionally be unnerving. Agents can slow down by using mindfulness practices, which have also been shown to reduce stress at work. By attempting to concentrate on the sensation of their

body moving, agents can engage in mindful exercise. Or take a thoughtful stroll while observing the breeze on one's skin, the sensation of one's hands or feet on various surfaces around or on the ground, and the various smells around.

4. In certain cases, BPO agents may take a break from work, that is the only viable choice for managing BPO role stressors and conquering anxiety. All agents should use all of their vacation time and unwind during extended periods off from the office.

For Future Researchers

The following are some suggested topics that can be done by future researchers:

1. Conduct a similar study on role stressors and how to overcome them using a wider scope of the BPO segment; and/or other types of industry.
2. Do a study to measure the extent of other types of stressors besides role and their corresponding countermeasures among BPO agents.
3. Perform a study on role stressors and how these contribute to the high attrition in the BPO industry.

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