

Role of Family Cohesion as Moderator between Job Stress and Drug Abuse among Employees of Business Process Outsourcing / Information Technology Sector

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Abstract: *The goal of the study is to evaluate how families are functioning in terms of cohesion and emotional ties as a moderating variable between job stress and drug abuse. The study used the "Occupational Stress Index" developed by Srivastava and Singh and Olson's Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES IV) to compare the stress level and family cohesion of 200 drug abusing Employees and 200 Normal/Non drug abusing Employees. In the Indian context, the aforementioned tests were deemed to be quite reliable and genuine. The findings also demonstrated that stress levels and family dynamics have a significant impact on substance misuse. Adults from households with substance abuse and alcoholism are more prone to higher levels of stress and anxiety, lower levels of self - differentiation, and dysfunctional behaviour. The above tests were reported as highly reliable and valid in Indian context. The results also showed that substance abuse is highly influenced by level of stress and family cohesion. Implications for practice, limitations of the studies with suggestions for future research are suggested.*

Keywords: Occupational stress, Substance abuse, family functioning, family cohesion.

1. Introduction

The Business Process Outsourcing/ Information Technology (BPO/IT) industry has contributed substantially to the growth of Indian economy, which has grown substantially in the past decade. Today the BPO industry employs nearly 5.1 million young Indians. However, it is a truth universally acknowledged that stress at work is perhaps the biggest reason of the high attrition rate in the BPO industry.

The emotional connection that family members have with one another is referred to as cohesion. Balanced levels of cohesion ranging from low to high, are most favourable to healthy family functioning, while unbalanced levels of cohesion ranging from very low to very high, are linked to problematic family functioning. With the ratio of balanced/unbalanced scores, this hypothesis—often referred to as the curvilinear hypothesis—can now be easily evaluated. The family system is more balanced when the ratio is more than 1, and is more imbalanced when the ratio is smaller.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Role of Family Functioning on Occupational Stress

Drug abuse is the major issue that is observed in many people and this is the main thing that would ruin the family life of people. Though, there is a single alcohol addict in the family, but it would have a greater negative impact on the entire family. Today, there are many drug abusers found in the family irrespective of male or female (Velampy & Aravintham, 2013). People who are of age 35 would also meet their parents once in a week (Yozgat et al., 2013).

Killorin and Olson (1984) indicated that chemical

dependency is not an isolated dynamic unique to one family member, but an integral part of family system Reilly (1984) has reported that young adults' misuse of drugs is commonly due to a dysfunction in a system of family of origin.

Alcohol consumption is not passed to the offspring in the family, but there is the chance of the next generation getting prone to alcohol consumption when under stress (AL - Hussami, 2008). Ahmad and Omar (2010) found that adults along with their siblings are prone to usage of marijuana, if the parents of these youth misuse drugs.

The children from families who consume alcohol and see consumption of alcohol during their dinner time, holidays, family rituals, vacations, visitors and weekend would develop the habit of drinking alcohol (Bashir & Ramay, 2010). The process that is related to managing the feelings, role structure and fulfilling the roles in the family system would make people behave like a drug abuser. The members of the family should involve to each other and influence the behavior of each other as it totally relates to proper functioning of the family (Coetzee and Rothmann, 2005). Fang et al., (2009) suggest that dysfunctional adult behavior may result in the family getting prone to drug abuse. Crompton (2006) stated that alcohol consumption would take a toll on the family interaction patterns and their response to the situations along with the conditions that are associated with the family and their status.

2.2 Family Functioning and Stress and Drug Abuse

The main problem that is seen in many people is drug misuse, and this is what will most likely destroy people's family lives. Despite the fact that only one member of the family is an alcoholic, the effects on the rest of the family would be more detrimental. According to (Velampy and Aravintham, 2013), drug addicts are increasingly common in

families nowadays, whether they are male or female. According to Yozgat et al. (2013), people over the age of 35 also have weekly meetings with their parents.

People who use drugs or alcohol may abuse their spouses or children. This largely adds to the discontent with one's marital situation, the breakdown of relationships, and the rejection of family members.

2.3 Research Gap/ Rationale of the Study

The methodological risks common to these studies mentioned above may be the cause of the debates in the literature. The list of them is as follows.

- Few studies use standardised instruments or theory - driven assumptions.
- Normal samples typically serve as control groups and are not the subject of independent research. As a result, researchers are well - versed in the traits of problematic samples but are less familiar with the capabilities of healthy samples that enable them to handle stress successfully. Consequently, both should be explored thoroughly.
- Employees' socioeconomic status is not taken into account when differentiating between the interactional dynamics that apply to employees from diverse cultural backgrounds.

2.4 Objective of the Study

- 1) To compare the degree of occupational stress experienced by people working in the BPO and IT industries who use hard and soft drugs, as well as those who don't use any drugs at all.
- 2) To assess the degree of balanced cohesion in family functioning for both substance - using vs. normal/non - using and hard - using vs. soft - using personnel and families in the BPO/IT sectors.
- 3) To investigate and contrast the Unbalanced level of Cohesion - Disengagement and Enmeshment in Family Dysfunctions in Substance Abusing vs. Normal/Non - Drug Abusing, and Hard vs. Soft Drug Abusing Employees and Families of BPO/IT Sectors.

Sample

The sample included 400 respondents (n=200) from the BPO and IT industries, representing 200 employees who abuse drugs and 200 employees who do not abuse drugs are chosen from the BPO and IT sectors. The goal of the current study was to examine how families functioned in terms of emotional ties/cohesion. It also focused on the parents (both mothers and fathers) of drug - using and non - using BPO/IT workers. Data were gathered from a number of call centres in various BPO (some IT) industries, mostly in eastern India, located in Kolkata like Vishnu Solutions, Sunview InfoTech Pvt. Ltd., Askit Infosystem Pvt. Ltd., United E Services and Graphtech BPO Pvt. Ltd. of

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The age range is 18 to 30 years, with a 22 - year - old average. 39% of the sample was female, with 61% being male, albeit it was challenging to identify the female

instances because drug addicts in this society are stigmatised on account of their gender.

3. Results

Table 1: Comparison between Substance Abusing and Normal/ Non Drug Abusing Sample

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2 - sided)
Pearson Chi - Square	195.823 ^a	2	.000

$\chi^2 = 195.823$ with $p < 0.0001$, where $\chi^2_{2, .05} = 5.99$ and $\chi^2_{2, .01} = 9.21$

Note: 0 Cells (0.00%) have expected counts less than 5. The minimum expected count is 62.50.

Table 1 shows that Chi - Square Statistics on drug abusing employees and non abusing employees, to test whether drug abuse is independent of Occupational Stress. It was found that Chi - square value is 195.823 with 2 d. f. The significance is < 0.0001 , which is much less than 0.01. So, we may infer that, drug abuse is not independent of Occupational Stress of employees. **So, there is strong association between drug abuse and employees' occupational stress. Hence H1 is accepted for drug abusing and non drug abusing employees.**

Table 2: Mean, SD and t - value of Balanced Cohesion among Employees

Groups	Sample (n)	Mean	S. D.	t - values	d. f.	Sig. Level
HDA Employees	62	22.27	3.34	0.954	198	Insignificant
SDA Employees	138	21.83	2.92			

It was observed from Table that Balanced Cohesion among NPF Employees is much higher than PF Employees.

Table 3: Mean, SD and t - value of Unbalanced Level of Cohesion - Disengagement - among Employees

Groups	Sample (n)	Mean	S. D.	t - values	d. f.	Sig. Level
PF employees	200	57.29	31.89	18.660**	398	1%
NPF employees	200	14.95	2.74			

The t - test was applied to test whether there is significant difference among PF and NPF employees. Regarding PF vs. NPF employees, the t - value was 18.660 which is significant at 1% level. **Thus it may be concluded that Disengagement among PF vs. NPF employees was significantly different.**

Table 4: Mean, SD and t - value of Unbalanced Level of Cohesion - Enmeshment - among Employees

Groups	Sample (n)	Mean	S. D.	t - values	d. f.	Sig. Level
PF employees	200	35.23	31.50	9.170**	398	1%
NPF employees	200	14.68	2.58			

The t - test was applied to test whether there is significant difference among PF and NPF employees. Regarding PF vs. NPF employees, the t - value was 9.170 which is significant at 1% level. The results concluded that Enmeshment among PF employees is much higher than NPF employees

4. Major Findings

The detailed analysis showed how balanced parameter like Balanced and unbalanced parameters like Disengagement and Enmeshment have an impact on Substance abuse among employees and their family members of BPO/IT sectors. The details are discussed below.

- 1) **Occupational Stress: There is strong association between drug abuse and employees' occupational stress.**
- 2) **Balanced Cohesion:** The results on Individual and Family level analyses confirm that NPFs having more Balanced Cohesion score, are significantly different from PFs, who are having low score in Balanced Cohesion in BPO/IT sector. But in case of SDAFs and HDAFs, there is no significant difference in Balanced Cohesion.
- 3) **Unbalanced Cohesion: Disengaged Scale:** The results on both individual and Family level analyses confirm that Non Problem families (NPFs) are less disengaged and significantly different from Problem Families (PFs), who are more disengaged in Disengaged Scale. But in case of SDAFs and HDAFs, there is no significant difference among them in the Scale.

Unbalanced Cohesion: Enmeshed Scale

Both Individual and Family level results confirm that PFs are more enmeshed than NPFs, but there is no significant difference between SDAFs and HDAFs in Enmeshment Scale though mean score is higher in HDAFs than in SDAFs. In conclusion, here, it is pointed out that Unbalanced level of Cohesion - Disengagement and Enmeshment - are associated with more problematic family functioning in Problem families (PF) of BPO/IT sectors than in Normal/ Non - problem families (NPF). However, in Problem Families, it is not more prevalent in Families of Hard drug abusers (HDA) than in Families of Soft drug abusers (SDA).

5. Implication for Practice

In the BPO/IT industries, a lack of experience and prospects for advancement may cause younger employees to feel unsatisfied with their jobs and make them more likely to engage in dysfunctional behaviour like substance misuse. Regular training and development programmes will therefore enable employees to understand that their own activities will contribute to their increased performance.

6. Limitations

All of the groups and subgroups' employees' educational history, birth order, parents' ages, levels of education, and financial situation were not taken into account. The effects of parental drug use and absence have not been researched.

7. Suggestions for Future Research

In summary, stress is a multidimensional phenomenon, and its causes cannot be unidimensional and dependent on a single component. More thorough research is required for this. The findings are preliminary and require confirmation

using more sample types. The aforementioned problems and the study's limitations require additional investigation, which can be done during the next ten years. Some employees' bad habits and erratic lifestyles made their difficulties worse.

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