

Significance of Locus of Control on Substance Abuse and Job Stress in BPO / IT Sector Employees

Dr. Om Prakash Chowdhury

Assistant Professor of Commerce, Deshbandhu College for Girls, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Abstract: *This study investigates the relationship between occupational stress, substance abuse, and locus of control among employees in the BPO and IT sectors in Kolkata, India. The research sample comprised 400 respondents, including 200 substance-abusing employees and 200 non-abusing employees. The substance-abusing group was further divided into soft drug abusers SDA and hard drug abusers HDA. Results indicated that substance-abusing employees experience higher levels of occupational stress compared to non-abusers, with hard drug abusers exhibiting the highest stress levels. Additionally, substance abusers displayed a more external locus of control, particularly those using hard drugs. Chi-square tests confirmed a significant association between substance abuse, occupational stress, and locus of control. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions to address the stress and control beliefs among substance-abusing employees in these sectors.*

Keywords: Occupational stress, Substance abuse, Locus of control, BPO employees, IT sector

1. Introduction

Information technology is the administration of information via the use of computers and software. A large company's information technology department would be in charge of storing, protecting, processing, transmitting, and retrieving information as needed. In some companies, this is referred to as Management Information Services (or MIS) or simply Information Services (or IS).

The five main parts of the IT sector are as follows: (i) e-commerce or online business; (ii) IT services; (iii) ITES (IT Enabled Services), such as BPO; (iv) software products; and (v) hardware. Over the past several years, India's economy has had a consistent increase in income, which may be attributed to the well-progressing nature of these constituents. India's IT/ITES business has expanded at a never-before-seen pace during the past ten years.

All forms of outsourcing are referred to by the term business process outsourcing, or BPO. Generally, a service provider manages and oversees a certain business process on behalf of another firm. BPOs may utilise new technology or repurpose outdated technology to enhance a particular business process. India is now the most sought-after destination for business process outsourcing, with the majority of US and UK firms using Indian service providers for IT-related outsourcing. The night shift at work necessitates changing social and biological practices, which are a major contributor to health and social problems. Extended work hours, shift rotation, permanent night shifts, exceedingly high work goals, and consistently meeting deadlines are the dark clouds endangering India's "sunshine" call centre sector. Due to the peculiar schedule and nature of the work, employees were required to spend nine hours a day seated in a chair, reading pre-written phone conversations nonstop, and frequently interacting with clients from all over the world. When an employee uses a computer to measure, record, and automatically log every second of their labour for a week, it might be used for praise or censorship. where there is never a simultaneous stop in the three processes of talking, watching, and listening.

Role of Locus of Control

The locus of control concept in social psychology describes an individual's degree of belief in their ability to alter the events that affect them. The Latin term "locus" (which means "place" or "location") can refer to an individual's sense of internal control over their life, or an external locus of belief control over their life, over which they believe their environment, a higher power, or other people control. People who have a high internal locus of control think that events are mostly caused by their behaviour and actions. People who have a strong external control locus of control think that events primarily change, powerful people, or luck or fate. High internal control individuals are more likely to regulate their behaviour and have high expectations for success. Those with a strong external control locus may believe that their grades are the product of a professor's arbitrary bad test design or bad test administration, while those with a strong internal control locus may believe that their grading is the result of their own abilities and efforts.

2. Literature Review

Stress and Drug Abuse

Stressor is regarded as the stimulus that induces threat in an individual (Abdullah, Jahanand Saha, 2008). Stressor must be thought of as the outcome of stress to result by individuals irrespective of the same being physical, psychosocial or psychological. Stressors that are physical comprises of pollutants from environment, pressure of environment as temperature changes, excessive exercise, shock, or certain body trauma and openness to disease. Psychological stressors are more of internal as feelings, concern and thoughts pertaining to stress.

Stress, Locus of Control, and Drug Abuse

In a 2003 study by Mimura and Griffiths, drug addicts were compared to a control group of people who were not addicts. Drug abusers have been found to be much more externally orientated inside the locus of control when compared to the non-addict control group. The same has been demonstrated, demonstrating a link between an individual's propensity to

characterise such favourable outcomes associated to events for external features and an increased risk of externalisation growth rate according to recurrence as well as addiction recovery.

Siu (2003) also provided well-explained epidemiological evidence that demonstrated the connection between stress and the rise in addiction.

However, Stamper and Johlke (2003) demonstrated how a number of these genetically determined personal characteristics might influence a person's likelihood of drug misuse dependence and recurrence. Because so many fundamental factors have been combined to promote addiction- driven behaviour throughout an individual's lifetime, the way addictions are portrayed appears to be manipulated for truth. According to Ugwu (2010), control may appear to be an unachievable objective when a person is battling addiction. No matter how hopeless one may have felt at the time, recovery has always been possible.

Research Methodology

West Bengal's Kolkata, in the country's east, has been chosen as the data gathering location mainly from Vishnu Solutions, Infonet Solutions, Sunview InfoTech Pvt. Ltd, Askit Infosystem Pvt. Ltd, United E Services, Dynaxon IT Services Pvt. Ltd., Inovora Technologies Pvt.Ltd.

Sample size

400 respondents (n=400) made up the sample, which included 200 abusing employees and 200 normal/non-abusing employees from the BPO and IT industries. 200 employees who abuse drugs and 200 employees who do not abuse drugs are chosen from the BPO and IT industries. The 200- person sample of drug abusers was further split into two groups: 138 Soft Drug Abusers (SDA) who abuse alcohol, cigarettes, and chew tobacco, and 62 Hard Drug Abusers (HDA) who abuse heroin, cocaine, brown sugar, morphine, marijuana, and other drugs.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The age range of the employees is 18 to 30, with a 22-year-old average. Due to the social stigma that drug abusers in Indian culture face, 61% of the sample was male and 39% was female. This made it challenging to identify the female cases.

Research Instruments:

Following scales have been used in this study to collect the data. The tools are:

- 1) Occupational Stress Index Questionnaire developed by Srivastava and Singh (1984).
- 2) Internal-External Locus of Control Scale outlined by Julian B. Rotter (1966).

Objectives of the study

- To compare the degree of occupational stress experienced by BPO/IT industry personnel who abuse substances to those who are normal/non-abusive those who abuse drugs, both hard and soft.
- To comprehend and contrast the roles of personality traits such as locus of control in employees in BPO/IT sectors who abuse substances with those who are normal/non-abusers and between those who abuse hard and soft drugs.

3. Results and Discussion

Substance Abuse and Occupational Stress

The level of Occupational stress among the Substance abusing employees of BPO/IT sectors will be high in comparison to Normal/Non- drug abusing employees. Use of hard drug will be associated with high level of Occupational stress compared to soft drug abusers.

On the basis of scores on Occupational Stress, the employees for Soft Drug Abusers (SDA), Hard Drug Abusers (HDA), Drug Abusers, and Non Abusers can be categorized into having Low (46 to 127), Moderate (128 to 150) and High (151 to 230) level of Stress (See Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Employees by Types and Level of Stress

Types of Employees	Level of Stress			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
1. SDA Employees	11	25	102	138
2. HDA Employees	5	19	38	62
3. Substance Abusing Employees ((1) + (2))	16	44	140	200
4.Non- Drug Abusing Employees	109	82	9	200
5. TOTAL ((3) + (4))	125	126	149	400

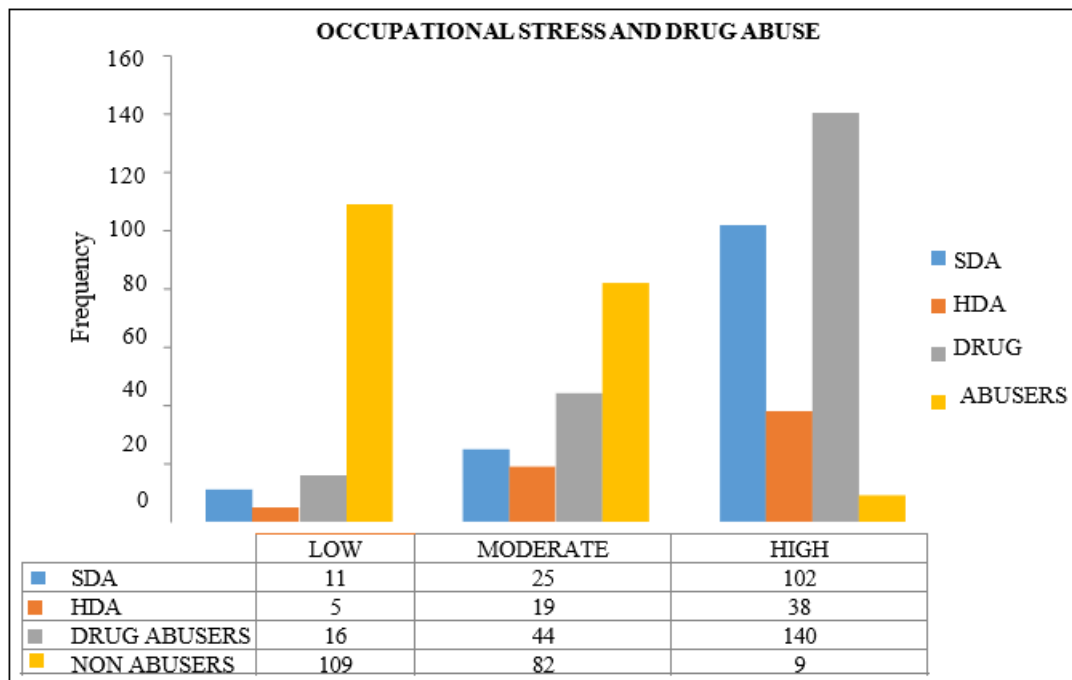


Figure 1: Occupational Stress and Drug Abuse

i) Comparison between Substance Abusing and Normal/Non- Drug Abusing Sample

Table 2: Chi-Square Tests

	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 2 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.**

ii) Comparison between Soft Drug Abusing (SDA) and Hard Drug Abusing (HDA) Employees

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp.Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.027 ^a	2	.133

$\chi^2 = 4.027$ with $p = 0.133$, where $\chi^2_{2, .05} = 5.99$ and $\chi^2_{2, .01} = 9.21$

Note: One Cell (16.7%) has expected counts less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.96.

Above Table 3 shows Chi-Square Statistics on soft and hard drug abusing employees, to test whether drug abuse is independent of Occupational Stress among SDA and HDA. Chi-square value was found 4.027 with 2 d.f. The significance is 0.133, which is higher than 0.05. So, it may be mentioned that, drug abuse is independent of Occupational Stress among soft and hard drug abusing employees. So, there is no significant difference in drug abuse and occupational stress among SDA and HDA employees.

So, drug abusing and stress is statistically significant among non-abusers and abusers in BPO/IT sectors. But, it is not true among soft and hard drug abusers.

Substance Abuse and Locus of Control

Substance abusing employees of BPO/ IT sectors will be "externals" in "Locus of control" compared to Normal/Non-drug abusing employees who will be "internals". Use of hard drug will be associated with high level of externality as compared to use of soft drugs.

On the basis of scores on Locus of control, Employees (SDA, HDA, Drug abusing, & Non drug abusing) are categorized into Strongly External (0-4), External (5-9), Both (10-14), Internal (15-19) and Strongly Internal (20-25) (See Table 4 & Figure 2).

Table 4: Distribution of Employees by Types and their 'Locus of Control'

Types of Employees		LOCUS OF CONTROL					Total
		"0"	"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	
		Strongly External (0-4)	External (5-9)	Both (10-14)	Internal (15-19)	Strongly Internal (20-25)	
1. SDA Employees		6	85	38	5	4	138
2. HDA Employees		8	18	24	8	4	62
3. Substance Employees ((1) + (2))	Abusing	14	103	62	13	8	200
4. Non- Drug Employees	Abusing	7	16	26	144	7	200
5. TOTAL ((3) + (4))		21	119	88	157	15	400

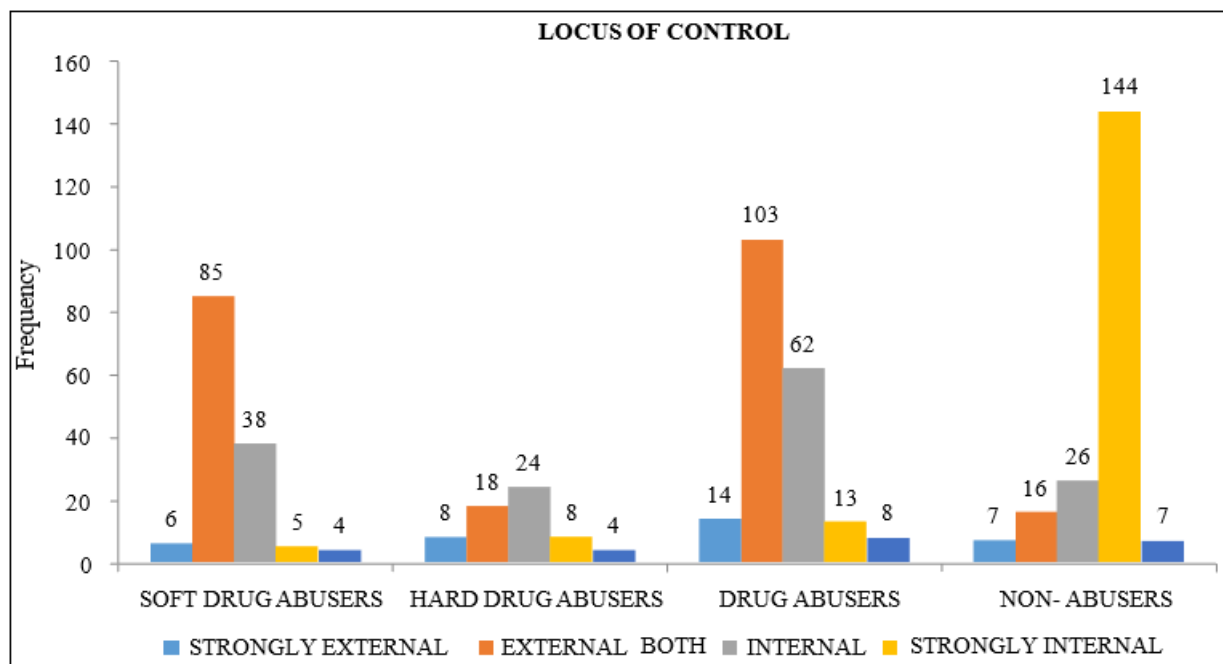


Figure 2: Locus of Control for SDA, HDA, Drug Abusers and Non Abusers

i) Comparison between Substance Abusing and Normal/Non- Drug Abusing Sample

Table 5: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	190.038	4	.000

$\chi^2 = 190.038$ with $p < 0.0001$, where $\chi^2_{4, .05} = 9.49$ and $\chi^2_{4, .01} = 13.30$

Note: 0 Cells (0.00%) have expected counts less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.50.

Above Table 5 shows Chi-Square Statistics on Substance abusing employees and non drug abusing employees, to test whether drug Abuse is independent of Locus of Control. It was found that Chi- square value is 190.038 with 4 d.f. The significance is < 0.0001 , which is much less than 0.01. So, it may be mentioned that, drug abuse is not independent of employees' Locus of Control. So, there is strong association between drug abuse and employees' Locus of Control.

ii) Comparison between Soft Drug Abusing (SDA) and Hard Drug Abusing (HDA) Employees

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.022	2	.000

$\chi^2 = 22.022$ with $p = 0.0002$, where $\chi^2_{2, .05} = 5.99$ and $\chi^2_{2, .01} = 9.21$

Note: Three Cells (30%) have expected counts less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.48.

Above Table 6 shows Chi-Square Statistics on SDA and HDA, to test whether drug Abuse is independent of Locus of Control. It was found that Chi-square value is 22.022 with 2 d. f. The significance is 0.000 which is much less than 0.01. So, it may be concluded that drug abuse is not independent of Locus of Control among soft and hard drug abusing employees. So, there is association between drug abuse and Locus of Control among SDA and HDA employees. So, drug

abusing and Locus of Control is statistically significant among non-abusers and abusers as well as SDA and HDA.

Hence "Substance abusing employees of BPO/ IT sectors will be "externals" in "Locus of control" compared to Normal/Non-drug abusing employees who will be "internals". Use of hard drug will be associated with high level of externality as compared to use of soft drugs" is strongly accepted.

4. Major Findings

In this context, the results of comparing the samples of substance abusers versus normal/non- abusers and SDA (soft drug abusers) versus HDA (hard drug abusers) indicate a strong correlation between substance abuse and occupational stress in BPO/IT employees who abuse substances and those who do not abuse substances. However, this is untrue for both soft and hard drug users.

The role of "Locus of Control" in substance abuse: It is evident that substance abuse is not independent of workers' locus of control when comparing substance abuse with normal/non-drug abuse and SDA with HDA sample. Therefore, for both samples, there is a high correlation between substance usage and employees' locus of control.

5. Limitations of the study

All groups and subgroups were not taken into account, including the employees' educational background, birth order, parents' age, education, and family economic condition.

There hasn't been any research on the relationship between parental drug usage and absenteeism.

Research has not taken into account the possibility that other psychological traits, such as neuroticism and negative affectivity (Burke, Brief & George, 1993; Firth-Cozens,

1992), may influence the connection between stress and performance.

6. Suggestions for Future Research

One may argue that stress is a multifaceted- phenomena whose cause cannot be unidimensional or dependent on a single component. More thorough investigation is required for this. The findings are preliminary and require confirmation using more sample types. The aforementioned problems and the study's limits require more investigation, which can be completed during the course of the following ten years.

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