

Effects of Non-Standard Schedules on the Life of BPO Employees

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Abstract

Objectives: The article uses a sample of 200 employees from the BPO industry in Chennai to find the impact of non-standard work schedules on the family life of employees comparing the employees based on their age, gender, Years married, Years in non-standard schedule and Hierarchy. **Method:** Lickert scale analysis is used to collect data from the respondents and questions pertaining to demographic variables and non-standard schedule were queried to get information. The data collected for family life were based on questions pertaining to family responsibilities, marital life and growth of children. T-test and one way-Anova are the Statistical tools that are used for the analyses. **Findings:** The Findings suggest that the effect of non-standard schedules on demographic variables differed with age, gender, years married, years in non-standard schedule and hierarchy. The effect of non-standard schedule on the family life differed significantly among the different groups. The effect was found to be more in the age groups of 46-55 years and above 55 years. The effect was more in the age groups of 46-55 years and above 55 years as the mean value is 85.4 and 76 respectively. The tests showed a significant difference between male and female as there was a significant mean difference of 7.1. The effect was more in the group where the individuals were married for more than 7 Years and married for less than 1 year. There was no significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule among the employee's years in non-standard schedule and hierarchy however there was slight differences among the different groups. **Application/Improvements:** The study enables organizations to understand the problems faced by the employee of BPO working in the non-standard schedules. The study is an insight for the employers to know the effect of non-standard schedules across the different category of employees based on their age, gender, marital years, years in non-standard schedule and position. This study would in turn guide the organizations to bring about measures that could prevent the problems occurring due to shift work.

Keywords: Children Growth, Family Life, Married Life, Night Shift, Non-Standard Schedules, Shift Work

1. Introduction

Non-standard work schedule exists in most of the industries to fulfill the needs of the clients on a 24/7 basis. Non-standard work schedule also called as shift work is more prevalent in the ITES industry and this has become mandatory for the employees to work in the required shift schedule or the required time to fulfill the customer's needs round the clock. Even though Non-standard shift schedules have provided good work opportunities for the people of India; they have an adverse effect on the life of the employees. In the present time in order to cater to the needs of the family and society, both spouses

have started to work in non-standard schedules. Many Indian citizens are forced to work in the non-standard schedule due to the family commitments. In the recent past there is an increase in the work flow, which is noted by the yearly hours of paid work, the expansion of 24-7 work arrangements, the increase in dual-earner families, and the importance given to the speed and quality of work¹⁻³. Work intensity has become a more prevalent issue in the organizations as the employers need to face stiff competition; the employers have used a variety of work arrangements to increase production. The 8-h and 5-day work schedule has given way to an increase in work days and work weeks; this has resulted in American work-

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ers working extra hours than their competitors in other industries⁴. Shift work involves hours of employment during non-standard shifts or alternative hours and it is a work schedule outside the normal working hours of 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday–Friday⁵. The efforts that are taken to summarize the findings of the research to know the impact of shift work have given useful information on the consequences of shift work schedule on the physical and mental state of the employees, sleep deprivation, family commitments, and community participation. Early reviews on the effects of non-standard schedule pertaining to marital stability, stress of shift work and depression were given by^{6,7}.

1.1 Work Family Conflict

In⁸ examined the interplay of work and family life by undertaking a conceptual analysis of work and family constructs. He identified that there were linking mechanism as well as causal relationship that were embedded within the work and family life. In⁹ have created theories to understand the work-family life and have written quite a lot of literature on the review of work and family in the 1990s. In¹⁰ in their study on the factors contributing to work-family conflict found that the family responsibilities and family demands has a great effect on the work family conflict for female employees since they have more household responsibilities than their male counterparts.

1.2 Maternal Employment

In⁹ had written about the negative effects of maternal employment specifically on the children as well as the negative role of child care. In¹¹ found that when a person works in non-standard schedule there is more chance that relatives take care of the child and there would definitely be a negative impact on the growth of the children.

1.3 Impact of Globalization and Development of Technology

It should be noted that the development of information technology and globalization has brought about a wide change in the work schedule as well as work style. The development of technology has changed the workplace into a place where machines and technology are used to do a job. From the time computers of mainframe started in 1970, there was a rapid spread of personal computers in 1980s and 1990s. Technology has played a very pivotal role in decreasing the distance between people

and enabled the people to do business in any part of the world. Increase in foreign trade and investment in other countries have expanded the world economy providing employment to many people around the globe. This technology has also made it mandatory for a large number of people to work in shift schedule or non-standard schedule affecting their family life and their well being¹². The advancement in technology has paved way for outsourcing of firms and an increase in business across the globe. This has resulted in more business and more income resulting in non-standard schedule¹³.

1.4 Non-Standard Schedules and Family Life

In⁹ has laid down the importance of looking at the temporary pattern of work as it overlaps or non-overlaps the employment schedule of the spouse. It is a common saying that non-standard schedules or shift work interferes with family roles and reduces the time the individuals spend with their families^{14–17}. In^{5,18} gives the most detailed and clear explanation with detailed analysis showcasing the effects of shift work on the stability and quality marriage life, and also the effect on child-parent interaction. Presser analysed the data from 3,476 married couples which was taken from the National Survey of Families and Household to find the impact of shift work on the marital life of the employees as well as to find out the likelihood of divorce or separation between the couples within a period of 5 years. In⁵ could examine the impact of evening shift, night shift, or rotating shift for both husbands as well as wives who had or hadn't children. In general the findings revealed that the effects of shift work depends upon the gender of the spouse, whether they had or hadn't children and the tenure of marriage. From the study it was found that men who had children and worked in shifts were more likely to separate or divorce their spouses. The men who were married less than 5 years and who have been working in fixed night shifts were found to be more affected and they had an increase in the divorce rate. The likelihood of divorce increased when the woman with children and married for more than 5 years had been working in fixed night shift. More than one fourth of couples who were dual-earners had at least one spouse working in a non-standard schedule⁵.

1.5 Work Life Balance

Many couples around the globe have great task of managing to bring about a balance in the work and family life. In order to balance the work and family life the type of shift

schedule and the no of hours the couples work becomes crucial. The no of hours per week worked by the spouse and the hours of work could determine their work-life balance as well as it could affect the time spent by the couples together. In the case of evening and night shift, the employees would have a greater difficulty of spending time with their spouse, hence the interaction and activities that commonly occur is disrupted⁷. In case of dual-earner couples where in one spouse works a non-standard shift have resulted in decreased marital quality¹⁹ and this increases the divorce rates and separation of the couples¹⁸. Night shift could be more straining in the married life when one spouse has to bear the burden of taking care of the children as well as accomplishing all the house work. In¹⁸ found that weekend employment had nothing to do with marital instability for parents with or without children¹⁸. On the basis of the extensive literature on shift work, it is clear that nightshift had a more detrimental effect than weekend work when it comes to marital stability. The important reason for shift work or non-standard schedule is because there is a need for the organizations to work in shifts to fulfill their requirements and also it is necessary for the individuals or employees to work in shifts to fulfill their economic necessities. This temporal flexibility is viewed as one of the milestones of labour flexibility in which many organizations are currently focused²⁰.

1.6 Previous Findings

This, non-standard schedules or shift work is a tool that is used widely by organizations to work round the clock to meet the highly flexible market demands. Shift work is more prevalent in the areas of services such as hotels, hospitals, the police, transportation and electricity and also in the industries depended on technology such as Information technology, Chemical industry, steel industry, power plants, Mining etc. The most pitiable discovery of⁵ in SA is that a large group of employees work in this type of work schedule because they are unable to fetch other jobs according to their convenience, since the choices of work were very limited. European research²¹ had found similar findings in which people's ability to hold multiple jobs is one of the reason people work in non-standard schedule. In²² found that 23 percent of night shift employees and 19 percent of evening shift employees had another job when compared with 11 percent of employees with regular day work. In another positive study undertaken

on shift work by²³ found that there are also employees who appreciate shift work, since it allows them to take time off during the mid-week and enjoy leisure activities without having to deal with the big weekend crowds. Though there are advantages and disadvantages in shift work the temporal flexibility can still result in varied difficulties for individuals. These problems would often be health issues^{22,24,25}. This paper aims to study the effect of non-standard schedules on the family life of employees to explore the differences among the age group, gender, years married, Years in non-standard schedule and Hierarchy based on the following hypothesis.

1. H1 = There is a significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule with respect to age of the employees.
2. H2 = There is a significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule with respect to gender of the employees.
3. H3 = There is a significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule with respect to the years been married.
4. H4 = There is a significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule with respect to the tenure at non-standard schedules.
5. H5 = There is a significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule with respect hierarchy.

2. Materials and Methods

The data for the study was taken from the employees working in in-standard schedules at the BPO companies around Chennai. Questionnaire method was used to collect data. The questionnaires were distributed to around 240 employees out of whom 200 were found to be appropriate. The researcher uses the convenient sampling method to collect the data as all the employees were working in non-standard schedule. Data was collected from different age groups and both genders were covered. The data was collected from employees with experience and from employees who have been working in non-standard schedule for quite some time. Only married employees were targeted and there was mixture of married employees from whom data was collected.

2.1 Statistical Analysis

The one way Anova method was used to find the effect of non-standard schedule on the family life of the employees

based on the age, hierarchy, No of years married etc., as well as the difference between each group. The t-test is used to find the difference among the gender. One way anova was able to give us the direct effect on non-standard schedule on the family life which is between groups and within the groups. The researcher uses Tukeys HSD test to compare the effect of non-standard schedules comparing the age, gender, years married, years in non-standard schedule and hierarchy. The test was found to yield the desired results leading the researcher to conclude that there is a relationship between non-standard schedules and family life but the effect differs according to the age, gender, the years married, years worked in non-standard schedule and the hierarchy of the employees.

3. Results and Discussion

As per Table 1 the effect of non-standard schedule on the family life differed significantly among the four groups, $F(3, 96) = 9.10$, $P < 0.01$. Table 2 shows that the effect was more in the age groups of 46-55 years and above 55 years as the mean value is 85.4 and 76 respectively.

Table 1. Effects of non-standard schedule with respect to age

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7723.679	4	2574.560	9.103	.000
Within Groups	55430.916	196	282.811		
Total	63154.595	200			

Table 2 reveals that there was a difference in all the four age groups. The age group 46-55 years differed significantly with the age groups 25-35 years and 36-45 years as the p value is <0.01 . There was not so much of significant difference between the age groups 25-35 years and 36-45 years. The age group above 55 years was not significant with the other age groups.

Levene's test was conducted to find the difference on the effect of non standard schedule with respect to gender. As per Table 3, the test showed a significant difference between male and female as the P value is <0.05 . There was a significant difference in the mean which ensured that the effect varied between the male and female gen-

Age	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	Tukey HSD	
				95% Confidence Interval	
25-35	36-45	-1.05551	2.63446	.978	-7.8819
	46-55	-27.30551*	5.52340	.000	-41.6178
	Above 55	-17.90551	9.82329	.266	-43.3597
36-45	25-35	1.05551	2.63446	.978	-5.7709
	46-55	-26.25000*	5.74409	.000	-41.1341
	Above 55	-16.85000	9.94906	.330	-42.6301
46-55	25-35	27.30551*	5.52340	.000	12.9932
	36-45	26.25000*	5.74409	.000	11.3659
	Above 55	9.40000	11.07029	.831	-19.2854
Above 55	25-35	17.90551	9.82329	.266	-7.5487
	36-45	16.85000	9.94906	.330	-8.9301
	46-55	-9.40000	11.07029	.831	-38.0854

Table 2. Multiple comparisons

Table 3. Effects of Non-Standard Schedule with respect to Gender

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Effects on Family Life	Male	142	62.1056	17.55385	1.47309
	Female	58	55.0000	17.58588	2.30914

ders. The mean for male is 62.1 and female is 55 ensuring a mean difference of 7.1. as per Table 4.

According to Table 5 the effect of non-standard schedule on the family life differed significantly among the four groups, $F(3, 96) = 11.6$, $P < 0.05$. As seen in Table 6,

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4. Leven's test

F		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	
Effects on Family Life	Equal variances assumed	.122	.727	2.596	198	.010	7.10563
	Equal variances not assumed			2.594	105.754	.011	7.10563

Table 5. Effects of non-standard schedule with respect to years been married

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9545.684	4	3181.895	11.633	.000
Within Groups	53608.911	196	273.515		
Total	63154.595	200			

Table 6. Multiple comparisons

Tukey HSD						
Years been Married		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Less than 1	1-3	14.33031*	3.77227	.001	4.5556	24.1051
	4-7	4.87973	3.57311	.522	-4.3789	14.1384
	Above 7	-5.98384	4.24015	.494	-16.9709	5.0033
1-3	Less than 1	-14.33031*	3.77227	.001	-24.1051	-4.5556
	4-7	-9.45058*	2.85203	.006	-16.8408	-2.0604
	Above 7	-20.31414*	3.65320	.000	-29.7803	-10.8480
4-7	Less than 1	-4.87973	3.57311	.522	-14.1384	4.3789
	1-3	9.45058*	2.85203	.006	2.0604	16.8408
	Above 7	-10.86357*	3.44716	.010	-19.7959	-1.9313
Above 7	Less than 1	5.98384	4.24015	.494	-5.0033	16.9709
	1-3	20.31414*	3.65320	.000	10.8480	29.7803
	4-7	10.86357*	3.44716	.010	1.9313	19.7959

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

the effect was more in the group where in the individuals were married for more than 7 Years and married for less than 1 year showing a mean value of 71.1 and 65.1 respectively. The least effected were the groups in which the individuals were married for 1-3 years as the mean value is 50.8. The group that was married for 1-3 years differed significantly with the groups that was married for less than 1 year and above 7 years as the p value is <0.05 and differed marginally with the 4-7 years as the p value is 0.06. There was also a significant difference between the group that was married for 4-7 years and the group that was married above 7 years as the p value is <0.05 .

Table 7. Effects of non-standard schedule with respect to years worked in night shift

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1269.820	4	423.273	1.341	.262
Within Groups	61884.775	196	315.739		
Total	63154.595	200			

Table 7 shows that there was no significant difference between the mentioned groups with regards to the effect of non-standard schedule on the years worked in non-standard schedule. However, there was marginal difference between the group that worked for less than 1 year in non-standard schedule and the other groups as the mean value differed marginally by 7.5 approximately.

Table 8. Effects of non-standard schedule with respect to hierarchy

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1417.136	3	708.568	2.261	.107
Within Groups	61737.459	197	313.388		
Total	63154.595	200			

According to Table 8, there was no significant difference on the effect of non-standard schedule among the

different hierarchy mentioned above as the p value is >0.05 . However, there is a marginal difference that exists among all the three groups.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

The article was useful in highlighting the problems faced by the employees who worked in non-standard schedules as there are quite a lot of Indians who have started working in shift work or night shift or on rotational shifts. The article focused on the family life of the married employees and arrived at a conclusion that there is definitely an effect of non-standard schedule on the life of married employees. The organizations from this study can emphasize on time management skills to motivate and encourage the employees to be able to balance their work and life as well as perform well in their job²⁶. Since the data's were collected from a number of individuals categorized into different segments we were able to get their views age wise, gender wise as well as according to their experience. Age wise there was significant difference and this research was able to bring about a clear explanation on what is the problem faced by the individuals. Many of the employees faced problems with their spouses. They were unable to spend quality time with their spouses and children. The employees were not able to take care of their family responsibilities and couldn't monitor the children's performance, there was utmost chaos in the family and conflicts erupted due to this non-standard work schedule. More detailed study can be done on the effect of non-standard schedule on divorce rate.

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