**Factors Shaping Work Engagement of Business Process Outsourcing Employees: A Systematic Literature Review**

abstract

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| **Aims:** This study explores the primary factors that shape work engagement among employees in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies. Acknowledging the fast-paced and demanding nature of the BPO industry including the combination of irregular hours and high-stress conditions. This study ultimately seeks to contribute to improving employee experience and organizational success in the dynamic and challenging BPO industry context.**Study design:** This qualitative study employs a literature review approach to examine the topic.**Place and Duration of Study:** The study was conducted in Bacolod City over a two-month period, from March to April 2025.**Methodology:**  **This study employed a qualitative approach through a structured literature review approach to examine the primary factors influencing work engagement among Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) employees. The review process began by defining specific research questions and establishing clear scope parameters, focusing on studies published from 2014 onward. Key elements included the use of relevant keywords, selected academic databases, and inclusion criteria limited to English-language articles. A systematic search was conducted using targeted keyword combinations, with search results organized and managed via Google Drive to facilitate efficient reference tracking and citation management. A rigorous quality assessment followed, involving title and abstract screening, full-text reviews, and the application of predefined inclusion criteria to ensure relevance and quality.The data from the selected studies were then extracted and synthesized, capturing key details such as authorship, research objectives, methodologies, and findings. Emerging themes and patterns were identified to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The final review was organized logically, covering background, research questions, thematic analysis, key findings, implications, and a complete list of references.****Results:** Two major themes emerged from the analysis: influential factors shaping work engagement of (BPO) employees, and the significance of work engagement among BPO employees. Under influential factors shaping work engagement of (BPO) employee, the following sub-theme emerged: career development, work-life balance,and work environment. A sub-theme that emerged from the significance of work engagement among BPO employees are the following: continuous training and skill enhancement initiatives of the employees training and development, strategically implemented performance management system and future directions for research. **Conclusion:**This study concludes that career development, work-life balance, and the work environment are fundamental drivers of work engagement among BPO employees. When supported by effective human resource management practices, continuous training, and strategic performance management, these factors enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and retention. Emphasizing a holistic approach that addresses the emotional, cognitive, and physical dimensions of engagement is crucial. To sustain engagement and ensure organizational success, BPO firms must provide personalized career paths, promote flexible work-life balance initiatives, improve workplace conditions, leverage technology-enabled performance management, and cultivate empathetic, emotionally intelligent leadership. This integrated strategy positions employee engagement as a strategic priority essential for long-term competitiveness in the BPO sector.Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of a holistic, multidimensional approach to understand work engagement in BPO companies. Future studies should investigate how career development, work-life balance, and work environment collectively impact retention and productivity over time. Using comprehensive tools to measure emotional, cognitive, and physical engagement will enhance insights into employee performance and well-being. Additionally, exploring effective training, continuous learning, technology-driven performance management, and empathetic leadership will support strategies that foster motivation, trust, and sustained engagement in BPO organizations. |

*Keywords: Career Development, Work-Life Balance, Work Environment, Employee Engagement, Job Performance, Performance Management System*

1. INTRODUCTION

Business process outsourcing (BPO) is hugely popular in today’s businesses that have centralized customer service and support services. The BPO industry typically has huge offices with a number of employees who handle transactions with different clients globally (Malicay & Gano-an, 2023). Moreover, employees in the BPO sector must possess strong skills in delivering exceptional customer service, confidently resolving complex issues and addressing client inquiries. As a result, a key challenge for BPO firms is to effectively manage their workforce making work enjoyable, aligning employees with organizational goals, enhancing job satisfaction and performance, and ultimately retaining talent to remain competitive in the market (Kotteeswari, 2014). However, according to (Arora et al., 2021) attrition is a major problem that every organization tries to solve. Today, companies are making strong efforts to keep their employees. In the BPO industry, the challenge is even greater. Even with good salaries, attractive benefits, and better transport facilities, high employee turnover remains a serious issue. Furthermore, all employees face the challenge of finding the proper work–life balance. The ability of employees to deal with a successful combination of work, family responsibilities, and personal life is crucial for both employers and family members of employees (Chen et al., 2024).

Employee productivity is influenced by various factors and is essential for enhancing performance, which in turn contributes to an organization's overall success (Malicay & Gano-an, 2023). Increasing employee productivity is a key priority for organizations, as highly productive employees play a significant role in driving overall performance (Jalal Hanaysha, 2016). In addition, work engagement theory of Khans denotes the degree to which a person shows self-preference in job tasks to promote connections between self and job, which can increase role performance through cognitive, emotional, and physical self-investment ([Kahn, 1990](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8886307/#B8)). Kahn’s theory suggests that when these conditions are met, employees are more likely to be engaged, leading to higher productivity and job satisfaction.

The aim of this study is to comprehensively examine and synthesize existing research on the key factors shaping work engagement among BPO employees. The BPO industry faces unique challenges due to high workloads, constant changes, and high employee turnover, making employee engagement especially important.Furthermore,This study aims to Identify and assess the primary predictors of work engagement, focusing on factors such as career development, work-life balance, and work environment. Moreover, To identify gaps in the existing literature and propose directions for future research aimed at improving the understanding and enhancement of work engagement in the BPO industry.In addition, through a systematic review of the literature, this study aims to provide a clear understanding of the factors that drive work engagement, ultimately informing more effective management and HR practices within BPO Company.

1. Methods

This study applied a qualitative method using a literature review approach, which offered a structured framework for researching, analyzing, and synthesizing existing scholarly work on the topic, in this case the factors shaping work engagement of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) employees.

In the first stage involved defining the research question and establishing the scope of the study. The research questions were specifically formulated to guide the literature review and identify what the study aims to address. These questions directed the search and analysis process. The scope of the review was determined by setting clear boundaries, including the time-frame (only studies published from 2014 onward were considered), keywords and search terms (work engagement, career development, work-life balance “WLB”, work environment, employee engagement, job performance, and performance management system), databases and sources (such as Google Scholar and business management journals), and inclusion/exclusion criteria (only articles written in English were included, with non-English publications excluded)."

In the second stage, relevant data related to the BPO and other outsourcing sectors were extracted. Keywords and their combinations were used to facilitate a comprehensive search.The Search results were organized and stored in Google Drive for easy access and tracking of collected references. Citations were systematically managed to streamline organization and facilitate accurate bibliography generation.

Quality Review of studies came next. This process included screening steps such as reviewing titles and abstracts to identify potentially relevant studies, followed by a full-text review to assess and read the selected studies. Each study was evaluated for quality and relevance based on established criteria, including study design and methodology, data analysis and results, and potential biases and limitations. Pre-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to finalize the studies included in the review.

The next stage is for analyzing and synthesizing the literature. It involved analyzing and combining the information from the selected studies. Important details were taken from each study, such as the author(s) and year of publication, research questions and goals, study design and methods, and main findings. Common themes, patterns, and connections between the studies were then identified. In addition, the findings were summarized and brought together to form a clear picture of the overall results.

Finally, the actual writing of the literature review. The review was organized in a logical structure, employing either a thematic or chronological approach. It began with background information, followed by the research question and an outline of the review's scope. The literature was analyzed and synthesized, emphasizing key themes and findings. The main findings were summarized, and their implications were discussed. Finally, a comprehensive list of all cited sources was included.

3. results and discussion

**3.1 Influential Factors Shaping Work Engagement of (BPO) Employees**

Work engagement among BPO employees is influenced by a combination of career development plan, work-life balance and work environment. Addressing these factors holistically fosters sustained engagement, reduces attrition, and enhances organizational performance in the competitive BPO industry.

In BPO’s, employee engagement programs are essential as they help align employee efforts with the company’s goals. Engagement goes beyond simply keeping employees busy it involves creating an environment that motivates them to give their best, ultimately contributing to the organization’s growth and success (Saloni, 2015). In addition, Caring human resource management (HRM) practices are positively associated with fostering an organizational climate characterized by care, empathy, and concern for employees (Saks, 2021).

Employees in the BPO company demonstrate adherence to organizational practices and policies that support the company's sustainability. These positive work attitudes serve as key drivers of employee engagement. It is also recommended to develop a comprehensive employee development plan to foster a better work environment and support the achievement of organizational success (Negros, 2022). In addition work engagement encompasses not only a physical component but also intellectual and emotional dimensions (Tarnowska et al., 2024).

**3.1.1 Career Development**

Career development, motivation, and promotion all have a significant impact on employee performance (Setyawati et al., 2022). For instance Chamdan Purnama, (2024) notes that career development has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. As career development improves, employee performance tends to increase as well. Employees who possess strong skills and the ability to handle challenges effectively contribute not only to their own growth but also to the organization’s success. Their capability and continuous development lead to enhanced performance and productivity.

Moreover, Chaturvedi & Sangwan (2016) states that in the BPO industry, the nature of the work is often repetitive and monotonous, with limited opportunities for interaction with colleagues and peers. Career growth prospects are also minimal, leading many employees to leave the organization in search of better opportunities.Furthermore, another way of motivating the employees to excel in their job is the provision of better career opportunities within the organization (Negros, 2022). In addition, Work engagement is strongly connected to employees' career growth and development (Lee et al., 2016).

**3.1.2 Work-Life Balance**

BPO employees often work irregular or non-standard shifts, making work-life balance challenging. According to Rabee (2023), an increasing workload exposes BPO employees to both physical and mental stress, making it difficult for them to fulfill personal responsibilities. Their limited engagement in non-work activities indicates that their personal lives have minimal impact on their work-life. However, the conflict often flows from work into their personal lives, leading many BPO employees to consider resigning in order to escape this ongoing strain. Furthermore, according to (Cabello, (2022), it is recommended that a management plan be developed to strengthen work-life balance policies and programs, particularly in ensuring the fair distribution of overtime hours.Moreover, BPO’s should ensure that employees maintain a healthy work-life balance to help reduce stress and prevent physical and emotional exhaustion (Saloni 2015).

Meanwhile, Ragothaman & Chitra, n.d., (2021) states that when an organization designs its policies to align with both its goals and the needs and expectations of employees, it helps maintain a healthy work-life balance for all staff members. Additionally, PAMAN et al., (2025) found that stressors negatively affect productivity, while stress-reducing factors help enhance performance and support a healthy work-life balance.

**3.1.3 Work Environment**

The level of employee motivation, performance, and productivity could be entirely influenced by the office environment (Malicay & Gano-an, 2023). However, BPO employees often spend long hours sitting at their desks and working on computers, poor workstation design can cause physical discomfort. When employees are in pain, they become distracted, which reduces their focus and productivity. Using ergonomic chairs, adjustable desks, and properly positioned monitors can help reduce discomfort and allow employees to work more comfortably and efficiently (Gumasing et al., 2023).

On the other hand, Mohammad Anisur Rahman & Islam, (2023) states that attrition in BPO companies is driven by sector-specific challenges, including intense competition for talent and rapidly evolving technologies. To address this, organizations must adopt proactive and adaptable strategies that reduce turnover while fostering a work environment that promotes continuous employee engagement, satisfaction, and growth. Furthermore, according to Gochangco & Ocenar, (2024), for Generation Z employees, key motivating factors include a supportive and engaging work environment. Moreover, Regoso et al., (2023) highly recommend that general employees engage in meaningful and positive communication with their co-workers to foster better relationships and contribute to a more pleasant workplace environment. In addition,

**3.2 The Significance of Work Engagement and Job Performance among BPO Employees**

Work engagement is a key factor in job performance in the BPO industry. It boosts both individual and company results while helping build a positive, resilient, and innovative workforce that's vital for long-term success. Besides, Kahn’s theory, the new concept of Work Engagement (WE) Theory categorizes engagement into cognitive, emotional, and physical dimensions, providing a more comprehensive understanding of employee involvement (Stanley et al., 2022). Furthermore, Gumasing et al., (2023) note that highly engaged employees often develop a strong sense of identification with their work, which can lead to greater job satisfaction. They tend to find purpose and personal fulfillment in their role.

Moreover, Katkar et al., (2024) study revealed that when organizations support employees' physical, psychological, and emotional well-being and help build their resilience, employees become more engaged and connected to their work and the company. This, in turn, enhances performance, boosts productivity, and supports long-term competitive advantage. In addition, management should ensure that sufficient support is provided to engaged employees to enhance their service recovery performance (Oentoro, 2018).

**3.2.1 Continuous Training and Skill Enhancement Initiatives of the Employees**

 **Training and Development**

One of the biggest challenges for BPO companies is finding and developing knowledgeable resources. Effective training requires careful planning, selecting the right timing, domain, and process trainers is essential. Strong knowledge management provides a competitive edge for outsourcing firms. Well-planned training ensures better results in a shorter timeframe (Krysińska et al., 2018). In addition, training the BPO employees should be approached with the utmost care, especially since they come from diverse academic and professional backgrounds. Each employee must be regarded as a vital asset to the organization. At the same time, the organization should proactively offer regular training programs tailored to the individual specializations and skill sets of employees. Training is essential for enhancing both the capabilities and stability of BPO employees, enabling them to perform effectively and adapt to evolving industry demands (Farzana & Bari, 2024). Also, Sellar, (2022) states that training and development significantly influence employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a moderating factor.

In contrast, George & Priya, (2018) study revealed that personal and job profiles have no impact on the overall effectiveness of training in BPO organizations. Instead, firms should focus on delivering high-quality training inputs, particularly through regular refresher programs. Such ongoing training ensures that employees continuously update their skills and knowledge, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of the training and enables employees to consistently meet or exceed their performance targets.

**3.2.2 Strategically Implemented Performance Management System**

In the fast-paced, target-driven BPO sector, timely and accurate performance evaluations are essential for maintaining both service quality and employee satisfaction. Implementing a system that automates the appraisal process through key performance indicators (KPIs) enhances efficiency and consistency (Sumathi & Com, 2025). In addition, the performance management system is a vital tool for measuring, motivating, and enhancing performance across the organization. It aligns individual efforts with the organization’s goals and supports the development of a results-driven culture focused on achieving specific, predetermined objective (Kumari, n.d., 2017). Furthermore, A strong performance management system has a positive impact on organizational success and must be continuously strengthened. Its key components are now closely linked to high performance factors, enabling practitioners to take a more systematic and focused approach to improving the system ultimately enhancing overall organizational effectiveness (De Waal & Van der Heijden, 2015).

Pandey (2024) articulate that it is essential for a company to effectively plan, manage, and reward employee performance. By doing so, overall productivity can improve, ultimately leading to increased profitability. This involves overseeing the entire performance management process, setting clear objectives, providing regular feedback, and evaluating outcomes. Employees are valuable resources and key assets to any organization. Therefore, organizations must develop strategies to identify, encourage, measure, evaluate, enhance, and reward employee performance. As a result, improved individual performance can significantly contribute to better organizational outcomes.

**3.2.3 Future Directions for Research**

Future research is recommended to adopt a multidimensional and dynamic perspective on work engagement in the BPO sector. Innovating career development opportunities to Foster engaging work experiences to reduce attrition. Designing flexible policies to support employee well-being. Enhancing ergonomic and social workplace conditions. **Additionally,**

**with the rapid adoption of AI, future research should explore how continuous training and development impact work engagement. These areas highlight emerging trends in well-being, individual learning path, flexibility, and ongoing development within the BPO industry. Furthermore, t**o enhance accuracy, transparency, and efficiency in BPO organizations they should Integrate digital tools and platforms into performance management system.However,significant gaps remain future research should consider like individual differences, incorporate employee insights and

thoroughly assess new technologies and management practices.

1. Conclusion

This study reveals that career development, work-life balance, and the work environment are pivotal factors influencing work engagement among BPO employees. These interconnected elements not only enhance individual job satisfaction but also drive key organizational outcomes, including productivity, employee retention, and service quality. The study confirms that supportive Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, ongoing training and development, and a strategic performance management system are essential enablers of sustained employee engagement.

Moreover, the emotional, cognitive, and physical dimensions of engagement, as emphasized by Work Engagement Theory, highlight the necessity of a holistic approach to managing and nurturing BPO talent. Engaged employees exhibit stronger commitment, reduced absenteeism, and superior performance levels. Consequently, fostering an engaging work environment transcends traditional human resource initiatives and emerges as a strategic imperative for achieving long-term success in the BPO industry.

In conclusion, to foster sustained work engagement and organizational success, it is essential to develop individualized career paths with clear promotion tracks and opportunities for lateral growth. Instituting work-life balance programs through flexible scheduling and equitable workload distribution enhances employee well-being. Improving workplace ergonomics and cultivating a supportive, inclusive culture further promote psychological health. In addition, continuous training and development aligned with industry trends to ensure workforce adaptability. Furthermore, Implementing smart performance management systems that provide real-time feedback and align individual goals with company objectives drives motivation and accountability. Finally, cultivating empathetic leadership through emotional intelligence training and responsive feedback mechanisms builds trust and psychological safety, creating a thriving work environment.

Disclaimer (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

The author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies, including ChatGPT and Perplexity, were utilized solely for the purposes of editing, rephrasing, and revising portions of this manuscript. This disclosure includes the name, version, model, and source of the AI tools utilized, as well as all input prompts provided to them.

Details of the AI usage are given below:

1. **AI Tool Used:** ChatGPT
 **Version/Model:** GPT-4o (as of June 2025)
 **Source:** OpenAI (<https://openai.com/chatgpt>)
2. **AI Tool Used:**Perplexity

**Version/Model:GPT-4.1 Omni**

**Source:** [https://www.perplexity.ai](https://www.perplexity.ai/)

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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