

Predictors of Psychological Well-Being among Call Center Agents

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Abstract The emergence of the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry introduced such drastic changes. Its demands have brought significant changes to the Philippines' work scene. Despite the good impact of the BPO industry in The Philippines, there are certain problems in the industry such as high attrition rate, work-life balance conflicts, lifestyle diseases, and others that need to be dealt with. As such, the study attempted to investigate the impact of the different sources of motivation and the phases of burnout on the psychological well-being of Filipino call center agents. Data were gathered from 300 call center agents from four call center companies in Baguio City using cross-sectional prediction. It was found that call center agents have a moderate level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In terms of the level of burnout, the participants have a high level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization which resulted in low personal accomplishment. Further analysis revealed that intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .38$, $p = .001$) and the three different phases of burnout such as emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -.039$, $p = .001$), depersonalization ($\beta = -.025$, $p = .001$) and reduced personal accomplishment ($\beta = -.023$, $p = .001$) are significant predictors of psychological well-being of call center agents. Multiple Regression analyses revealed that 41.8% [$F(5,294) = 44.004$, $\Delta R^2 = .418$, $p < .001$] of the variance in the psychological well-being of the respondents is accounted for by the combined effects of both burnout and motivation.

Keywords Psychological Well-being, Motivation, Burnout, Call Center, Business Process Outsourcing

1. Introduction

In the dynamic world of work, changes are brought about in the organization that needs to be dealt with. Human resources are currently facing many challenges in the organization like technological advancement, changes in the political and legal environment, challenges in the economic environment, mobility of professional personnel (Kamal & Kumar, 2013), globalization, and workforce diversity (Green, Wysocki, Kepner, Fransworth & Clark, 2015). These are the challenges that increase the pressure in every Human Resource Department to attract, retain, and nurture talented employees.

Nowadays, a new form of a service company, particularly in communication and information technology (IT), brought about the establishment of call center firms or known as the business process outsourcing (Benninghoven, 2005). The emergence BPO industry has also introduced such drastic changes. Its demands have literally brought significant changes to the Philippines' work scene. In an article published by CNN Philippines, it was reported by Lee (2015) that the BPO industry has been dominated by call center

employees. Hundreds of foreign companies are outsourcing employees to provide services in the field of telecommunications, financial services, hospitality, and manufacturing at a low cost (Jiao, 2016). The fact that the Philippines is an English-speaking country is one of the reasons that attracted western companies to offshore their call center services (Torres, 2014). As a result, the Philippines is now considered the call center capital of the world. Moreover, ASEAN Briefing (2017) projected that the BPO industry in the Philippines is expected to generate a revenue from 40 to 55 billion US dollars by 2020. With the increasing revenues from the BPO industry, Magkilat (2020) cited the prediction of the founder of Outsource Accelerator in which there will be 30 million jobs to be created in the Philippines in line with the BPO industry.

Currently, the BPO industry in the Philippines, are facing problems that need immediate action. The Call Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP) revealed that the attrition rate for BPOs or call center companies in the Philippines reached as high as 80%. Concerning that, it has been observed that call center agents are transferring from one company to another company, chasing the latest best offer (Pena, 2008). In addition, Amojelar (2012) mentioned that the high turnover rate in call center companies has something to do with the exposure of call center agents to work-related stress and lifestyle diseases. A local study conducted by Hechanova (2013) found that conflicts towards

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work-life balance and job satisfaction are among the reasons for the high turnover. The increase of employee absenteeism and turnover rate in the Philippines particularly the call center industry drills down to the physical and psychological impact of conflicting work schedules (Hechanova, 2013 & Amojelar 2012), social isolation, and lack of social support (Hechanova, 2013). These are real problems that are worth investigating.

The increasing number of turnover and other problems in an organization ignited the interest of researchers to investigate its relationship to the employee's level of burnout (Montalbo, 2016). It was pointed out by Aamodt (2013), Furnham (2005), and Riggio (2008), that turnover and absenteeism in an organization or a company is associated with burnout. People who are experiencing burnout are in an extreme emotional state involving the presence of the three factors which are professional efficacy, cynicism, and emotional exhaustion (Finchman & Rhodes, 2005; Furnham, 2005).

With the alarming effects of burnout among call center agents, it became an eye-opener for researchers to investigate. It has been found by Montalbo (2016) that the majority of Filipino call center agents scored high in the three dimensions of burnout. Studies revealed that the common reasons for a high level of burnout among call center agents in the Philippines are physical and psychological impacts of conflicting work schedule (Hechanova, 2013, Amojelar, 2012 & Montecillo, 2012), social isolation and lack of social support (Hechanova, 2013) and which eventually lead to an increase of employees' turnover and absenteeism.

Interestingly, the group of young call center agents tends to be emotionally exhausted compared to the older group. The possible explanation is the fact that older people have had developed already the immunity to burnout while younger employees are still in the process of adapting and learning certain coping mechanisms to avoid the effect of burnout (Serin & Balkan, 2014; Montalbo, 2016).

Factoring sex in understanding employee's level of burnout is significant. It has been said by Norlund, Reuterwall, Hoog, Lindahl, Janlert, and Birgander (2010), that burnout significantly affects professional women compared to men. However, when other factors were taken into consideration, gender became non-significant in terms of the level of burnout. Despite the fact, an interesting result was found that women showed significant associations to burnout at the same time related to the socio-economic situation. Maurya and Agarwal (2015), noted that professional women are at risk of severe stress because they have more responsibilities to do than professional men.

In a different point of view, a study conducted by Keser (2006) found that both male and female call center agents have equally high levels of burnout. This finding has been supported by the research of Serin and Balkan (2014). A similar local study was conducted and it has been found that both male and female call center agents scored equally in the three dimensions of burnout (Montalbo, 2016). It was further explained by Suri and Rizvi (2008) that the nature of work,

deadline, and working conditions are both similar for males and females.

Exploratory studies that were previously conducted among call center agents focused more on the understanding of burnout as a predictor of attrition and low performance. However, psychological well-being is another variable that should be taken into consideration along with burnout and other significant variables. The level of burnout among employees has a great impact on psychological well-being and will eventually affect work productivity. According to Harter, Schmidt & Keyes (2003), well-being is the result of employee engagement that generates positive affect such as job satisfaction, commitment, joy, fulfillment, caring, and interest. Having stable psychological well-being will encourage creativity, ultimate business outcomes, retention, employee retention (Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2003), organizational functioning, and work quality (Riggio, 2008). On the other hand, Korat and Pandya (2015) highlighted that in the mental health perspective, an individual with low psychological well-being can experience anxiety, depression, low morale, lack of self-confidence, low sense of personal autonomy, inability to cope with the problems of living and dissatisfaction with one's self and the physical environment.

Researchers attempted to investigate the direct relationship between burnout and psychological well-being among employees. Burke, Koyunco, and Fiksenbaum (2010) found that working nurses who have a higher level of burnout decrease their level of psychological well-being. In a separate study conducted by Harry and Coetzee (2011), there is a negative correlation between burnout and psychological well-being among call center agents. This is an indication that the higher the level of burnout, the lower the level of psychological well-being among call center agents. More so, Finchman and Rhodes (2005) expounded that employees who are experiencing burnout due to workplace stressors will result in low physical and mental well-being.

In the assessment of one's psychological well-being, it is very important to look into account some possible factors that would differentiate every group of individuals. One possible predictor of psychological well-being is sex. In a study conducted by Roothman, Kirsten, and Wissing (2003), it has been found that among the different dimensions of psychological well-being, men scored higher on physical self-concept, automatic thoughts, constructive thinking, cognitive flexibility, total self-concept, and fortitude. On the other hand, women scored higher with the remaining dimensions of well-being which are the expression of affect, somatic symptoms, and religious well-being. Contrary to the previous findings, it has been found by Ibrahim and Ohtsuka (2005) that there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of psychological well-being. The result was supported by the fact that nowadays, both males and females are equally enjoying the benefits of employment (Creed & Watson, 2003).

Another possible factor that can predict an employee's psychological well-being would be age. Chanfreau et al., (2008) found that there is a curvilinear trend of well-being

when grouped according to age. It was further explained that psychological well-being starts to decrease during middle adulthood and it starts to increase during late adulthood up to old age. In addition to the first finding, it was mentioned by Korat and Pandya (2015) that psychological well-being and age were positively correlated among call center agents.

In support of the above-mentioned study, the possible explanation of why middle adults experiences a decrease in psychological well-being is due to the midlife crisis phenomenon. It has been said that the midlife crisis is caused by significant events such as aging and death of parents, maturation, and separation of children, work or career concerns, and spousal relationship problems. This certain phenomenon that happens to their life can cause tremendous effects such as stress and depression (Doheny, 2008).

In a workplace that requires a lot of demands, it is highly recommended for an organization to make sure that their employees are highly motivated. It has been found by Kaur (2012) that the psychological well-being of employees is determined by motivation and performance. The common sources of motivation among employees are better to work relationships, job security, salary, work-life balance, and other benefits. Not all human beings have the same source of motivation. Aamodt (2013) discussed four individual differences related to work motivation, such as personality, self-esteem, intrinsic motivation, and need for achievement. According to Riggio (2008) intrinsic motivation of employees are from their accomplishments, competence, and mastering a work task, and sense of autonomy in their respective work. Aamodt (2013) explains that intrinsic motivation is present when an individual is motivated in the absence of external factors such as money, promotion, and co-workers. Moreover, Cerasoli, Nicklin, and Ford (2014) found that employees in the workplace are primarily motivated by external factors than internal motivators. This further supports the proponent of needed theories that human beings are highly motivated by their basic needs.

Previous researches that were conducted either focused on one or two variables such as burnout, motivation, and psychological well-being. Considering the existing issues experienced in the business process outsourcing industry, this interest the researcher to investigate the three variables in one study including the significance of sex and age. The findings of the study are foreseen to provide a better understanding and possible solutions to address the high percentage of attrition and absenteeism in the BPO industry as a consequence of the adverse effects of burnout and low intrinsic motivation. The results of the present study can be used as a reference and guideline for call center agents to acquire best practices that they can apply in their respective careers. Moreover, this will guide the organization to calibrate a mental health program to aid concerns of employees in the BPO industry.

The human resource the department plays a vital role in the management and overseeing the well-being of their employees. They have an important role in the hiring of an employee up to the employees' possible termination or

separation from the company. The current study shall provide a reference to every HR department to identify what needs to be achieved through innovation and improvement of good plans particularly in their management (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling) and operative functions (procurement, placement, training, motivating employees, and compensation). Moreover, practitioners in work psychology will be given an idea to execute innovative mechanisms of developing skills and competencies of human resources to prepare them to accept the emerging challenges in the present time.

Based on the existing literature about these issues and the result of some researches in the field of industrial psychology, the main objective of this research is to understand the psychological well-being of call center agents with the influence of burnout and motivation. Specifically, the current findings posited the following assumptions:

- H1: Female respondents are expected to have a higher level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation than male respondents.
- H2: Female respondents tend to have a higher level of extrinsic motivation than male respondents.
- H3: Older respondents are expected to have a higher intrinsic level of motivation compared to younger respondents.
- H4: Younger respondents are expected to have a higher extrinsic level of motivation compared to older respondents.
- H5: Female respondents tend to have a lower level of burnout than male respondents.
- H6: Younger respondents tend to have a higher level of burnout than older call center agents.
- H7: Female respondents tend to have a higher level of psychological well-being than males.
- H8: Younger respondents are expected to have lower psychological well-being as compared to older respondents.
- H7: Burnout and motivation are expected to be significant predictors of the psychological well-being of call center agents across sex and age groups.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

The research study used a quantitative design specifically cross-sectional prediction. This design allowed the researcher to investigate the factors (motivation and burnout) that would affect the psychological well-being of call center agents.

2.2. Participants

The respondents of the study were 300 Filipino call center agents who were currently employed for at least six months in four center companies in Baguio City, Philippines. Most of the respondents belong to the ethnic groups of the Igorots, Ilocanos, and Pangasinense in the Northern part of Luzon

Island. Other respondents are from other ethnic groups such as Tagalog, Kapampangan, and others. The high demand in the call center industry allows even high school graduates who are at the legal age to work aside from other employees who are college undergraduate and college graduate. Using stratified random sampling there was an equal distribution of the respondents in terms of sex (150 Males and 150 Females). The distribution of respondents in terms of age is 18 years old- 25 years old (n=143) and 26 years old to 45 years old (n=157). Initially, the researcher planned to have three age groups such as generations X, Y, and Z (for those who are legally working at the age of 18). Due to the non-equal distribution of the respondents who participated in the research study, the researcher decided to regroup the population into two; in which the first age group are those in Generation Z and half are from the younger Generation Y. Meanwhile, the second are those in Generation X and half of which are from the older Generation Y. The age of the respondents has been limited to 45 years of age since most of the call center agents in the Philippines are predominantly aged between 18-34-year-old (Magellan Solutions, 2015). Moreover, the average basic salary of these call center agents ranges from 10,000-15,000 pesos (200-300 USD).

2.3. Research Instrument

The study used a paper-pencil survey method to gather data from all the respondents who answered using a scaled response. The researcher utilized three different scales to gather the needed data for the study. The first scale is the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale which measures work motivation that is theoretically grounded in the Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Respondents were asked to check their answer that best describes their agreement with each statement. The first three items measure the overall intrinsic motivation and the remaining items measure the extrinsic motivation of the respondents. Responses were rated on a seven-point Likert scale wherein responses are scored as 1 and 2 (does not correspond at all), 3, 4, and 5 (corresponds moderately), and 6 and 7 (corresponds exactly). The overall average score between 1-2 corresponds to a low level of motivation, 3-5 corresponds to a moderate level of motivation, and 6-7 corresponds to a high level of motivation. The reliability coefficients for intrinsic motivation is .89 while the extrinsic motivation is .77 (Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, Pelletier, Villeneuve, 2009).

The second scale that was used is the Maslach Burnout Inventory by Maslach and Jackson. The scale consists of 22 items where respondents were asked to put a checkmark on their answers that best describe their agreement with each statement. A seven-point Likert scale was used wherein responses are scored as 1 (never), 2 (a few times a year or less), 3 (once a month or less), 4 (a few times a month), 5 (once a week), 6 (a few times a week), 7 (every day). The three subscales enabling the measurement of three sources of burnout namely, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization,

and Reduced Personal Accomplishment. The sum of the score of the items 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 20 relate to emotional exhaustion and items 5, 10, 11, 15, and 22 relate to depersonalization subscale, and items 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, and 21 measure the reduced personal accomplishment of an individual. Reverse scoring was applied in all items that measure reduced personal accomplishment. Overall sum score between 1-18 indicates low burnout, 17-30 indicates moderate burnout and equal or greater than 31 indicates high burnout under the subscale emotional exhaustion. On the other hand, the sum score of the items under depersonalization scales between 1- 7 indicates low burnout, 8-13 indicates moderate burnout and equal to or greater than 14 indicates high burnout. The overall sum score between 1-34 indicates low burnout, 35-40 indicates moderate burnout and equal or greater than 41 indicates high burn out under the subscale reduced personal accomplishment of an individual. Moreover, the sum score under the overall level of burnout between 1-50 indicates low burnout, 51-103 indicates moderate burnout and 104-154 indicates high burnout. The internal consistency for the subscales was the following: .83 for emotional exhaustion, .87 for depersonalization, and .88 for personal accomplishment (Wickramasinghe, Dissanayake, & Abeywardena, 2018).

The third scale was the Psychological General Well-Being Index that measures the overall psychological well-being of an individual. It was developed for the evaluation of perceived well-being with 22 items. The scoring of the scale in each item was 1-6 giving a maximal score of 132. The overall sum score between 1-72 indicated severe distress while the sum scores between 73 to 86 indicated moderate distress, and 88 to 132 indicated positive well-being. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale ranged from .80-.92 (Groossi, Groth, Masconi, Cerutti, Pace, Compare & Apolone, 2006).

2.4. Research Procedure

Before the conduct of the research study, this was presented and approved by the panel of evaluators at Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines. Upon approval, the researcher gave a letter of request to conduct the study to the respective administration of the different four call center companies. However, one company disagree to have the research study to be conducted within its vicinity and prefer to have it conducted after office hours. Though other companies allowed the administration of the questionnaire within the vicinity of the company granted that it will be done during break time. Other terms and conditions were taken into consideration since some companies insisted on not to disclose their company name to protect their image. It has been added that in any case that the study will yield a negative result, it might impact their advertising strategy. Upon getting approval in the conduct of the study, the researcher checked the estimated population of the four call center agents which became the basis in identifying the number of respondents to participate in the study. The

composition of the respondents are as follows; 33% (Company-1), 26% (Company-2), 20% (Company-3) and 21% (Company-4). Through convenience stratified random sampling, 300 Filipino call center agents answered through face-to-face the compiled paper and pencil survey in 15-25 minutes. Though, the actual target of respondents is to equally survey at least 100 call center agents in each BPO company. In the actual conduct of the research study, the researcher assured the respondents that whatever result of their answer will be kept confidential and will not surely affect their work.

3. Data Analysis and Results

The study used descriptive statistics specifically the mean and the standard deviation to determine the level of psychological well-being, motivation, and the different phases of burnout. To determine differences between sex (male and female) and age group (18-25 years old and 26 years old to 45 years old) in terms of the three variables, the Independent samples t-test was utilized. Validating the main

assumption of the study which is to test if the different phases of burnout and motivation are good predictors to the psychological well-being of call center agents, Stepwise Multiple Regression was utilized using SPSS version 24.

The results revealed that call center agents have a moderate level of intrinsic ($M=5.60$; $SD=1.07$) and extrinsic motivation ($M=4.85$; $SD=1.36$). Though the computed mean score indicated that call center agents are more intrinsically motivated. Differences in extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation are not statistically significant when grouped according to sex. In terms of age group, significant differences were only found on extrinsic motivation [$t(298) = 2.232, p = 0.026$]. The result is a piece of existing evidence that younger call center agents ($M=5.04$; $SD=1.38$) have higher extrinsic motivation compared to call center agents who belong to the age bracket 26-45 years old ($M=4.69$; $SD=1.33$). Thus, the hypothesis which states that younger call center agents have higher extrinsic motivation is accepted. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation found no significant difference among call center agents when grouped according to sex and age.

Table 1. Differences of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and overall level of motivation when grouped according to gender and age

			N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Intrinsic Motivation	Gender	Male	150	5.61	0.99	0.074	0.941
		Female	150	5.60	1.15		
	Age	18-25	143	5.69	1.09	1.392	0.165
		26-45	157	5.52	1.06		
Extrinsic Motivation	Gender	Male	150	4.90	1.39	0.634	0.527
		Female	150	4.80	1.34		
	Age	18-25	143	5.04	1.38	2.232	0.026*
		26-45	157	4.69	1.33		

Note. * $p < .005$

Table 2. Differences on the phases of burnout when grouped according to gender and age

			N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Gender	Male	150	34.70	11.52	-0.61	0.540
		Female	150	35.47	10.30		
	Age	18-25	143	35.72	11.81	0.96	0.338
		26-45	157	34.51	10.03		
Depersonalization	Gender	Male	150	17.23	6.77	2.34	0.020*
		Female	150	15.45	6.47		
	Age	18-25	143	16.94	7.36	1.48	0.139
		26-45	157	15.80	5.95		
Reduced personal Accomplishment	Gender	Male	150	23.57	6.93	-0.32	0.749
		Female	150	23.84	7.50		
	Age	18-25	143	24.30	7.26	1.37	0.173
		26-45	157	23.17	7.13		

Note. * $p < .005$

Another variable that was investigated in the study was burnout and it was found that the participants have a high level of emotional exhaustion ($M=35.08$; $SD=10.91$) and

depersonalization ($M=16.34$; $SD=6.67$) which resulted in low personal accomplishment ($M=24.70$; $SD=6.84$). As indicated in the findings, this means that the effect of burnout

will decrease the performance of Filipino call center agents. Further analysis revealed that there is a significant difference in the level of depersonalization among call center agents when grouped according to sex [$t(297.4) = 2.34, p = 0.020$]. Specifically, male call center agents ($M = 17.23$; $SD = 6.77$) have a higher level of depersonalization as compared to female respondents ($M = 15.45$; $SD = 6.47$). Differences in emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment were not significant when grouped according to sex. Moreover, the current result revealed that there are no significant differences in different phases of burnout namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment among Filipino call center agents when grouped according to age.

Interestingly, it was found that call center agents have positive psychological well-being ($M = 90.58$; $SD = 13.62$) but the significant differences, when grouped according to age and sex, were not found.

To further understand why call center agents are

experiencing positive psychological well-being despite the effect of burnout, stepwise multiple regression has been utilized. Model 1 analysis used the different phases of burnout while the second model used both phases of burnout and the types of motivation. The analysis revealed that the phases of burnout play a significant influence on the psychological well-being of the participants [$F(3, 296) = 66.818, \Delta R^2 = .398, p < .001$] as it accounts for 39.8% of the variance observed in the psychological well-being. It was revealed in table 1 the significant contribution of the variables in model 1. More so, Model 2 indicated a significant result [$F(5, 294) = 44.004, \Delta R^2 = .418, p < .001$] as it shows 41.8% of the variance in the psychological well-being of the respondents is accounted for by the combined effect of burnout and motivation. Individual beta weights disclosed that extrinsic motivation is the only variable that does not have a significant contribution in increasing the psychological well-being of Filipino call center agents.

Table 3. T-test analysis of the psychological well-being when grouped according to gender and age

			N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Psychological Well-being	Gender	Male	150	90.62	13.97	0.047	0.963
		Female	150	90.55	13.31		
	Age	18-25	143	89.76	14.07	-1.001	0.316
		26-45	157	91.34	13.20		

Note. * $p < .005$

Table 4. Regression Analysis for Burnout and Motivation as Predictors of Psychological Well-being

	Psychological Well-being				
	B	SEB	Beta	T	ΔR^2
Model 1					
Emotional Exhaustion	-.444	.068	-.356	-6.565*	.398
Depersonalization	-.599	.110	-.273	-5.059*	
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	-.578	.090	-.291	-6.455*	
Model 2					
Emotional Exhaustion	-.425	.068	-.340	-6.270*	.418
Depersonalization	-.517	.111	-.253	-4.641*	
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	-.454	.100	-.228	-4.551*	
Intrinsic Motivation	2.443	.710	.192	3.443*	
Extrinsic Motivation	-.481	.553	-.048	-.870	

Note. * $p < .005$

4. Discussion

Understanding the current situation of call center agents in the Philippines interest the researcher to assess the predictability of burnout and motivation to their psychological well-being. It was revealed in the study that burnout and motivation are significantly accounted for the psychological wellbeing of the respondents. The result indicated that the decrease of burnout tends to promote positive psychological wellbeing compared to motivation. When types of motivation were included, it was only

intrinsic motivation along with the phases of burnout that has a significant impact on the psychological well-being of the respondents which were evident in the second model.

Comparison of sex and psychological well-being found no significant difference which was supported by previous findings (Creed & Watson, 2003; Chanfreau et al., 2008; and Ibrahim & Ohtsuka, 2005). Such a result was expounded by Creed and Watson (2003) that most organizations are making sure that both males and females are equally enjoying the benefits of employment. The Philippine government made an effort in protecting the rights of women

which became the sole purpose in the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710). It was highlighted in this regulation that women are not just a passive recipient of development but they are an active agent of development.

In contrast to the result of the current study and other previous findings, men scored higher on physical self-concept, automatic thoughts, constructive thinking, cognitive flexibility, total self-concept, and fortitude in the different dimensions of psychological well-being. On the other hand, women scored higher with the remaining dimensions of well-being such as expression of affect, somatic symptoms, and religious well-being (Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003). Furthermore, female employees are expected in society to prioritize their responsibility in their family at the same time they need to be on equal footing with men in the workplace. As a result, with this high demand and pressure of society, women tend to have lower psychological well-being due to work overload and responsibilities (Maurya & Agarwal, 2015).

Looking into the difference of age group in terms of psychological well-being, the hypothesis which states that younger call center agents have lower psychological well-being compared to older call center agents is rejected. In the study conducted by Wright and Cropanzano (2000), the interaction of age and gender to the psychological well-being of employees was found to be non-significant. It was further discussed by other researchers that the psychological well-being of employees is associated with other factors such as job performance (Bright & Bonnet, 2007) and job satisfaction (Wright & Cropanzo, 2000). Though, it has been proven by previous results that age is a significant predictor of an employee's psychological well-being (Chanfreau et al., 2008 and Korat & Pandya, 2015).

Analysis of the different phases of burnout accounted for 39.8% variance on the psychological well-being. The result on burnout shows that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are high among call center agents across sex and age groups which results in low personal accomplishment. This explains the fact that working in the BPO industry particularly as a call center requires a lot of high demands. It was reported that call center companies to have already reached the pick of attrition rate because of work-related stress (Amojelar, 2012 & Kawi, 2013) and a need for work-life balance (Hechanova, 2013). According to Salipsip, King, Llaraena, and Lucero (2019) call center agents have high exposure to work stressors as they handle irate customers, pressure from the management to be at goal in their matrix, and their working environment can result in emotional exhaustion. A local study found that call center agents are experiencing burnout which eventually leads to poor performance (Montalbo, 2016). Meanwhile, Norlund, Reuterwall, Hoog, Lindahl, Janlert and Birgander, (2010) and Maurya and Agarwal (2015) described that professional women are at risk of severe stress because they help in providing financial needs of the family but they are also

expected to take care of the family and raising their children. Yet according to Suri and Rizvi (2008) and Montalbo (2016), the nature of work, deadline, and working conditions are both similar for males and females across.

The result of the study contradicts the initial hypothesis wherein younger respondents tend to have a higher level of burnout because they are less experienced compared to older respondents. This finding is in contrast to the findings of previous studies. In a study conducted by Montalbo (2016), younger Filipino call center agents tend to be emotionally exhausted compared to the older group. It was further explained that younger call center agents do not have enough experience in handling excessive job demands and irate customers. Lack of exposure in the real world of work has a significant impact in which they feel incompetent which in turn leads to lower productivity and eventually results in low professional efficacy. International findings likewise revealed that age is negatively correlated to employee's level of burnout. This denotes that older people have had developed already the immunity to burnout while younger employees are still in the process of adapting and learning certain coping mechanisms to avoid the effect of burnout (Serin & Balkan, 2014).

Beta weight result in Model 1, disclosed that an increase of depersonalization decreases psychological wellbeing. In the stage of depersonalization, respondents have a negative perception of how they deal with their customers and co-workers. Call center agents to become callous towards other people and their customers. According to, Huang et al. (2012) as cited by Serin and Balkan (2014), in this stage, workers with high depersonalization may display unemotional insensitivity and they may have bad beliefs and attitudes towards, co-workers, clients, and the organization. It is expected that people with high emotional exhaustion and depersonalization will have low accomplishment which is not a surprise in the current study. People at this stage lose interest in their work, less efficient, and have little initiative (Champoux, 2006). This may also contribute to the fact in which Kawi (2013) found that most local call center companies lack access to counseling or psychological services. Though call centers are providing technical training, it has been mentioned by Montalbo (2016) that there is a lack of training on how to handle emotional stress brought about by the nature of their job. It was further explained that younger call center agents do not have enough experience in handling excessive job demands and irate customers. Thus, their lack of exposure in the real world of work has a significant impact in which they feel incompetent which in turn leads to lower productivity and eventually results in low professional efficacy.

On the other hand, variability increased to 41.8% on the psychological wellbeing of the participants in Model 2 when the types of motivation were included in the analysis. The result failed to yield a significance in terms of the predictability of extrinsic motivation as reflected in the beta weights. Though generally, people are extrinsically motivated most especially younger employees. Cerasoli,

Nicklin, and Ford (2014) found that the primary source of motivation among employees is money and other material things. Therefore, this is also an indication that human beings are highly motivated by their basic needs as mentioned by the proponent of need theories. In the Philippine setting, workers in the BPO industry is dominated by younger workers on the average age of 24 (Castro & Deluna, 2013) who are extrinsically motivated with money and other materials (Cerasoli, Nicklin & Ford (2014). The drive of extrinsic motivation among younger employees is the fact that they have an increasing financial burden that encouraged them to find a job that helps in reaching their financial goals rather than one which is intrinsically interested (Catania & Randal, 2013).

Another possible explanation is the fact that even if call center agents are extrinsically motivated, they often divert their stress into unhealthy habits. The financial benefits of their work allow them to indulge in tobacco dependence, (Mishra, Majmudar, Gupta, Rane Hardikar & Shastri, 2010) and another unhealthy lifestyle that leads to obesity (Bhuyar, Banerjee, Pandve, Padmnabhan, Patil, Duggirala, Rajan & Chaudhury, 2008; Raja & Bhasin, 2014). This was no surprise when the Department of Science and Technology in the Philippines raised awareness on alcohol consumption and food choices among call center agents causing the high number of obesity (Ducusin, 2017). Looking at the big picture, the lifestyle of call center agents makes them vulnerable to handle stress in their work environment. Interestingly, Cecil, McHale, Hart, Laidlaw (2014) suggested that a healthy lifestyle decreases the chance of burnout. It was further explained by Holder (2019) that managing a good lifestyle by eating healthy foods increases longevity, boosts the immune system, good personal relationship, and prerequisite to career success.

It has been said by Kalkowski (2004), those women are less motivated due to conflicts in their respective homes. These conflicts and problems within their families have a contributory factor that affects their drive to work at the peak of their ability. In addition to that, Vaskova (2006) reiterated that female employees feel undervalued in the same position in the workplace. There are more female employees compared to male employees who subjectively believe that they are being less paid by their respective companies. These would be some possible explanations of why male respondents are more motivated than female respondents.

The results of the present study in terms of the extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation of male and female call center respondents validate the finding of previous studies. According to Edrak, Yin-Fah, Gharleghi, and Seng (2013) differences in extrinsic motivation between males and females are not statistically significant when grouped according to gender. Therefore, this is an indication that there is a substantial overlap between males and females in many different variables that are being used in studies of gender differences.

The current study found those call center agents significantly vary in their level of extrinsic motivation in

terms of age is similar to the findings of Catania and Randal (2013) that age is negatively correlated to extrinsic motivation among employees. The result was further explained by Cerasoli, Nicklin, and Ford (2014) that the primary source of motivation among employees is external factors such as money and other material things. Therefore, this is also an indication that human beings are highly motivated by their basic needs as mentioned by the proponent of need theories. In addition to that, Catania and Randal (2013), mentioned that in the theory of Maslow (1943) younger individuals are more preoccupied with their basic needs than older individuals. The researchers further explained that nowadays younger workers have increasing financial burdens that push them to find a job that enables them to reach their financial goals rather than one which is intrinsically interesting.

Furthermore, intrinsic motivation (combined with the phases of burnout) emerged to be a good predictor of psychological well-being. The current finding was supported by the explanation of Hackman and Lawler (1971) as cited by Baard, Deci, and Ryan (2004) in which intrinsic motivation is the nutriment for human survival and growth. This was further expounded by Kaur (2012) that psychological well-being is predicted by the motivation that includes better work relationships, job security, salary, work-life balance activities, and other extrinsic motivators. As mentioned by Serin and Balkan (2014), workers who are experiencing personal failure have a pessimistic way of thinking towards people around them, which leads to the development of a negative self-concept. In the long run, feelings of guilt are being expressed as a result of a low self-concept. Despite this situation, people who are intrinsically motivated allow themselves to create a positive work environment. Jamandre and Arce (2011) found that Filipino call center agents in the Philippines practice self-disclosure with their co-workers. This significant gesture enables them to feel a sense of social support from others most especially those who are experiencing problems and burnout.

The research has been undertaken to look into the effect of motivation and burnout on the psychological well-being of call center agents. Moreover, the aspects of burnout have been investigated and how it affects the psychological well-being of call center agents. At the same time, the researcher looked into the possible sources of the motivation of call center agents either these sources are found in the work environment or within the person. The methods and variables used that were used in this study make it unique and different from the previous researches that were conducted.

Although, the study failed to include call center agents from the metropolitan areas and other call center establishments in the Philippines. This shall be a careful consideration among readers not generalized the result among call center agents. Any action plans such as programs and policies to be crafted in addressing the existing gaps in the business outsourcing industry must factor in other

variables and limitations of the existing study. The researcher would like to recommend future studies to increase the number and consider a diverse group of respondents. Other variables such as work resilience, grit, commitment, marital status, educational attainment, and social support should be taken into consideration to better understand the psychological well-being of call center agents using Hayes Process macro particularly moderated mediation. More so, other methodological designs such qualitative or mixed methods shall be used.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, males have a higher tendency to experience depersonalization caused by burnout as compared to female call center agents. Though, when gender was used as a point of comparison in terms of psychological well-being and motivation, it failed to reveal a significant difference.

The claim and prediction of previous studies that younger employees are extrinsically driven as compared to older employees were confirmed in the current study. However, intrinsic motivation, burnout, and psychological well-being are just at the same level among younger and older call center employees.

The burnout experienced among call center employees significantly affect their psychological well-being. This was evident in the result in which in every one unit increase of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment is a decrease of .444, .599, and .578 in the psychological well-being respectively. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation can significantly help to buffer the effects of burnout in which evidently, in every one unit increase of intrinsic motivation is a significant increase of 2.443 in the psychological well-being of the respondents. Apparently, the group of respondents representing the population of call center agents in Baguio City is not extrinsically motivated.

6. The Implication for Future Policy and Practice

Despite the promising benefits and perks of working in the call center industry, the current situation of call center agents contributes to an unhealthy lifestyle and burnout. The result of the study became the basis of the researcher to recommend important considerations that will help call center agents. Though work-related stress is inevitable, it is highly recommended to consider the fun at work program through regular teambuilding, sports fest, and outreach program that will foster the spirit of camaraderie and social support. A holistic approach to the attainment of well-being is assuring the physical wellness of call center agents. Companies may come up with a health fitness program that will surely decrease the possibility for employees to indulge in an unfitting lifestyle. Training is vital to improve the skills of

employees as it will increase their productivity, but the integration of well-being workshops or psychoeducation will significantly prepare them to deal properly with stress. Another area of consideration would be access to mental health professionals that will help them as they encourage self-expression and offer counseling services. Lastly, the increase of call center agents is brought about by the huge foreign investments in the field of BPO industry. As such, the BPO industry serves as one of the backbones in the Philippine economy. Thus, it will be a win-win situation for the national and local legislators to craft ordinances, regulations, and laws that will protect the well-being of call center agents or people who are working in the BPO industry. Thereby, increasing their productivity which in turn will result in a boost in the Philippine economy as it attracts more investment as they see the stability and progress to these human capitals.

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