Globalisation and Women Employees: A Study on Women Employees in BPO Industry in India

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Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "**Globalisation and Women Employees: A Study on Women Employees in BPO Industry in India**" submitted to Sikkim University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is my original work. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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"Globalisation and Women Employees: A Study on Women Employees in BPO Industry in India"

Submitted by Shikha Jyoti Deka under the supervision of Dr. Sebastian N. of the Department of International Relations, School of Social Sciences, Sikkim University, Gangtok 737 102, INDIA

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"I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Mrs. Putuli Deka and Mr. Indra Mohan Deka, whose love, trust, selfless support, optimism and example over many years laid the foundation for the discipline and application necessary to do justice to this work".

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3G   Three Global Services Private Ltd

ACCENTURE   Accent to Future

ADP   Automatic Data Processing

AOL   America Online

APEC   Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

ASEAN   Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASP   Application Service Provider

ASSOCHAM   Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry in India

ATM   Automated Teller Machine

BA   British Airways

BBC   British Broadcasting Corporation

BN   Billion

BOT   Build Operate Transfer

BPM   Business Process Management

BPO   Business Process Outsourcing

BRGs   Business Resource Groups

CA   Chartered Accountant

CAGR   Compound Annual Growth Rate

CBDT   Central Board of Direct Taxes

CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
C-DAC	Centre for Development of Advanced Computing
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGI	Consultants to Government and Industries
CMMI	Capability Maturity Model Integration
CNN	Cable News Network
CS	Company Secretary
CSC	Computer Sciences Corporation
CSD	Circuit Switched Data
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DEITY	Department of Electronics and Information Technology
DGMO	Deputy General Manager-Operations
DNA	Daily News and Analysis
DOH	Department of Health
DOIT	Department of Information Technology
DPI	Disposable Personal Income
DST	Department of Science and Technology
E&Y	Ernst & Young
EDS	Electronic Data Systems

EPZs	Economic Processing Zones
ER&D	Engineering Research & Development
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
ESG	Environmental Social and Governance
ESI	Employees' State Insurance Act
ET	Economic Times
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTE	Full-Time Employees
FY	Fiscal Year
G8	Group of Eight
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GECIS	Ge Capital International Services
GIC	Global In-house Centres
GPS	Global Positioning System
GST	Goods and Services Tax
GWN	Global Women's Network
HCL	Hindustan Computers Limited
HCM	Human Capital Management
HP	Hewlett Packard

HR	Human Resources
HSBC	Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation
HTML	Hyper Text Markup Language
IBEF	India Brand Equity Foundation
IBM	International Business Machines
IBN	Indian Broadcasting Network
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFG	International Forum on Globalization
IGIDR	Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research
IGMSY	Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana
IGT	Inter Globe Technologies
IJR	International Journal of Research
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFOSYS	Information Systems
INR	India Rupee
INTEL	Integrated Electronics
IP	Internet Protocol
IS	Impact Sourcing
ISO	International Organization for Standardization

IT	Information Technology
ITC	Imperial Tobacco Company of India Limited
ITES	Information Technology Enabled Services
ITO	Information Technology Outsourcing
IWIN	Infosys Women's Inclusivity Network
JAPAC	Japan and Asia Pacific
KFC	Kentucky Fried Chicken
KPO	Knowledge Process Outsourcing
L&T	Larsen & Toubro
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and Transgender
LWP	Leave without Pay
M2M	Machine to Machine
MD	Managing Director
MNC	Multinational Corporation or Company
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Services Companies
NCR	National Capital Region
NDTV	New Delhi Television Limited
NEBPS	North East BPO Promotional Scheme
NGO	Non Government Organization
NIE	Newly Industrializing Economies

NMEW	National Mission for Empowerment of Women
O&O	Offshore Outsourcing
ODCs	Oracle Developer Cloud Service
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEMs	Oracle Enterprise Manager
ORACLE	Oak Ridge Automatic Computer and Logical Engine
PC	Personal Computer
PDF	Portable Document Format
POSH	Prevention of Sexual Harassment
PWC	Price Waterhouse and Coopers
PwDs	Persons with Disabilities
QC	Quality Control
R&D	Research and Development
RMK	Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
S&P	Standard & Poor's
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAP	Systems Applications Products
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SMAC	Social Media, Mobility, Analytics and Cloud
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SMS	Short Message Service

STEP	Support to Training and Employment Program
STPs	Software Technology Parks
TCS	Tata Consultancy Services Limited
T-Hub	Telangana Hub
TL	Team Leader
TNC	Transnational Corporations
TNN	Times News Network
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
US	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VC	Venture Capital
VOIP	Voice Over Internet Protocol
VP	Vice President
WDR	World Development Report
WEPs	Women's Empowerment Principles
WHO	World Health Organization
Wi-Fi	Wireless Fidelity
WIL	Women In leadership
WIPRO	Western India Products Limited

WMR	World Migration Report
WNS	World Network Services
WOW	Women of Wipro
WTO	World Trade Organization
WUNRN	Women's UN Report Network
Y2K	Year 2000
YAHOO	Yet Another Hierarchically Organized Oracle
Y-o-Y	Year over Year

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This study looks into the dynamics in the relationship between globalisation and women workers with a focus on Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry in India. The study aims at analysing the nature of women employment in BPOs in India in general and in Pune – one of the largest centres of BPOs in India in particular. The study focuses on the nature of women participation in connection with BPO sector as, irrespective of various challenges, the participation of women has been increasing in recent years. As per the studies of Women Safety 2013, Nasscom[1] and Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit 2017, the share of women in BPO workforce has increased 14% from 2004 to 2017. Currently women constitute 34% of total BPO workforce and it is estimated that one out of three employees joining the $143-billion Indian IT-BPO industry is a woman (Report of the Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2017).

This study also addresses certain fundamental questions related to globalisation, women workers and BPOs in India like; what is the impact of globalisation on BPO sector? What is the nature of women participation in BPO Industry? What are the challenges and opportunities before female employees in the sector? Does the participation of Indian women in BPOs impact in a positive way? These questions are important as globalisation and the growth of BPO sector in India, over the past few years, has resulted in considerable changes in the lives of the youth and women workforce in India. Today, women participation and contribution has become critical in this sector. This study examines the growth of BPO industry in India and its impact on women

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[1] The National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) is the industry association for the IT-BPO sector in India. It was established in 1988 and registered under the Indian Societies Act, 1860. A not for profit organisation funded by the industry, its objective is to build a growth-led, sustainable, technology and business services segment in the country. The member organisations represent 95 per cent of industry revenues and have enabled the association to spearhead initiatives and programmes to strengthen the sector in the country and globally. Nasscom has also contributed to the development of two organisations - the Data Security Council of India, which is focused on security and the Nasscom Foundation, which helps drive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Nasscom is headquartered in New Delhi, India, and has offices in eight other cities—Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram & Kochi (Nasscom Annual Report, 2016-17).

workers in the sector. Though the study takes India as a whole for the examination of the key questions addressed in the study, a special emphasis is given to BPO industry in Pune as Pune has a representative character of Indian BPO industry in terms of companies as well as workforce[2].

The study approaches the whole question in the context of globalisation which facilitates the expansion of BPOs all over the world, especially to the developing countries like India. The growth of Business Process Outsourcing services can be considered as one of the major outcome of globalisation. BPO industry has adopted an international business environment with a global standard and thus has reduced the national and geographical differences. The process of globalisation has been an indispensable part of the present-day economic growth achieved by developing countries. For example, in developing countries like India, globalisation has played a crucial role in export-led growth, directing to the expansion of the employment sources in the country. In the last few years, the country has witnessed tremendous increase in the employment of skilled professionals by both local and foreign Multinational Companies and they provide services to customers from US, UK and other European countries. The availability of educated and English-speaking[3] human resources in a lower cost and the advanced and developed global communication technologies such as voice-over IP (VOIP)[4], email and internet, have enabled global firms to lower their cost base by setting up outsourced knowledge-worker operations in India.

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[2] Pune is emerging as the favoured outsourcing hub with a number of Business Process Outsourcing centres catering to the US and European markets. In Pune, BPO is very prominent with 50+ top international companies have their presence. Importantly, most of the leading BPOs in Pune has its branches in other parts of the country and thus interconnected both at national and international level. The policies through which the workers are governed by, the nature of opportunities they get, scope for growth, challenges, facilities and BPO work culture in other cities are similar to Pune and therefore BPOs located in Pune broadly reveals the general nature of Indian BPO industry. So, it is understood that, a study on women BPO workers in India with special focus on women employees in Pune based BPOs will be helpful to understand the work practice, work culture and work atmosphere of Indian professional women in BPOs.
[3] India's English speaking populaton is more than the total population of United Kingdom where the mother tongue is English (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2004).
[4] Voice over Internet Protocol (Voice over IP, VoIP and IP telephony) is a methodology and group of technologies for the delivery of voice communications and multimedia sessions over Internet Protocol (IP) networks, such as the Internet (http://wildcardts.com/page.php?Page_Id=28).

Globalisation and expansion of BPO sector has changed the role of Indian women in the global workforce. BPO employment has made women in the country more career-oriented and self-confident. They are experiencing more financial independence, greater freedom and also high standard of living. They have also acquired respectable status in the family and society.

1.1. Understanding Contemporary Globalisation

Globalisation is the term used to depict the economic, political and cultural climate of contemporary world. The term has been in increasing use since the mid 1980s and especially since 1990s. Globalisation is a complex world transformation whereby the mobility of capital, organisations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken an increasingly global or transnational form (Moghadam, 1999).

Anthony Giddens (2001: 51) describes globalisation as "those processes that are intensifying worldwide social relations and interdependence". They result from "complex economic and social ties that link countries and people around the world". Globalisation is created by "the coming together of political, social, cultural and economic factors". It makes possible the rapid movement of people, ideas, goods, services, money, and information across the globe in an increasingly short period of time (Helman, 2007: 304).

"Globalisation means different things to different people. Some say it is the movement of people, language, ideas and products around the globe. Others see it as the dominance of multinational corporations and the destruction of cultural identities" (Peters and Peters 2005, as cited in Eoin Devereux, 2007: 46).

The globalisation system, unlike the Cold War system, is not static, but a dynamic ongoing process, involves the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree never witnessed before. In a way that is enabling individuals, corporations, and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper than ever before, and also producing a powerful backlash from those brutalised or left behind by this new system (Friedman, 1999).

Another argument is that, "the driving idea behind globalisation is free-market capitalism. The more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and competition, the more efficient and flourishing your economy will be. Globalisation means the spread of free market capitalism to virtually every country in the world" (Veseth, 2002: 40).

As per Peter Heslam, "Today all countries are engaged in international trade and nearly all trade significant proportion of their national income. If, in the past, trade sometimes formed an enclave largely isolated from the rest of the national economy, it is now integral to the structure of national production in all modern states. The historical evidences show that international trade has grown to unprecedented levels, both in absolute terms and in relation to national income" (Heslam, 2004: 4). Integration into the world economy has proven a powerful means for countries to promote economic growth, development, and poverty reduction. Over the past 20 years, the growth of world trade has averaged 6 percent per year, twice as fast as world output (IMF, 2001). Many developing countries have opened their own economy to take full advantage of this opportunity for economic development through reduction of trade barriers and technological advancement. Embracement of trade liberalisation and other market-oriented reforms are helping countries to attract considerable amount of foreign direct investment. Integration into the global economy has helped India to promote economic growth, increase the employment rate and poverty reduction.

The contemporary world trade system is defined by both an intensive network of trading relations embracing virtually all economies and evolving global markets for many goods and services. This shift towards global markets has been facilitated by the existence of worldwide transport and communications infrastructure, the promotion of trade liberalisation through the institutionalisation of a world trade system, and the internationalisation of production (Booth et.al, 1998: 228). The existence of systemic risks produces contradictory imperatives. On the other hand, the desire on behalf of financial institutions, both public and private, to avoid a major international crisis produce a demand for more extensive and more intensive international regulation of world finance. Thus, in the wake of the 1997 East Asian financial crisis, the annual

IMF/World Bank summit meeting in 1998 agreed to more effective international surveillance mechanisms and greater transparency in the release of financial information in an attempt to prevent such a crisis in future (Held et.al, 1999: 234).

Compared with the era of the classical Gold Standard, or that of Bretton Woods, contemporary financial globalisation has many distinctive attributes. Chief amongst these is the sheer magnitude, complexity and speed of financial transactions and flows. More currencies, diverse and complex financial assets are traded more frequently, at greater speed and in substantially greater volumes than in any previous historical epoch (ibid: 235). A distinctive new stage in the organisation and management of credit and money in the world economy is represented by contemporary economic globalisation. The conditions that determine the short-term and long-term prosperity of states and people across the globe is also transformed by the contemporary financial globalisation.

Aside from global finance, perhaps the commonest image of economic globalisation is that of the multinational corporations (ibid: 236). Today, transnational production 'outweighs exports as the dominant mode of servicing foreign markets'. A small number of MNCs dominate world markets for oil, minerals, food and other agricultural products, whilst a hundred or so play a leading role in the globalisation of manufacturing production and services. Together, the 100 largest MNCs control about 20 percent of global foreign assets, employ 6 million workers worldwide and account for almost 30 percent of total world sales of all MNCs (ibid). Development in communications technology and the advances in infrastructure conditions have not only accelerated the rise of global economic market and worldwide trade but also have contributed to a globalised production amongst small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), within the most developed economies in the world.

In comparison with earlier epochs of business globalisation, the contemporary phase is both more extensive and intensive as measured in terms of FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), numbers and size of MNCs, subsidiaries etc. This freedom from imperial constraint is reflected in changing patterns of stratification as more FDI flows to NIEs (Newly Industrializing Economies) and developing countries, in the organisation of global production which is encouraging a new global division of labour, and in the

internationalisation of business within developing countries which is becoming a more visible feature of the global political economy (Booth et.al, 1998: 231).

MNCs are the linchpins of the contemporary world economy. Around 44,000 MNCs account for 25-33 percent of world output and 70 percent of world trade (ibid). MNCs are not simply national firms with international operations, rather, in contemporary world they play a much more predominant role in the functioning of the global economy in compare to the past and they figure notably in organising large-scale and comprehensive transnational networks of coordinated production and distribution.

1.2. Globalisation and Labour Market

It is important to note that modern-day globalisation is not only driven by technological progress, but also by political and ideological change. Since the 1980s, there has been a global political trend shifting towards laissez-faire economic policies, which went along with the gradual, albeit asymmetrical, lifting of international barriers for trade and capital flows. This process gained momentum in the 1980s with the Reagan and Thatcher governments in U.S. and the UK, respectively, pushing the agenda for domestic and international economic deregulation (Czaika and Haas, 2014: 285). The current wave of globalisation starting around 1999-2000 with changes in the concepts of development and with the ensuing capital market liberalisation following earlier undertaken trade liberalization has profound effects on the labour market and on the employment situation of workers all over the world (Hoeven, 2010).

The effects of globalisation on the labour market lies on the fact that earnings from labour represent the main source of income for the great majority of the inhabitants of developing nations and especially of the poorer groups of workers, who lack ownership of any other material assets (UNIFEM[5])[6].

Positive effects of globalisation can occur on labour market as a result of the increased capacity of developing countries to create new opportunities for work and

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[5] UNIFEM is now known UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
[6] http://www1.aucegypt.edu/src/globalization/labor_Market.htm

production following the alleviation of price distortions with respect to both labour and capital (ESCWA, 1999:24). FDI has both direct and indirect effects on employment creation in the recipient countries. This largely depends on the size and type of investment, the type of technology adopted and the ability of the host country to master the imported technology and adapt it to its needs. FDI also has indirect effects on employment through the vertical links to the TNCs (Transnational Corporations), and there may also be spillover effects of TNCs on local science, technology, education and training (UNIFEM).

Negative effects of globalization on labour market occur as a result of large-scale technological developments that accompany this phenomenon, which will reduce the demand on labour, especially unskilled labour. Even foreign direct investment does not care for cheap workers but only for highly skilled workers. The traditional nature of 'work'[7] might disappear due the rapid advances in technology, while at the same time creating new and innovative occupations in favor of the highly specialized professions (ibid). An increase in hidden unemployment, a lack of new job openings, and deterioration of real wage rates are the consequences of globalisation in most developing economies, which were unable to adapt the new technologies (ibid). Most trade liberalisation benefits will be received by the manufacturing-producing countries, while the smallest share will be going to the agricultural-producing countries (developing countries). In addition, policies of structural adjustment such as privatisation imply an increase in unemployment since privatisation is accompanied usually by a reduction in the demand for labour or over exploitation of labour (UNIFEM). Finally the theoretical predictions about the employment consequences of trade liberalisation are based on assumptions of full employment of resources and flexible labour markets. These assumptions might not hold true in developing countries where labour markets are inflexible due to structural factors (ibid).

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[7] The traditional nature of work signifies permanent, full-time work. In today's world traditional work is increasingly giving way to non-traditional work—i.e. part-time and temporary work and self-employment. Non-traditional work can create job opportunities for many people who might otherwise be out of work. In contemporary world, the structure, content, and process of work have changed. Work is now: more dependent on technological competence, more cognitively complex, more time pressured, more dependent on social skills, more team-based and collaborative, more mobile and less dependent on geography.

There are some aspects of employment on which economic globalisation may have an impact. Economic globalisation may first have an impact on the number of jobs available in the economy, and thus affect key macro-economic variables such as the unemployment rate and the employment-to-population ratio (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2007). Economic globalisation may also affect the structure of jobs, i.e. their distribution across economic activities. Jobs linked to certain economic activities may tend to disappear whereas jobs linked to other, maybe new activities, are created due to changing competitive advantages and patterns of specialisation (Bansal and Bansal, 2014: 3). The composition of jobs, the mix of skilled and unskilled jobs in the economy is also likely to be affected by economic globalisation. So far, in the developed countries, unorganised and low-skilled[8] workers have been most affected by stagnating revenues and/or increasing unemployment due to competition from developing countries workers and also as a result of technological progress. The workforce in developing countries, however, is becoming better qualified and increasingly engaging in more sophisticated, service-oriented activities (Di Pietro et.al, 2007). Thus, the skilled workforce of developing countries is providing more and more competition to their counterparts in developed countries.

Economic globalisation may affect job earnings in two ways. First, by increasing the overall efficiency of the economy, it causes an increase in real incomes that may be shared with job earnings. Second, by fostering movements of products and production factors it may eventually even out price differences between countries, including the price of labour, i.e. job earnings. Both trends seem to materialise at the global level (Bansal and Bansal, 2014). In developing economies the rate of decline in the numbers of working poor has slowed and between 2012 and 2015 the number of extreme poor decreased by around 0.9 per cent per annum whereas the number of moderately and near poor increased by around 5.2 per cent (ILO, 2016). The job earnings seem to be steadily increasing in developing countries, leading to a narrowing of the job earnings gap at the global level (Di Pietro et.al, 2007). At the same time, in the advanced industrial countries, the demand for more-skilled workers has increased at the expense of less-skilled workers,

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[8] Here, skills are defined in terms of education, experience or job classification.

and the income gap between the two groups has grown[9] (IMF, 1997). It can be said that, globalisation narrowed job earnings gap at the global level and rises income inequality between the more and the less skilled with increase of unemployment among the less skilled.

The movement of people between countries and continents is increasing in contemporary world. The number of tertiary educated immigrants in the OECD increased by 70 percent in the past decade to reach 27 million in 2010-11 (OECD, 2013). The International Organisation for Migration and the UN estimate the total global population residing temporarily or permanently outside their country of origin is around 180 million (International Labour Office, 2002). Despite the reluctance of governments to liberalise immigration policy, the number of people living outside their countries of origin has almost doubled from 120 million in 1990 to an estimated 215 million in 2012 (The World Bank, 2012), which is approximately 3.05 percent of the world population[10]. Labour migration is directly fostered by regional agreements liberalising the movement of people as in the EU (European Union), by changing patterns of specialisation, and by the development of multinational enterprises moving key personnel to, from and between their foreign affiliates (Di Pietro et.al, 2007). The advancement of transport and communication facilities too plays a major role in it.

These immigrants are increasingly skilled: while migration to the OECD area increased at the same rate as trade, high-skill migration (or brain drain) from developing to developed countries rose at a much faster pace[11] and can certainly be regarded as one of the major aspects of globalisation (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012: 682). Migrants

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[9] In the United States, for example, wages of less-skilled workers have fallen steeply since the late 1970s relative to those of the more skilled. Between 1979 and 1988 the average wage of a college graduate relative to the average wage of a high school graduate rose by 20 percent and the average weekly earnings of males in their forties to average weekly earnings of males in their twenties rose by 25 percent. This growing inequality reverses a trend of previous decades (by some estimates going back as far as the 1910s) toward greater income equality between the more skilled and the less skilled. At the same time, the average real wage in the United States (that is, the average wage adjusted for inflation) has grown only slowly since the early 1970s and the real wage for unskilled workers has actually fallen. It has been estimated that male high school dropouts have suffered a 20 percent decline in real wages since the early 1970s (IMF, 1997).

[10] Migration and Globalisation, 2013,
http://www.globalisation101.org/uploads/File/Migration/migration.pdf

[11] The number of highly educated immigrants living in the OECD member countries increased by 70 percent during the 1990s (and doubled for those originating from developing countries) compared to a 30 percent increase for low skill immigrants (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012: 682).

reduce labour shortages and contribute to the resolution of population ageing in developed countries. As far as developing countries are concerned, more migration to developed countries may result in a brain drain[12].

Employment conditions are part of the competition between economic locations in addition to more obvious factors such as labour costs. Lower safety requirements, longer working hours, or a ban on trade unions, for example, may be attractive for multinational enterprises and may spur offshoring (Di Pietro et.al, 2007). This may, in turn, have an effect on employment conditions in the source countries of offshoring as recently observed in some EU countries as regards working hours. Changing patterns of specialisation induced by economic globalisation or technological progress such as a more service-oriented economy may also have effects on employment conditions that are not always clear (ibid).

1.2.1 Women in Global Economy and Labour Force

Economic aspects of globalization bring new opportunities and resources to women, because it promotes the diffusion of ideas and norms of equality for women (Gray et.al, 2005). Women's concerns were first integrated into the development agenda in the 1970s (Parpart et.al, 2000). Economic arguments on the effects of globalisation on women fall into two broad groups, one intensely critical and the other basically optimistic, but with reservations and qualifications (Gray et.al, 2005). From the critical point of view, economic globalisation has largely negative consequences for women. It confines them to low pay, low status, often part-time jobs that reinforce their subordination and perpetuate the devalorisation of women's work in most societies (ibid). Demand among multinational firms for cheap, flexible labour has encouraged offshore production using the labour force of low-paid women. Women, however, remain excluded from the more stable and higher-paying jobs in heavy industry (ibid).

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[12] Brain drain is the emigration of highly skilled and educated people from a particular country to more prosperous country, seeking higher wages and better working conditions. In developing countries brain drain has become one of the concern as it has negative impact on the country's economic prospects and competitiveness. It turns down the number of potent, creative and dynamic citizen who can contribute to the evolution and progress of the country.

In Pettman's account, globalisation defined as increasing capital mobility, trade, and offshore manufacturing leads to an "increasing feminisation of labour" because women continue to be "constructed as dependents" and thus confined to the worst paying jobs (Pettman, 1996: 163-67). The removal of barriers to transnational investment, far from empowering women, has brought them dismal jobs in offshore production sites where they are subject to sexual discrimination and harassment. Furthermore, competition from foreign firms undercuts efforts to help women launch local 'microenterprises' (Sforza, 1999). Some within the critical camp also acknowledges that the picture for women as workers in an era of mobile capital is somewhat mixed, but see it as largely discouraging. Some women may benefit from new jobs, but their "work is highly exploitative and features low wages, poor working conditions, suppression of trade unions, and little opportunity for security or advancement" (Wright, 1995: 864).

In addition to this the structural adjustment and market liberalisation policies that have accompanied globalisation are particularly damaging to women. They lead to cuts in public sector jobs that are often disproportionately held by women, they undercut social programs that benefit women, and they inhibit labour organisation by women. Further, in an increasingly volatile economic context, women are often the first to suffer in times of financial crisis (Gray et.al, 2005). Evidences from the Asian financial crisis showed that women were more likely than men to lose their jobs. Another argument is that, industrial development causes environmental damage that disproportionately degrades life for Third World women. Women suffer the most from ecological problems because they are responsible for most family sustenance; finding food and fuel becomes harder, and diets suffer (ibid).

The alternative to the critical position is a qualified one that posits, on balance, economic advantages in the form of greater agency for women in an era of globalisation. The primary advantage centers on enhanced prospects for non-household employment. Indeed, globalisation, including greater openness to foreign direct investment (FDI), has led to a massive infusion of women into job markets. It is observed that, in the lower income countries, foreign multinationals often make better paying jobs available to women (ibid).

There is, to some extent, a joining of two different dynamics in the condition of women described above. On the one hand, they [women] are constituted as an invisible and disempowered class of workers in the service of the strategic sectors constituting the global economy (Sassen, 1996:26). This invisibility keeps them from emerging as whatever would be the contemporary equivalent of the 'labour aristocracy' of earlier forms of economic organisation, when a low wage worker's position in leading sectors had the effect of empowering that worker, i.e. the possibility of unionising (ibid). On the other hand, the access to wages and salaries (even if low), the growing feminisation of the job supply, and the growing feminisation of business opportunities brought about with informalization, do alter the gender hierachies in which they [women] find themselves (ibid).

Gender is constituted by societal views of the norms for male and female roles. Major social institutions-economic, political, cultural, and religious often reinforce them. Women are typically of lower status than men and occupy subordinate positions in most societies. Globalisation can unleash forces that confront and erode existing social constructions of gender. As we will see, global organisations such as MNCs and the IMF often use social constructions of gender to their advantage (Appelbaum and Robinson, 2005: 251).

Since the 1950s, women's participation in the paid workforce has grown substantially. Four factors are considered to be the main drivers of this change. First is the rising rate of education of women[13], which encourages workforce participation. The other three factors relate to declining fertility, which increases women's availability for employment, as well as their increasing desire for personnel fulfillment and the economic need for employment (Lingard and Francis, 2009: 2-3).

Global economy restructuring in the latter part of the 1980s was characterised by three trends. First, there was a movement toward market-based economies, in particular, export-oriented strategies, at the behest of international financial institutions such as the

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[13] In the UK in 2006/2007, 57 percent of first-degree graduates were women (Higher Education statistics Agency, 2008). This is similar for most developed countries; in Australia for instance 54 percent of university enrolments were women, compared with only 20 percent in 1951 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002; Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005)- (Lingard and Francis, 2009: 2-3).

World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Mitter, 1986). Second, the rapid globalisation of productive and marketing activities by transnational corporations from many countries was accompanied by substantial informalisation and subcontracting of work arrangements beyond state regulation (Portes et al., 1989), or what Harvey (1989) labels 'flexible accumulation'. Finally, various economic crises, involving periodic recessions, debt and the environment, have occurred. As a consequence of all these changes, industrial and family-based economies now exist side by side in a mixture of factory organisation and subcontracting to family sweatshops that maintains men's control over women workers (Harvey, 1989).

In the early 1980s, women-in-development scholars[14] debated whether internationalisation of employment was beneficial market for women or if they were being exploited in yet another way, as low -wage workers, employed at most for a few years, and working under unhealthy conditions. Linda Lin (1985, 1990) continued to argue that such employment is an advantage to women, while others maintained that the overall impact of such employment on women was unfavorable (Bose and Belen, 1995:39).

Instead, from the mid-1980s onward, this dichotomous debate has largely been replaced by analyses acknowledging the contradictions and dynamics of women's employment in transnational corporations (ibid). This newer view recognises that transnational companies have some positive and many adverse effects on women, which evolve over time because of changes in corporate strategy, state policy, geographical location and /or worker resistance (ibid: 39-40).

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[14] The term "women in development" was originally coined by a Washington-based network of female development professionals in the early 1970s (Tinker, 1990). In popular discourse, "Women in Development" (WID) is associated with the wide range of activities concerning women in the development domain, which donor agencies, governments and NGOs have become involved in since the 1970s. The 1975 World Conference of the International Women's Year at Mexico City, and the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985), gave expression to the major preoccupations of women around the world: improved educational and employment opportunities; equality in political and social participation; and increased health and welfare services. In sum, the WID movement that emerged during this period demanded social justice and equity for women (UNRISD, 1995). Scholars associated with "women-in-development" are Ester Børgesen, Hermann Baumann, Phyllis Kaberry, R.Galletti, K. D. S. Baldwin, Dina etc.

The rapid formation of a female labour force across the globe during the past decades has, to a great extent, been tied in particular to the growth of the service sector and of low-cost manufacturing, even though these have not been the only sectors behind the feminisation of the labour force (Berch, 2010:155). The links between gender and globalisation should not be seen as responding only to structural and economic forces; although these have, of course, been at the root of this feminisation, they have also been shaped by the interaction between these forces and the different ways through which gender constructions have been used and reconstituted during the past decades (ibid). The feminist movement, in its quest for gender equality, has contributed to this trend on the supply side by emphasising the need for women to search for greater financial autonomy, bargaining power, and control over their lives (ibid).

1.3. Globalisation and BPO Industry in India

Gartner Dataquest Guide (2003) defines Business Process Outsourcing as the delegation of one or more IT-intensive business processes to an external provider who, in turn, owns, administrates and manages the selected process (es), based upon defined and measurable performance metrics (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2004:34). BPO is defined simply as the movement of business processes from inside the organisation to external service provider. With the global telecommunications infrastructure now well-established and consistently reliable, BPO initiatives often include shifting work to international providers[15] (Click and Duening, 2005: 4). BPO is basically outsourcing[16] of business process with an aim to lower the costs and raise efficiency. It is the system of having a third party in employment, which is hired on contract, to carry out specialist jobs on behalf of any company.

During 1990s, the new economic policy of Indian government has brought tremendous changes in Indian economy. Due to Liberalisation, Privatisation and

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[15] Five BPO international hot spots have emerged around the globe. They are- i) India: Engineering and Technical, ii) China: Manufacturing and Technical, iii) Mexico: Manufacturing, iv) United States: Analysis and Creative, v) Philippines: Administrative (Click and Duening, 2005: 4).

[16] Outsourcing means giving that process to others who can deliver that process at a lower cost. For e.g., a PC (Personal Computer) manufacturing firm in the US can outsource its technical support and customer care process to a Company in India, which can perform the task at half the cost. The Indian Company can do so since they can employ engineers in India at lower salaries. It would be very expensive for the US company to do the same task back home (Robins et. al, 2016).

Globalisation, many Indian industries have geared up and made a lot of progress in their existing business enterprises. In 1999, the New Telecom policy has brought radical changes which ended monopoly of telecom services with free policy of international call facility. This has given a birth to new sector that is Information Technology, and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) [17] (Pokharna, 2011). Business Process Outsourcing is a part of ITES.

While inaugurating Networking workshop on India BPO promotion scheme on 03 October 2016, Mr Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister for Electronic & IT, said that India holds 38% share in the global BPO industry and stage is set for massive growth of the sector (Ministry of Communications, Government of India, 2016). As per Mr. Prasad, the sector has substantial share in India's growth story. During last fiscal (2015-16) IT & IT enabled services earned the highest ever revenue of $143 billion which is around 9.3 % of GDP in India (ibid). During the same period the sector also recorded an export of $ 108 billion which is around 45% of services export from India (ibid). The sector gave direct employment to 3.7 million people and last year alone 2 lakh additional employment were created (ibid) .What has worked wonders for this industry and suddenly brought it into lime-light consists of the following factors: i) Factor cost advantage, ii) Economy of scale, iii) Business risk mitigation, iv) Superior competency, v) Utilization improvement (Verma, 2009: 21-22).

Towards the end of the 20th century, when the Y2K[18] bug emerged as a threat to the western world, it paves the way for India as an important, preferred and favoured outsourcing location of the world. Since then, the industry with the abundance of large

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[17] IT represents Information Technology wherein ITES stands for Information Technology Enabled Services. ITES is a part of IT and BPO is a part of ITES. ITES or IT Enabled Service is a term used to denote those businesses which run with the help of IT. A Typical example would be a BPO (Robins et. al, 2016). BPO jobs usually are not directly IT-related, their data-based orientation often means that they require IT departmental support to be successfully outsourced. IT-enabled outsourcing can be defined as-those outsourcing services that use information technology in the processing and delivery of the service. Services are typically delivered through a telecommunication or data network, or other electronic media (Pankaj, 2005:254).

[18] Y2K is an abbreviation for 'year 2000'. It is a computer flaw and also known as "Millennium Bug". The so-called "Millennium Bug," led to anxiety and the Y2K scare. When complex computer programs were first written in the 1960s, engineers used a two-digit code for the year, leaving out the "19." As the year 2000 approached, many believed that the systems would not interpret the "00" correctly, therefore causing a major glitch in the system (National Geographic Society).

numbers of English-speaking resources at a lower cost and the industrious and steady efforts put in by the BPO companies is tremendously growing from strength to strength.

BPO industry has witnessed rapid development in recent years, which has established India as a preferred outsourcing destination. In the Asia-pacific week held in Germany, India was the focus country for BPO market (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2004). The country is leading in outsourcing in comparison with other countries like Russia, China, Malaysia etc. in the world market. If we compare the manpower of other competitors such as Australia, Holland, Mexico, China, Ireland, Hong Kong, Russia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore; the Indian labour pool, on the basis of their diligence, fluency in English, educational-qualifications, ability to work hard, efficiency, punctuality, work ethics and enthusiasm is considered to be the foremost (as revealed during survey).

India is a point of attraction in outsourcing due to the availability of highly skilled workforce with technical knowledge required for BPOs. Being the second largest populated country in the world, our country is in a position to provide huge manpower having good command over English at cheaper labour rate. As a result of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) revolution, India's telecommunications sector is becoming comparable with other countries. Governmental support[19] through policies and incentives is a great advantage for the country. Hence, without being affected by the stiff competition from the above mentioned countries, India continues to be the most desired destination to set-up BPO operation, which is clearly depicted in Figure 1.1. The share of various countries in outsourcing is discussed through Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 indicates that India plays a prime and commanding role in global outsourcing market. In the year 2005, India occupied 49% of global outsourcing business while the rest of the world shared 51%. In 2009 while the rest of the world covered 49%; Indian alone took control of 51% of global outsource. In 2010 India's share raised to 55% and the share of rest of the world decreased to 45%. In 2011 and 2012 India continued to

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[19] Government policies and incentives are motivating such as income tax exemption until 2010 for the export of IT enabled services. Many State Governments are also offering incentives and infrastructure for setting up IT enabled services (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2004:34).

gain more market share and with 58% market engagement in both the year, emerged as the largest outsourcing destination. Though in 2013 India witnessed 6% lost of global market but still continued to lead with 52% share, while the rest of the world held 48%.

Figure 1.1. India's Share in Global Outsourcing Business Market
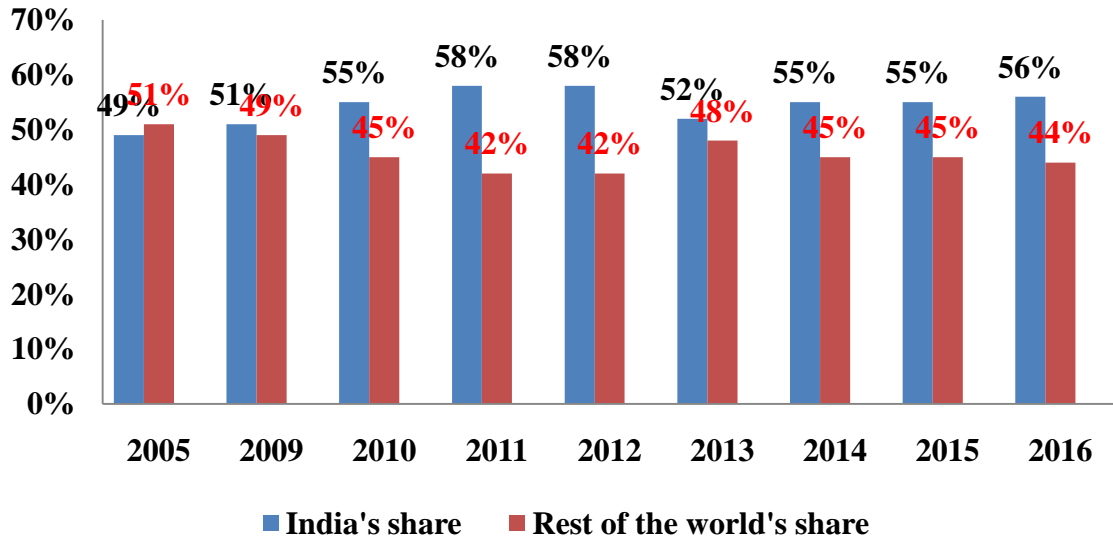
Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited, 2014; Strategic Review (Nasscom) 2015; Vedashree (Nasscom) 2015; Indian IT-BPM Industry: FY16 Performance and FY17 Outlook (Nasscom), 2016

Indian outsourcing market gained 3% of global business in 2014 and raised its share from 52% in 2013 to 55% in 2014 and continued the same share in 2015. In 2016, India extended its share over more than half of the market (56%) while the other countries namely, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Russia, Ireland, China and Mexico as a whole occupied 44% share. The existence of a giant gap between India's engagement in global market and other outsourcing countries is distinctly visible in the above Figure.

Even after years of outsourcing and rising competition, India continues to be the preferred outsourcing location and for companies seeking offshoring of IT needs, India remains well ahead of other outsourcing alternatives i.e. China, Philippines, Sri Lanka

etc. Although outsourcing has a distinctly global flavor, still as per Tholons[20] Top 100 Outsourcing Destinations 2015, six[21] of the top eight outsourcing destinations are located in India and two of them in Philippines (Tholons, 2016).

As export revenues from ITES-BPO grew from US $ 2.5 billion in the year 2002-03 to US $ 3.6 billion in years 2003-04, a year-on-year growth of 44 per cent was achieved. In year 2003-04, ITES-BPO exports accounted for over 27 per cent of the total export revenue earned by the Indian IT-ITES industry. The industry's contribution to the national economic output has nearly tripled-from 1.2 per cent in the year 1997-98 to 3.5 per cent in 2003-04. With this growth, the sector is estimated to account for 4.1 per cent of the national GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in the year 2004-05 (DeitY[22], 2004-2005). According to Nasscom-Mckinsey study conducted in 2007, the Indian BPO industry grew seven times the annual GDP growth. The Indian software and services exports including ITES-BPO is estimated at US$ 40.3 billion in 2007-08, as compared to US$ 31.4 billion in 2006-07, indicates an increase of 28.3 per cent (DoIT[23], 2007-08). In 2009, the industry contributed nearly 2.5 percent to the GDP (Business Line, 2007). The outsourcing industry had come to be viewed as the primary engine of the country's

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[20]Tholons is a Services Globalisation and Investment Advisory firm that combines "Best of Breed" consulting experience with deep execution expertise and investment insights to deliver truly effective services to its clients. Tholons draws upon the considerable experience of a hand-picked team, which has successfully formulated and executed globalisation strategies to unlock value for Global Fortune 1000 companies. Tholons advisors engage with government bodies to build compelling strategies for making countries attractive destination for outsourcing (https://www.coursehero.com/file/p5k1p49/Tholons-is-a-Services-Globalisation-and-Investment-Advisory-firm-that-combines/).

[21] The top six Indian outsourcing cities are- i) Bangalore, ii) Mumbai, iii) Delhi (NCR), iv) Chennai, v) Hyderabad, vi) Pune.

[22] In 2012, the Department of Information Technology has been renamed as the Department of Electronics and IT (DeitY) to reflect the increasing focus of the government on the electronics sector (NDTV,2012). The Government has taken out the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) from the remit of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, and has made it a new Ministry. On 19 July 2016, DeitY was made into full-fledged ministry, which henceforth is known as the Ministry of Electronics and Technology, bifurcating it from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (The Economic Times, 2016).

[23] Department of Information Technology (DoIT) was set up in year 2000 to implement the Information Technology (IT) Policy of Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi. Department of Information Technology is working to put technology to its highest and best use throughout Delhi Government Department/Autonomous Bodies to improve the administration of State programmes and services. Proving guidance on technical matters to Departments, vetting IT projects and taking Department on achieving IT Road Map are the basic jobs of Department of Information Technology (http://www.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/DoIT_IT/doit_it/home/).

development over the next few decades, contributing broadly to GDP growth, employment growth, and poverty alleviation (Srinivasan 2006: 204).

Despite the volatile global economic climate in 2009 and gradual recovery in 2010, the Indian BPO industry held its head up, continued to take centre stage in global sourcing strategies, and maintained its position as a strategic offshoring destination. Efficiencies gained during the economic crisis were not lost and the industry continued to re-engineer internally. Overall, the BPO segment remained a net hirer, continuing to create employment opportunities. BPO sector witnessed a recovery during 2009-10, growing at 4 per cent. Revenues from BPO services rose to USD 158 billion in 2010 (Nasscom, 2012). The Indian BPO export revenues grew by 14% to reach USD 14.1 billion in 2011 and industry employed close to 835,000 people. The industry (Indian exports) accounts for 34% of globally sourced BPO market in 2010, thus becoming the world's largest destination for BPO services delivery (Firstsource[24] Annual Report, 2010: 28). The year 2011-2012 marked a significant landmark for the IT-BPO industry as it crossed the milestone of USD 100 billion in revenues. The industry performance in the year 2012 demonstrated the sector's ability to innovate and deliver differently in order to maintain the growth trajectory (Nasscom, 2011-2012). As a proportion of national GDP, the sector revenues have grown from 1.2 per cent in 1998 to nearly 8 per cent in 2012-13 (DeitY, 2012-13). The revenue aggregate (Exports + Domestic) of IT-ITES industry is expected to grow by 9.2 % and reach USD 130.0 billion in 2015-16 as compared to USD 118.8 billion in 2014-15. (Rs. 8,40,455 crore in 2015-16 as compared to Rs. 7,29,432 crore in 2014-15 with a growth of 15.22% in INR terms). ITES/BPO segment has been reinventing itself in the past few years and is expected to grow at 8.8 % and generate export revenue of the order of USD 24.4 Billion in year 2015-16 as compared to USD 22.5 Billion in year 2014-15 (DeitY, 2015-16).

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[24] Firstsource Solutions Limited is a provider of BPO services headquartered in Mumbai, India. It provides customized business process management to customers in the customer services, healthcare sectors, banking and financial services and telecom and media. Firstsource clients include Fortune 500 financial services, healthcare companies and telecommunications. It has operations in Ireland, UK, India, Philippines and US.

IT-ITES sector has become one of the key sectors for the Indian economy because of its economic impact. As it can be seen in Table 1.1 direct employment in the IT services and BPO/ITES segment is estimated to grow by 5.0 % reaching 3.86 million in 2016-17, adding around 170,000 employees during this year (MeitY, 2016-17:110). Being one of the organised private sector employers in the country, this sector is also playing a key role in enabling higher levels of employment in adjacent verticals like, transportation, real estate and hospitality, Security services, Housekeeping etc. Indirect employment generated by the sector is estimated as 10.0 million (ibid).

Table 1.1. Direct Employment in the IT-ITES Segment (In Millions)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (E)
Direct Employment	2.966	3.267	3.485	3.688	3.863
Net Addition	0.191	0.301	0.218	0.203	0.172

Source: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Annual Report 2016-17)

IT-ITES/BPO industry provides employment to people with various skill levels i.e. Engineers, Lawyers, Arts/Science/Commerce/ Literature etc. graduates; High School Pass outs etc. This sector is the largest employment provider of women and has about 34% of its workforce comprises of women (ibid). The Indian ITES-BPO has seen the number of women employed increase to over 1.7 million, which is more than a third of the total workforce (ibid). Women constitute more than half of the current entry-level hires. Over the past few years, the industry has also been actively pursuing inclusion of persons with disabilities as well as encouraging an overall inclusive work culture (ibid).

The phenomenal growth of the Indian IT Software & Services and ITES-BPO sector has had a perceptible multiplier effect on the Indian economy as a whole. In addition to the direct positive impact on National Income, the sector has grown to become the biggest employment generator, and has spawned the mushrooming of several ancillary industries such as transportation, real estate and catering, and has created a rising class of young consumers with high disposable incomes, triggered a rise in direct-tax collections and propelled an increase in consumer spending (DoIT, 2010-11).

India has continued to maintain its first mover advantage and retained its leadership position in the global sourcing arena with a share of 55 per cent in 2015. The Indian industry continues to develop capabilities around traditional and emerging markets, verticals and customer segments, expand global delivery presence and increase focus on high value services including product development. The government's technology reliant economic growth agenda, particularly–'Digital India'[25] and 'Make in India[26]', have significantly boosted domestic IT-BPO market growth prospects and overall business confidence (DeitY, 2014-15).

1.3.1. BPOs in Pune

Pune city, situated in the Indian state of Maharashtra is one of the fastest growing cities in the Asia-Pacific region. The city has attracted many over the past few years due to developments in urban infrastructure. Pune is emerging as the favoured outsourcing hub with a number of business process outsourcing centres catering to the US and European markets. Today, Pune is a leading location for talent, investments, corporations and outsourcing.

The concept of IT parks touched Pune way back in the year 2000 to encourage new IT companies. Since then many IT parks[27] have been established in the city. The long list of service providers in the city includes ITO (Information Technology Outsourcing) providers such as Accenture, Cognizant, CSC, Geometric, HCL, IBM,

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[25] 'Digital India' is a central programme to make India ready for a knowledge-based future. The focus of the Rs 1.13 lakh crore initiatives is on using technology to create a participative, transparent and responsive government. The 3 major targets of the programme are: i) To create a digital infrastructure as a utility to every Indian citizen. This includes providing high-speed internet, mobile phone and bank account enabling participation in digital & financial space, shareable private space on a public cloud, and creating a safe and secure cyber space; ii) The programme aims to take digital literacy to the next level, and will focus on finding ways to encourage people to opt for cashless financial transactions; iii) The initiative also aims at seamless integration across departments/jurisdictions, and ensuring availability of services in real time from online and mobile platforms (Business Standard, 2015).

[26] Make in India is the BJP-led NDA government's flagship campaign intended to boost the domestic manufacturing industry and attract foreign investors to invest into the Indian economy. The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi first mentioned the keyphrase in his maiden Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort and over a month later launched the campaign in September 2014 with an intention of reviving manufacturing businesses and emphasising key sectors in India amidst growing concerns that most entrepreneurs are moving out of the country due to its low rank in ease of doing business ratings (Maps of India, 2014).

[27] Rajiv Gandhi IT Park, the Magarpatta Cyber city, the MIDC Software Technology Park at Talawade, the Marisoft IT Park and Kumar Cerebrum IT Park at Kalyani Nagar, the International Convention Centre (ICC), and Weikfield IT Park are the popular ones.

Infosys, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, Zensar and many more and BPO provider such as Convergys, EDS, EXL and WNS to name a few. Pune has a significant number of captive setups of global firms such as Amdocs, Citi, Microsoft, Oracle, Kanbay, Mimosa Systems, HSBC Software and Symantec. The IT majors that have BPO operations as well in Pune include Infosys, Wipro and Mahindra Satyam (Tholons, 2009).

The following are the main attractions of Pune as an Outsourcing Destination:

a) **Skilled Workforce:** Pune offers a large, readily available network of highly skilled people. The 'Mercer 2015 Quality of Living rankings' evaluated local living conditions in more than 440 cities around the world where Pune ranked at 145, second in India after Hyderabad. With this high quality of life, Pune is an attractive city in which to live and work, and attracts professionals and students from India, South East Asia, the Middle East and Africa (Dan McCue, 2016).

b) **Presence of Higher Educational Institutions:** The city offers a large talent pool with 650,000 students and 5,700 engineering colleges in Pune University, and 526 affiliated graduate colleges in the city (Wardadkar, 2009). The city is popularly known as the "Oxford of the East". A great number of educational institutions and universities made it a popular location for both foreign and Indian students.

c) **Excellent Infrastructure:** Known as a center of innovation and technology, Pune has numerous IT parks, an international convention center, hotels, transportation and other hallmarks of a world-class city (Dan McCue, 2016). The software scene in the city is very attractive. Pune is inviting small as well as large software companies to invest here. Talking in statistics, Pune has 212 software companies; Bangalore has 208 followed by Hyderabad with 97. However, Pune hasn't been able to reach the highest number of software companies (300) located in Mumbai (Wardadkar, 2009).

The city has lower real estate costs and is house to 50+ top IT and BPO companies who have their main offices here (Back Office Pro[28], 2014).

d) **Location:** Pune city is conveniently located. Proximity to Mumbai and the triangle between Pune, Nasik and Mumbai provides a geographical advantage.

e) **Low Labour Costs:** In comparison to other outsourcing cities, Pune offers lower labour costs. An entry-level techie in Pune earns between \$270 and \$290 and an entry-level BPO executive can cost from \$180 to \$200 (Tholons, 2009: 31).

f) **Foreign Language Capabilities**: The city has more than 15 institutes that offer foreign language training. Speaking French, Spanish, German and Japanese is quite popular amongst Puneites (Dan McCue, 2016). While Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad suffer from the accent factor, the language skills in English in Pune are found to be average.

g) The city is also developing skills in financial services, legal services, contact center (English), product development, application development and infrastructure-management services (Tholons, 2009: 31).

h) Special incentives to the IT industry are provided by the Maharashtra IT policy, which supports Pune in emerging as a preferred outsourcing location in the world. The government also has designed beneficial and business friendly functioning policies.

i) Lastly, the safety factor in the city is incredible. Usually, it's said that if immigration in a city is high, the crime rate will automatically increase. However, this hasn't happened in Pune (Wardadkar, 2009).

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[28] "Back Office Pro" is a recognised market leader that provides a wide range of outsourcing services that meet or exceed ISO standards. For more than 12 years, Back Office Pro has been providing outsourcing services to clients across the world, including United States, Canada, Australia and all leading countries across Europe. Back Office Pro offers a full suite of outsourcing services, including data management, creative design, audio and video, engineering services, research and analytics, image editing, animation services, and transcription services (https://www.crunchbase.com/organisation/backofficepro#/entity).

1.3.2. Women Workers in BPO Industry in India

The market for global Business Process Outsourcing is predicted to triple in size by 2020 (Nasscom, 2012). Such explosive growth has had and will continue to have huge economic benefits for Asia. The benefits are clearly manifest in India, the leading offshore outsourcing (O&O) destinations for the BPO industry. In India, this development has resulted in an initiative to increase the number of women in the BPO workforce by a staggering 50 per cent (Forey, 2013: 503). It is argued that, in countries such as India, where women have traditionally faced historical and ingrained discrimination, BPO employment provides both challenges to traditional stereotypes, opportunity and potential hope (Forey, 2013: 503).

According to Nasscom Vice President Sangeeta Gupta, "The Indian IT-BPO industry has set high standard in gender inclusivity. Women are a key and vital part of our workforce, and their participation in the workforce is seen as a critical enabling factor for continued growth of the industry" (Nasscom, 2009). Currently women constitute 34% of the IT-BPO workforce (i.e. over 1.3 million women employees) an increase of around 1.8 times since 2009. Nearly 10% of these women are in senior management roles. Further, 28% of the women employees in the sector are primary breadwinners, thereby indicating the changing trend of women's employment and inclusion in the sector (PwC, 2016:8). One out of three employees joining the $143-billion Indian IT-BPO industry is a woman (Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2016). As per the latest estimates, the number of firms that have more than 20% women at senior level increased to nearly 60%, and nearly 51% of firms has more than 20% of women at C-suite (top-level) level (Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2017).

In India, women involvement in IT/BPO sector is persistently growing. As shown in figure 1.2 the share of women participation in BPO sector has increased from 20% in 2004 to 26% in 2008. Likewise, the sector witnessed a growth of 4% during 2008-2012. Currently in February 2017, woman employee shares 34% of total IT-BPO workforce. Thus Figure 1.2 indicates women's constant rise in Indian IT-BPO workforce representation.

Figure 1.2. Share of Women in Indian IT-BPO Workforce
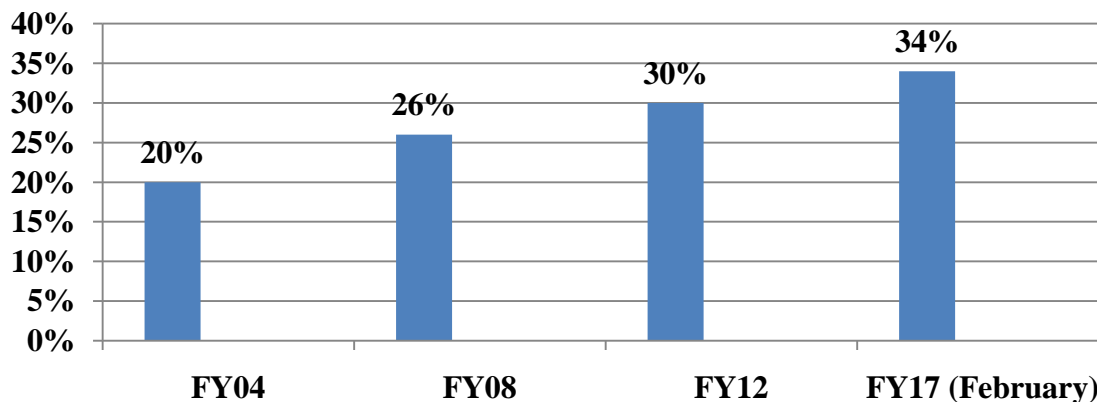
Source: Women Safety 2013, Nasscom and Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit 2017

In technical jobs traditionally considered all male-bastions, we see the percentage of female employees steadily increased from 35 percent in 2006 to 36 percent in 2008, especially at junior levels (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008). The percentage of women workforce in BPO-IT industry is close to 34 percent and majority of them are at entry level (Nasscom, 2014). It is important here to note that, while women participation in BPOs is significantly growing in recent years and are impressively engaged at entry and middle management level, still in many organizations, there is deficiency in proper representation of women at senior levels. For instance, women managers have gone up a mere 2 percentage points from 21 per cent in 2012 to 23 per cent in 2014, indicating that cultural factors as well as a not-supportive-work environment have been crucial factors in women climbing up the corporate ladder (*Business Line,* 2016).

Apart from cultural and not-supportive-work environment, there are a few other factors such as, the need of balancing work-life, personnel bindings, child care, professional travel requirement, relocation specially when husband needs to move to other location etc. also turn to be obstacles on the way of women's career furtherance. Promotion brings greater authority and additional accountability and less flexibility with it, which is not a preferable proposal for many women due to personnel bindings. It often becomes a challenge for them to balance work, family, society and self with greater professional responsibility and added work rigidity. Thus, personnel bindings stand

against their career plan and determinations and many highly potential women professionals cease to continue their career development at early stage; which largely impacts on women representation at higher level.

This is a great concern for the sector to improve the number of female members engaging in BPOs, to control the drop-out rates and enable them to become industry's leading professionals. In that direction, the sector has brought to light the deterrents and addressed them through structured policies which are discussed in details in the thesis. The attempts, policies and initiatives undertaken by organisations to eliminate the challenges of women at workplace have a large effect and making believable in an inclusive and supportive workplace.

The study focuses on the BPO women workforce in Pune, in particular, due to Pune being emerged as one of the largest and chosen outsourcing locations in the country. As found during survey, Pune's women workforce is constituted of women from all parts of the country namely, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Hyderabad, Goa, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Kerala, Mumbai, different other part of Maharashtra, Kolkata, Delhi, Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, Meghalaya etc. Though, the workforce represents different places, traditions and cultures, still the existence of greater 'Indianness' influenced by BPO culture is quite recognisable. The industry follows a single Work Policy in all its locations throughout the country, therefore women employees located in Pune are also governed by similar organisation policy, culture and work environment like any other parts of the country.

As revealed during field work, BPO employees find Pune in comparison to other places, as the safer city for women to work even at night and believe that Pune's culture makes the employees more traditional both at professional and personnel levels. As found during survey[29], women employees are more respectful and carry the "readiness to accept" attitude in professional lives in comparison to other cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore. They are more family oriented and lead a smoother work-life balance.

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[29] A few interviews are conducted with employees working in BPOs located in Mumbai and Delhi; who frequently travel to the Pune branch as a part of professional requirement. Survey was also carried out among employees who had worked in BPOs in Mumbai and now shifted to Pune.

Inadequacy of governmental transportation compare to Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and a few other cities, makes the transport section of Pune BPOs alert, systematized and attentive towards its employees.

1.4. Review of Literature

A number of studies have been reviewed in order to find out knowledge gap on the theme under discussion. The source materials reviewed are mainly fall under two categories-firstly the writings of scholars-mainly books and articles on globalisation and international division of labour; globalisation and transnational corporations; globalisation, labour and trade; globalisation and woman employment. They can be used to study and develop a clear understanding of such concepts and their various manifestations in the 'global era'. Second set of literature is the writings of various scholars on BPO industry in both global and Indian context and these have been used to develop a clear understanding of the industry under study. Besides, the reports and articles published by the Government of India and media on some important developments related to the sector have also been used.

J. Timmons Roberts and Amy Hite's (2000) *From Modernization to Globalisation: Perspective and Development and Social Change* attempts to understand globalisation and its social effects. The article included in this book, "The New International Division of Labour in the World Economy" by Folker Frobel, Jurgen Heinrichs and Otto Kreye (1980) is useful since it is among the first to consider the role of gender in the choice of locations & workers by the transnational firms. Another article incorporated in the same book, "Gender, Industrialization, Transnational Corporations and Development: An Overview of Trends and Patterns" by Kathryn B. Ward and Jean Larson Pyle (1995), is also useful in understanding how the intertwining of class, race and gender shapes economic role, often in different ways in different parts of the world. The chapter "Global Trade and Finance" written by Matthew Watson in the book, *The Globalization of World Politics: an Introduction to International Relations* written by John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens (1997) provides important issues in the conduct of global trade and global finance.

Articles in particular, "Globalisation and WTO: Impact on India's Economic Growth and Export" by Alok Kumar Pandey (2008); "What caused globalisation?" worked by Tejvan Pettinger (2013); "NAFTA's Economic Impact" by James McBride and Mohammed Aly Sergie (2017); "Globalisation and its impact on education policy of India" by Dr. Rajesh Kumar (2015); "Globalisation" by David Held and Anthony McGrew (1999); "Humanising Globalisation" by World Trade Organisation (2006); "Ten Theses on Globalisation" worked by Amartya Sen (2001); "Is Globalisation A Stablizing Force In The International System?" by Ian Howarth (2013); "Globalisation and Civil Society: NGO Influence in International Decision-Making" by Riva Krut (1997); "NGOs Facing Democracy and Globalisation" by Eduardo Gudynas (1997); "Globalisation: An Overview of Globalisation and Its Positive and Negative Aspect" by Colin Stief (2017); "NGOs in India" Joydeep (2013); "What are the Driving Forces of Globalisation?" by Nirav S (2012); "Globalisation and Its Impact on Indian Economy" by Md. Suresh Khan (2015); "Globalisation, Privatisation and Competition in the Third World Countries" by Ama Aka Udu (2016); "Globalisation: A Brief Overview" by IMF (2008); "Dimensions of Globalisation" by Prabhjot Kanwal Chhabra (2015); "Globalisation is primarily of three types: Economic, Cultural and Political" by Samir (2011); "What is the EU and why was it formed?" Alice Foster (2016); "Globalisation Presentation" by Janice Pietro (2015) and books like, *The Race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalisation* by Tomas Larsson (2001); *The Media and Globalisation* by Terhi Rantanen (2005); article "Globalisation and Crime", written by Usman Ahmad Karofi and Jason Mwanza (2006); books namely *The Globalisation of Politics* edited by Andelko Milardovic, Davor Paukovic, Davorka Vidovic (2008); *Globalisation: A Reference Handbook* by Justin Ervin and Zachary Alden Smith (2008); *Myles' Textbook for Midwives* by Jayne E. Marshall and Maureen D. Raynor (2014); *When did globalisation begin?* by Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson (2002); *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-Secular Age* by Elaine Graham (2013); *Food and Health in Early Childhood: A Holistic Approach* by Deborah Albon and Penny Mukherji (2008); *Globalisation and International Business* by Rakesh Mohan Joshi (2009) and reports like, *The U.S. Should Not Join the International Criminal Court* presented by Steven Groves and Brett Schaefer (2009) are useful in understanding the conceptual framework of globalisation.

Some important works that analyse various aspects of globalisation like, "The End of the Old Order? Globalisation and the Prospects for World Order" written by David Held and Anthony McGrew (1998); the book, *Twentieth Century International Relations* by Michael Cox (2007), inform this study the theoretical aspects as well as the course and context of globalisation. In the similar way, other scholarly works like, *Globalisation and the Good* edited by Peter Heslam (2004); *Culture, Health and Illness*, by Cecil G. Helman (2007); *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* by Thomas L.Friedman (1999); *The Rise of The Global Economy*, edited by Michael Veseth (2002); *The Eighty Years' Crisis: International Relations 1919-1999* edited by Ken Booth, Michael Cox, Tim Dunne (1999); *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*", David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton (1999) and the articles like, "Global Trade Liberalisation and the Developing Countries" by IMF (2001) are used to explore contemporary globalisation.

Besides, the scholarly works of Cato Institution (2000), "The Blessings and Challenges of Globalisation"; "From Sarajevo to September11: The Future of Globalisation" by John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge (2003); "Labour Markets Trends, Financial Globalisation and the Current Crisis in Developing Countries" by Rolph van der hoeven (2010); "Employment and Labour Market Effects of Globalisation: Selected Issues for Policy Management" written by Haroon Bhorat and Paul Lundall (2004); "The Globalisation of Migration: Has the World Become More Migratory?" by Mathias Czaika and Hein de Haas (2014); "The Impact of Globalisation on Employment" by Di Pietro Michel, Esther Mirjam Girsberger and Alain Vuille (2007); "Globalisation and Its Impact On Employment In India" by Sandeep Bansal and Rama Bansal (2014); "Globalisation, Labour And Migration: Protection Is Paramount" by Patrick Taran (2002); "Globalisation, Brain Drain and Development" by Frederic Docquier (2012) are helpful to analyse the consequences of globalisation both in general and on labour market and employment level.

In addition, the joint study of the Secretariat of the World Trade Organisation and the International Labour Office (2009), *Globalisation and Informal Jobs In Developing Countries*; Speech by Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Michel

Camdessus, at the Sixteenth World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) Brussels (1996); Reports namely, *The Impact of Globalisation on the World of Work*, presented by ILO (1996); *Globalisation and Employment: The Impact of Trade on Employment Level and Structure in the Philippines* by Aniceto C. Orbeta; and articles vis., "Globalisation, Labour Markets, and Inequality" by Uri Dadush and William Shaw (2012); "Globalisation, economic policy and employment: Poverty and gender implications" by James Heintz (2006); "Globalisation and The Informal Economy: How Global Trade and Investment Impact On The Working Poor" by Marilyn Carr and Martha Alter Chen (2001); "How does globalisation have positive and/or negative effects on your – and your friends' – efforts to secure a job?" by UN Focal Point on Youth (2011); "The Employment Impact of Globalisation in Developing Countries" by Sanjaya Lall (2002); "Globalisation and Workers in Developing Countries" by Martin Rama (2001) and books in particular, *What Goes Up Must Come Down: Have the Total Compensation Packages Awarded to Empolyees of Major Labour Unions in The Past Created The Decline and Demise of Those Same Unions Today?*" by William N. Spencer (2011); *The Impact of Globalisation on Income and Employment: The Downside of Integrating Markets* by Michael Spence (2011); *Does globalisation promote employment?* by Huwart, Jean-Yves and Loic Verdier (2013) and article, "Globalisation And Employment In Developing Countries" written by Ajit K. Ghose (2008) are used to analyse the impact of globalisation on labour market.

Ariticles "From WID to GAD: Conceptual shifts in the Women and Development discourse" by Shahrashoub Razavi and Carol Miller (1995) and "Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development" by Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, and V. Eudine Barriteau (2000) and books like, *Critical Globalisation Studies* edited by Richard P. Appelbaum, William I. Robinson (2005); *Managing Work-Life Balance in Construction* written by Helen Lingard and Valerie Francis (2009); *Common fate, common bond: Women in the global economy* by Mitter (1986); *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries* by Portes, Alejandro, Manuel Castells and Lauren Benton (1989) and *Women in the Latin American Development Process*, edited by Christine E. Bose, Edna Acosta-Belen (1995) helped in understanding the concept of women and global economy. Furthermore, books as *Globalisation and*

Feminist Activism by Mary E. Hawkesworth (2006); *The Handbook of Globalisation, Second Edition*, edited by Jonathan Michie (2011); *Women's Activism and Globalization: Linking Local Struggles and Transnational Politics* edited by Nancy A. Naples and Manisha Desai (2002); *Gender Justice, Human Rights and Neo-liberal Economic Policies* by Diane Elson (2001); and articles namely, "Globalisation and Women Empowerment" by Gagandeep Singh (2012); "Gender And Globalisation: Female labour and Women's Mobilization" by Valentine M. Moghadam (1999); "Women at Work Trends 2016", ILO (2016); "Impact of Globalisation on Women Workers in India" by G.Subhalakshmi (2012); "Gendered Impacts of Globalisation: Employment and Social Protection" by Shahra Razavi, Camila Arza, Elissa Braunstein, Sarah Cook and Kristine Goulding (2012); "The Effects of Globalisation on Women in Developing Nations" written by Nazreen Bacchus (2005); "Globalisation and Women at Work: A Feminist Discourse" by Sumita Sarkar (2007); "Globalisation and Economic Liberalisation" by J. Ghosh; Lucy B. Bednarek's (1998) "The Gender Wage Gap: Searching for Equality in a Global Economy'"; "Dividing the Surplus: Will Globalisation Give Women a Larger or Smaller Share of the Benefits of Cooperative Production?" by Kenneth G. Dau-Schmidt (1996) and world Development Report, 2012 *Globalisation's impact on gender equality: What's happened and what's needed*; *Human Development Report, 2015*, published for the United Nations Development Programme; World Development Report, 2012 are used to develop the perception of relation between globalisation and women employment.

In the similar way, articles like, "Safeguarding gender equality" by Masuda M. Rashid Chowdhury (2014); *Remove the obstacles! On the right track to equality* by ILO (2008); "Impact of Globalisation on Women in India" by Dr. Ghazala Parveen (2013); *Recognizing Rights Promoting Progress: The Global Impact of The Convention of The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW)* (2010) by Ann Warner are helpful to be familiar with the efforts taken towards gender equality.

In order to get the clear concept of Business Process Outsourcing, major components of BPO, trends in BPO sector and BPO business models, books particularly, *Trends, Challenges & Innovations in Management-Volume II*, edited by Dr. Ramesh Kumar Miryala and Dr. Ravi Aluvala (2015); "The Outsourcing Handbook: How to

Implement a Successful Outsourcing Process" by Mark J Power, Kevin C Desouza and Carlo Bonifaci (2006) and scholarly articles like, "Productivity Effects of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO): A Firm-level Investigation Based on Panel Data" by Jorg Ohnemus (2009); "Onshore, Offshore, or Near Shore What is the Difference?" by Jim Iyoob (2012); "Offshore Outsourcing–Is it for You?" by Susan Young (2014); "Advantages of nearshore vs. offshore outsourcing" by Jorge Agnese (2015) and "A Study On Coping Strategies Adopted By Select ITES Company Employees" by T. Ezhilarasi (2015) are referred.

Books namely, S. Nakkiran and D. John Franklin's (2008) *Business Process Outsourcing: Concept, Current Trends, Management, Future Challenges*; *Business Process Outsourcing: The Competitive Advantage* By Rick L. Click and Thomas N. Duening (2005); *A study of human resource administration in selected BPO industries in Pune city* by Sunita Shantilal Pokharna (2011); *Soft Skills for the BPO Sector* by Shalini Verma (2009); *Strategic outsourcing* by Dr. Dogra Balram, Kharo Navjot and Verma Rajesh (2007); *Information Technology and India's Growth Prospects* by T. N. Srinivasan and articles like "Highest Gender Gap in Employment Rates in India: Survey" written by Vidhi Choudhary (2013); "A Study of Health Problems of Working Women in BPO sector in Delhi and NCR" by Dr. S.S. Sarangdevot, Dr. Rakesh Kumar Sharma and Prof. Rajender Kumar Yadav (2012); "The impact of Gen Y women in the corporate sector" Uma Ganesh (2014) are of great help to construct the picture of Indian BPO industry.

Apart from the above mentioned references, work especially *English and Development: Policy, Pedagogy and Globalisation* edited by Elizabeth J. Erling and Philip Seargeant (2013) has developed the profile of Indian BPO. Clearly expressed information on leading BPO-ITES cities in India is provided in article "Impact of Globalisation on BPO Industry in India" by B. Sathish Kumar and A. Elgin (2007). Article "Top 20 IT-BPM Industry Employers" by Sangeeta Gupta (2016) gives an overview of major players in BPO sector in India. The major services offered by Indian BPO companies are well-defined in articles "The BPO Industry and Jobs in India" by Semat (2016); "7 Ways to Improve the Data Entry Process" by Gopinadh Gulipalli

(2015) and "The Difference between Bookkeepers and Accountants" By Cameron McCool (2017).

In order to figure out the impact of IT-BPO industry in Indian economy, the following works are referred- Rama Vedashree's (2012) article "Indian IT-BPO Industry: Driving India's Socio Economic Transformation"; Chandra Sekhara, Reddy Konda, Sowmya Bommu and G. V Naidu's (2015) "Impact of IT-BPO Industry On The Indian Economy and Society-A Study of Selective IT Emploees"; Bhanu Singh and Prateek Majumdar's (2016) "India's IT sector: Back office of the global village"; Meenu's (2016) "Performance of IT and ITES Industry in Indian Economy". Over and above those, press releases and statements of Nasscom; various articles, reviews, reports, data and executive summary published by Nasscom; study conducted by Nasscom and Mckinsey; study carried out by Nasscom and Mercer; reports and figures published by Department of Electronics and IT on Indian BPO industry; reports published by Department of Information Technology; Fact Sheet of IT & BPO industry published by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology; documentations issued by India Brand Equity Foundation are also utilized to get information on the effects of IT-BPO sector in Indian economy.

Articles in specific, "A Study of Work Life Balance with Special Reference to Indian Call Center Employees" written by Parul Agarwal (2014); "NASSCOM: "Anything as a Service" Will Revitalize India Inc." by Narayan Ammachchi (2013) have helped in developing a clear concept of the growth of IT-BPO sector in the recent years and future outlook of the industry. The books used in the study to analyse the government initiatives towards Indian BPO sector are- *Entrepreneurship Development in India* by Sanjay Tiwari and Anshuja Tiwari (2007); *International Business*, by Shyam Shukla (2008) and *Business Process Outsourcing-The Indian Experience* by Nitin Mehrotra (2005). Book *Bank 2.0: How Customer Behaviour and Technology Will Change the Future of Financial Services_* by Brett King (2010) and article "Heavy Accents Lead to Call Center Job Loss in India" by Frank Griffin (2014) are used to analyse the challenges in BPO sector.

Amrita Gupta's (2012) article "Health, Social and Psychological Problems of Women Employees in Business Process Outsourcing: A Study in India" made it easier to understand the health issues faced by women employees in call centres. "Management of Stress Among Women Employees in BPO Industry in India: A Contemporary Issue" written by Sonal Pathak and Dr Anil Sarin (2011) gives useful information about the changes that are required to manage stress among women and also highlights the coping strategies that can be selected to further continue corporate journey to gender inclusion and advancement of women in the organisation. "Gender Issues of Women Employees at Work Place in Indian BPO Sector" by I.N. Murty, Govind Pedireddi and Sayyad Imtiyaz (2012) provides an analysis of work-life balance of women employees in this sector. This work is also useful to understand the relationship between socio-economic characteristics and gender issues in BPO. "Women in Call Centres", by Preeti Singh and Annu Pandey (2005), gives a clear and basic knowledge and information about the women employees. Arun Bhatia and Rashmi Bhatia (2007) in their paper titled, "Stress at work and How to Manage It" gives a clear picture of stress that can be both positive and negative and which has an impact on employees performance at work. Article "Stress among Working Women" by Mythili (2008) is helpful to develop a comprehensive understanding of Indian Society's approach towards women employees in BPOs. Article "IT Needs More Women in Tech Roles" by Sohini Bagchi (2014) was of great help to analyse the initiatives taken at organisational level to eradicate the challenges of women employees.

The articles used in the study to analyse a comparative picture of the situation of different states and vis-a-vis women employees, such as "Women in BPO Sector in India: A Study of Individual Aspiration and Environmental Challenges" by Dipa Dube, Indrajit Dube, Bhagwan R. Gawali & Subechhya Halden (2012); "Women Employees in BPOs and Call Centres Problems and Solutions (a case study of Chandigarh) by Arvinder Kaur and Shibani Gupta (2012) and "Women in the Work-Place-BPO Industry" written by C.M. Sudha Arogya Mary (2012) are relevant in the present study since they reveal the service condition, benefit, hazards of women employees in the states namely Karnataka, West Bengal, Chandigarh and Channai city respectively. All these articles are much useful in analysing the problems and challenges faced by women employees.

"Looking at Information Technology from a Gender Perspective: The Call Centres in India" written by Rekha Pandey (2005), is used in current study to develop an overall understanding of the gender related issues in BPO industry, especially in India.

The impact of globalisation and BPO industry on economic, social and cultural empowerment of women is an important aspect of the current study. The articles such as "Examining the 'Global' Indian Middle Class: Gender and Culture in the Silicon Valley/Bangalore Circuit" written by Smitha Radhakrishnan (2008); "Social and Cultural Impact of Outsourcing: Emerging Issues from Indian Call Centres" by Pradhan and Abraham (2005); "Problems of Women Employees in call centres" by Dr P. Akbar Batcha (2007); give a micro level understanding of the image of women employees in BPO industry in the eyes of Indian urban middle class. These writings discuss certain significant issues, which are directly related to the question of gender differentiation in employment and discrimination at different levels.

Information on BPOs located in Pune and knowledge on female workers in Pune based BPOs are gathered from articles namely, "Strategic Sourcing Locations: Spotlight on Pune, India" by Dan McCue (2016); "The impact of call centre employment on women in India" by Gail Forey (2013). Reports published by Tholons are used to get the top 100 global outsourcing destinations and information on BPO located in Pune. Tholons reports are also helpful in understanding the main attraction of Pune as an Outsourcing Destination.

The reports and the articles used in the study to explore the existing safety processes and measures for women are-"Safer night shifts for women in IT, BPO Sectors" written by Shilpa Phadnis & Anshual Dhamija (2012); "Rapes Shock India: BPO and Many Female Workers Want Out" by Naryan Ammachchi (2013); "Briefs: Pune BPO Rape Case: Convicts Plead for a Chance to Reform", *DNA*, 5th September 2012; "Pune BPO Employee Rape-Murder: HC Confirms Death for Two Convicts", *CNN IBN*, 17th September 2012; "Pune BPO employee's Rape and Murder Case: Bombay High Court Confirms Death Sentence For Two Convicts", 17th September 2012, *The Times Of India, Pune*; "High Court Agrees With Death Sentence in Pune BPO Rape Case", *NDTV*, 12th September 2012; "Pune BPO Girl Rape and Murder Case: Two Convicts Get Death

Sentence" *NDTV*, 21st March, 2012; "Pune BPO Girl Rape and Murder Case: Cab Driver, Accomplice Found Guilty", *NDTV*, 8th March 2012; "Two Get Death for BPO Girl Rape and Murder in Pune", 21st March 2012, *DNA*; "Two Get Death Sentence in Pune BPO Girl Rape Case", *Rediff.com*; "Pune BPO Staffer Rape-Murder Convicts Guilty: HC", 13th September 2012, *DNA*. The noticeable changes in the transport and security processes in the present time are highlighted in these articles. They are useful in this study, since they give a detailed picture of the transport and security system for women in BPO industry.

Besides, several articles and reports published in different newspapers, magazines like, *Business Line*, 2011, 2013 and 2016; *The Financial Express*, 2014; *Business Standard*, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016; *Maps of India*, 2015; *Voicen Data Bureau*, 2012; *India Infoline News*, 2014; *The Hindu*, 2014 and 2016; *Business Today*, 2014 and 2016; *DNA*, 2016; *Financial Chronicle*, 2015; *India Today*, 2013; *ET Bureau*, 2009 and 2015; *The Economics Times*, 2009, 2010 and 2014; *Hindustan Times*, 2012 and 2013; *TimesJobs.com*, 2013 and 2014; *Times of India*, 2014; *Live Mint*, 2014; *TNN*, 2012 and 2014; *Dataquest*, 2014; *Live Law News Network*, 2017; *Business Wire*, Nov 23, 2010; *The Economic Times*, 2013; *Information Week, 6th* February 2013; *The Wall Street Journal*, 2013 are also used to strengthen the understanding of various aspects of BPO industry in India.

The literature available on BPO sector indicates that although a lot is available in print on the subject, but it has not highlighted the nature of women participation in BPO sector and its impact on Indian women. In some of the available literature one or two aspects of women employment in BPOs are touched upon but all the issues are not studied in depth. There are little or negligible literature dealing with the impact of BPO employment on Indian women. Such limitations become a major hurdle in the form of understanding the nature of participation of women in the sector. An attempt has been made in this study to bridge such knowledge gaps by studying the characteristics of women representation and its effects on their personnel and professional life.

Therefore, the present research work seeks to analyse the impact of globalisation on BPO industry, the pattern of women participation in the sector, the challenges and

prospects of women workforce. This study is an endeavour to fill the gap by studying the impact of BPO employment on Indian women; the initiatives taken by the sector to eradicate the challenges that women face at BPO work culture, which would further facilitate overall growth of women in the sector.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The study addresses the following objectives:

a) To analyse the changing nature of BPO industry.
b) To examine the nature of women participation in BPO industry in India.
c) To analyse the impact of BPO industry on women workers in India.
d) To examine the challenges before female workers in BPO sector in India.

1.6. Rationale of the Study

In the words of Kris Lakshmikanth, founder Chief Executive and Managing Director, The Head Hunters India Pvt. Ltd, an executive search firm, "Traditionally India has been a country where the man of the house gets the money and the wife takes care of the house. The influx of women in employment has increased primarily because of the IT and BPO industries, there you will find the men and women ratio at 60:40. Even the service sector has started employing more and more women now" (Choudhary, 2013). The dynamic involvement of women and phenomenal growth of India's BPO industry has formed an international bunch of professionals who are enthusiastically engaged in designing an image of contemporary India that is global in scope, yet Indian in spirit. These women workers have displayed great skill in making delicate balances between an 'Indian' home life and a 'global' professional life.

ITES industry by virtue of its proximity and access to global customers has a ringside view of the transition taking place in the styles and functioning of business; it is one of the first sectors to recognise the contribution that women could make and has started to take strides in signaling this intention (*The Financial Express*, 2014).

In the past fifteen years, especially since 2003-2004, corporate interest has been changed about "Gender-Diversity". Initiative is being taken which aimed at capitalisation

of "female talent pool" which is easily available and who are eager to accept the challenge (Pathak and Sarin, 2011: 65). India has a vast educated English-speaking workforce with computer skills indeed; it is estimated that, in India over 1,67,000 engineering students and approximately 1.5 million graduates are added each year to the youth workforce (Dr. Sarangdevot et.al, 2012: 45).

Globalisation of economy has forced corporate workforce to concern more in winning the "War for Talent" and India's educated professional women are a significant asset that should no longer be undervalued and underutilised (Pathak and Sarin, 2011). Notably, unlike many other sectors, BPO brings privilege of employment for the youth, with better disposable personal income (DPI) and swift promotional approach. As a result, career aspiration and financial targets are obtained by female professionals before the usual or expected time. BPO industry is at explosion and number of women employees keeps on increasing.

A Mckinsey report shows that companies with gender-balanced executive committees have a 56 percent higher operating profit compared to companies with male-only executive. Study conducted by Catalyst shows a 26 percent difference in return on invested capital between companies with 19-45 percent women board directors as compared with those who had no women on their boards (Uma Ganesh, 2014). Hence, increasingly ITES industry is working towards hiring and retaining larger percentage of women in their workforce; recognising the value women executives are capable of bringing to their workforce through their unique characteristics, they can benefit from namely, multitasking, paying attention to detail, conflict resolution, ability to deal with fuzziness, flexibility and creativity required for problem solving and innovation (ibid). These are some of the key capabilities in demand today as businesses are redefining the new leadership capabilities required for building and sustaining successful businesses and women have a natural advantage in contributing to this new leadership construct (ibid).

BPO industry is one of the dominating professional sectors in major cities in India and in Pune as well. In Pune it is very prominent with 50+ top international BPO companies. Apart from representing various parts of the country, the female workers in Pune based BPOs share the similar kind of professional life with the women employees

in Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi (NCR), Chennai, Hyderabad or other major cities of India. Importantly, most of the leading BPOs in Pune are also located in other parts of the country and thus interconnected both at national and international level. The policies through which the workers are governed by, the nature of opportunities they get, scope for growth, challenges, facilities and BPO work culture in other cities are similar to Pune and therefore, it broadly reveals the general nature of Indian BPO industry. Therefore, it is understood that, a study on women BPO workers in India with special focus on women employees in Pune based BPOs will be helpful to contribute some new knowledge into the existing knowledge on the work culture and life style of Indian professional women in BPO as a whole.

1.7. Methodology

The current study is an analytical study. It critically examines the changing nature of BPO industry in global era with special reference to factors/variables such as income status, percentage of participation, global exposure, mobility, knowledge level, opportunities for growth etc.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods have been followed in this study. Quantitative method has been used in terms of looking at the growth and expansion of the BPO industry by collecting and analysing data and indicators. Qualitative method has been followed to develop an understanding on the theme with regard to nature of participation.

A general study on women employees in BPOs in India and a detail study on Pune based BPOs has been carried out in this research. A list of 20 international BPOs operating in the Pune city was compiled and it was decided to take 12 for the sample. The names of the BPOs were pooled out from www.careers360.com and divided into 3 strata as Voice Process, Non-Voice and Semi-Voice in order to represent the 3 major work profiles of the industry and 4 BPOs from each work profile were selected using random

sampling technique. Convergys India Services Pvt Ltd[30], Aegis BPO[31], Mphasis[32], IBM Daksh[33], Sopra Steria Limited[34], WNS Global Services Pvt Ltd[35], Capita India Pvt Ltd[36],

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[30] Convergys is the world leader in customer experience outsourcing. It has careers available in 33 countries at 150+ locations. In India it is located in Bangalore, Gurgaon (4), Hyderabad, Pune and Thane.

[31] Aegis BPO is a leading global business services provider of customer experience management. Present in 44 locations across 9 countries and with over 40,000 employees, Aegis manages almost half a billion customer interactions every year for over 150 clients across diverse sectors. In India, it is located in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Gurgaon, Hazira, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Noida and Pune. Aegis has been recognised as a Great Place to Work 2015 by Great Place To Work® Institute in collabouration with Nasscom. Aegis gets recognised by SHRM (The Society for Human Resource Management) for 'Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion', for the fifth time in a row (2012,2013,2014,2015 and 2016).

[32] Mphasis is a leading IT solutions provider, offering Applications, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Infrastructure services globally through a combination of technology knowhow, domain and process expertise. Mphasis ranked #2 in Silicon Review's Top 30 Fastest Growing Tech Companies 2016 list. In India it is located in Bangalore, Mangalore, Chennai, Puducherry (Pondicherry), Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Noida, Indore, Hyderabad, Vadodara, Kolkata, Raipur.

[33] IBM Daksh India serves as the global destination for managing business processes for all clients of IBM. IBM Daksh India Ranked 1 among Global Outsourcing 100, in the 2007 listing of the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals for the World's Best Outsourcing Service Providers. In India it is located in Gurgaon (5) Bangalore (3), Chandigarh, Chennai, Kolkata (2), Mumbai (2), Pune (2), Vizag.

[34] Sopra Steria Group SA (commonly referred to as Sopra Steria) is a European information technology consultancy established in September 2014 upon the merger of Sopra Group SA and Groupe Steria SCA (commonly refererred to as Sopra and Steria, respectively). With over 40,000 employees in more than 20 countries, Sopra Steria had revenue of €3.7 billion in 2016. India is an Integral part of Sopra Steria's global business strategy. It has a strong local presence in India with more than 5,000 people working across 4 delivery centers: Noida, Bangalore, Chennai and Pune.

[35] WNS Global is a global business process management company headquartered in Mumbai, India. More than 30,000 employees serve across 45 delivery centers located in China, Costa Rica, India, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey, UK and US. WNS Wins the National Quality Excellence Award for Workforce Development in 2016 and also recognised as an AON Best Employer India 2016.

[36] Established in 2004, Capita India is part of Capita plc, the UK's No. 1 business process management (BPM) and professional services company. Capita India is Capita's largest multi-client service centre, partnering with clients to transform and streamline their business processes by adding valuable insights and delivering exceptional customer service. Capita has over 7000 staff based out of 5 offices across 3 cities – Mumbai, Pune and Bengaluru.

Infosys BPO Ltd[37], TCS BPO[38], EXL[39], Wipro BPO[40], Cognizant BPO[41] were the twelve BPOs chosen for the study. Since it was not possible to build one-to-one rapport with all the employees, a sample size of 250 women employees was chosen for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to gather data from the Entry Level, Team Manager and Manager level employees. To minimise bias and simplify analysis of results, the subsets of the frame, in a simple random sample of a given size, are given an equal probability. Specifically, the variation between individual opinion within the sample is a good signal of variance in the entire population, which makes it relatively easier to estimate the precision of outcome. A questionnaire (Close Ended and Open Ended) was intricately designed to tap the demographic variables including Name, Age, Current Designation, Home Town, Cast/Community, Education, Parents/Husband's Occupation, Marital Status and Tenure of the women respondents. It gathered information about

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[37] Infosys BPO, the business process outsourcing subsidiary of Infosys, was set up in April 2002. Infosys BPO focuses on integrated end-to-end outsourcing. Infosys BPO operates in India, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Ireland, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, the United States, Puerto Rico, China, the Philippines, Singapore, and Australia, and as of January, 2017, employed 35,070 people. In India it is located in Bangalore (2), Chennai, Gurgaon, Jaipur (2), Pune. Infosys BPO has been consistently ranked among the leading BPO companies and has received over 60 awards and recognitions in the last 5 years. It has consistently been ranked among the top employers of choice, on the basis of its industry leading HR best practices.

[38] Tata Consultancy Services,a part of the Tata group, India's largest industrial conglomerate, TCS has over 378,000 of the world's best-trained consultants in 45 countries. The company generated consolidated revenues of US $16.5 billion for year ended March 31, 2016 and is listed on the BSE (formerly Bombay Stock Exchange) and the NSE (National Stock Exchange) in India. TCS named as part of an exclusive group of ten of the world's best employers. Company also ranked a top employer in Europe for fifth consecutive year, with eight countries picking up recognition in the region.In India it is located in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Baroda, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon, Gandhinagar, Goa, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Mumbai, Pune, Thiruvanathapuram.

[39] EXL Service is a provider of decision analytics, operations management, outsourcing, business transformation and IT services. EXL's services are structured around insurance, banking, financial services, utilities, healthcare, transportation and travel industries. The company is headquartered in New York City, but most of its services are provided through India-based delivery centers. In 2007, it was ranked 10th among India's ITES-BPO (IT enabled services - Business process outsourcing) exporters. In India it is located in Noida (6), Gurgaon (3), Pune (2).

[40] Wipro Ltd is a global information technology, consulting and outsourcing company with 170,000+ workforce serving clients in 175+ cities across 6 continents. Wipro entered the BPO business in 2002. In India it is located in New Delhi, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore, Greater Noida. Wipro won "Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion" award & "Employer with best Employee Health and Wellness Initiative" award at SHRM India HR Awards 2016. Wipro also wins 'Nasscom Corporate Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion 2016'. Wipro recognised as the 'Best Company to Work For', among supersized organisations in India, in the 2014 edition of a study conducted by Great Place To Work® Institute and The Economic Times.

[41] Cognizant is an American multinational corporation that provides information technology, information security, consulting, ITO and BPO services. In 2015, the Fortune magazine named it as the world's fourth most admired IT services company. In India it is located in Bangalore, Chennai, Coimbatore, Gurgaon, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Pune.

career option, level of women representation, growth, scope, family and social support, attitude of organisation/employer towards women employees, smooth work-life balance, safety and security, the challenges facing and suggestions on behalf of improve women participation in the industry.

Besides gathering data through questionnaire, interviews (close ended and open ended) were also held among 40 BPO employees (32 women employees and 8 male employees) in order to substantiate the data gathered. The population for interview was divided into 4 strata as Entry level, Manager Level, Director Level, Top Level, in order to represent the various hierarchical positions of an organisation and their views on the subject under study. From the above four categories, employees are approached for interview using lottery method. Thus, with the unconditional assistance of various associates, data was collected comfortably from the respondents working in the selected BPOs.

Data collection began in the month of April 2016 and went on till September 2016. The questionnaire was printed and 20 questionnaires were posted to each of the twelve selected BPOs. The questionnaires were sent to 240 respondents, of which 205 responded, thus making the response rate to be 85.41%. 180 completed instruments were used for the study.

The major source materials for the study are various reports published by related agencies such as The Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY), ILO, World Bank, IMF, Nasscom, Research Institutions like V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, IGIDR, CSD, Women Commission and concerned Departments (Labour, Family Welfare, Industry) of Government of India. Research papers and articles published in Journals, Newspapers, Magazines, Website and Books about BPO industry has been used as secondary sources.

1.8. Research Questions

This study rests on the following research questions-

   a) What is the impact of globalisation on BPO sector?

b) What are the characteristics of women participation in BPO sector in India?

c) What are the challenges and prospects of women workforce in the BPO industry in India?

d) Does participation of Indian women in BPO sector has a positive impact?

1.9. Organisation of the Study

The work presented in this thesis focuses on the women workforce in the Indian BPO industry; how the sector is impacting women in the country. The study has been organised in six chapters. A brief outline of the various chapters is as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction

It is a prologue to the thesis. It establishes the foreword about globalisation and labour market, BPO industry and female workforce. The last part of the chapter contains general overview of topic including rational of the study, methodology, research questions, objectives and organisation of the study. The chapter also reviews the relevant literature.

Chapter II: Globalisation, Employment and Women Employees

This chapter deals with globalisation and employment relation with a special emphasis on women workers. The chapter commences with the conceptual framework of globalisation which includes origin, history and driving forces behind it and also looks at the dimensions of globalisation elaborately. It then hits on the impact of globalisation on employment in general. The chapter then moves to an analytical discussion of the effects of globalisation on women employees and discusses the recent trends of women employment. In the end, the chapter discusses gender equality in employment around the world. The point of discussion in this chapter is the relation between globalisation, employment and women employees.

Chapter III: Business Processing Outsourcing Industry in India

Chapter 3 is an exhaustive and comprehensive description of the Indian BPO sector. It begins with a brief discussion on global BPO industry. It then analyses Indian BPO segments, its evolution, major BPO-ITES cities, market size, its growth, contribution and

impact on Indian economy. This part also brings to light the Governmental Initiatives towards Indian BPO sector. Finally, it talks about the challenges in Indian BPO industry.

Chapter IV: Women Employees in BPO Industry in India

This chapter deals with the detailed findings and analysis of the major objectives of the study i.e. discussion on the nature of women participation in BPO industry in India; discussion on the impact of the expansion of BPO sector on women employees and examination of the challenges of female workers at workplace. The chapter examines women employee's participation, role and representation at workforce, the challenges they face in both professional and personnel levels. This part also reveals the health issues of BPO women workers with special reference to those who exclusively deal with calling processes and work in night shift. The chapter also discusses the initiatives taken by the industry to accelerate the diversity and inclusion across the sector at large and for recognizing, implementing and supporting woman oriented work policies. The chapter identifies how the industry is handling the important issues of women's safety and security.

Chapter V: BPO Women Employees in Pune: A Case Study

Chapter 5 focuses on the major findings from the field study and survey. Effort has been made in this chapter to analyse and understand the phenomena. It contains the Field Survey conducted in 12 Pune based BPO firms. This chapter elaborates impact of BPO firm employment on women and their families in Pune in particular. The chapter also emphasis on examining the significance of management part at organisational level in enriching women employment.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

Chapter 6 makes the concluding remarks of the study in relation with globalisation, BPO sector and women employment. The key findings of the study and recommendations have been elaborated in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Globalisation, Employment and Women Employees

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on globalisation and employment with special emphasis on women workers. The first part of the chapter discusses the conceptual aspects of globalisation; which includes origin, history, dimensions and driving forces behind it. The second part tries to analyse the impacts of globalisation on employment in general and final part consists of an analytical discussion on the effects of globalisation on women employees. The chapter also touches briefly the recent trends of women employment. In the end, the chapter discusses gender equality in employment around the world.

2.2. Defining Globalisation

The International Forum on Globalisation (IFG) defines globalisation as "the present worldwide drive toward a globalised economic system dominated by supra-national corporate trade and banking institutions that are not accountable to democratic processes or national governments" (Milardovic et.al, 2008: 74). The World Bank defines it as "the growing integration of economies and societies around the world........"(Ervin and Smith, 2008: 3). For World Health Organisation (2013), globalisation is "the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of people and countries and is generally understood to include two interrelated elements: the opening of borders to increasingly fast flows of goods, services, finance, people and ideas across international borders; and the changes in institutional and policy regimes at the international and national levels that facilitate or promote such flows (Marshall and Raynor, 2014: 4).

According to the Director-General of World Trade Organisation (WTO), Pascal Lamy, "globalisation can be defined as a historical stage of accelerated expansion of market capitalism, like the one experienced in the 19th century with the industrial revolution. It is a fundamental transformation in societies because of the recent technological revolution which has led to a recombining of the economic and social forces on a new territorial dimension" (WTO, 2006).

Globalisation can be thought of as the widening, intensifying, speeding up and growing impact of world-wide interconnectedness (Yolles, 2006: 624). Globalisation has enabled individuals, corporations and nation-states to influence actions and events around the world — faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before — and equally to derive benefits for them. The process has led to the opening, the vanishing of many barriers and walls, and has the potential for expanding freedom, democracy, innovation, social and cultural exchanges while offering outstanding opportunities for dialogue and understanding (WTO, 2006). It is facilitated by information technology and operated by global trade and investment; a process of interaction and incorporation among the people, companies and governments of various countries. It has great impact on political systems, on economic advancement and profitability, on culture, ecosystem and also on prosperity in societies around the globe.

Though the scholars are not agreed on any single definition of the term globalisation, most of them accept two facts -firstly, it is occurring and continuing. Secondly, it is a process of enhancing interconnectedness. According to Amartya Sen, "Globalisation is not in itself a folly: has enriched the world scientifically and culturally, and benefited many people economically as well" (Sen, 2001). Martin Albrow (1990) defines it as follows; "Globalisation refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society" (Albrow and King, 1990: 9). In the words of Swedish journalist Thomas Larsson, "globalisation is the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer. It pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world" (Thomas Larsson, 2001: 9).

Roland Robertson, professor of sociology at University of Aberdeen, writes in 1992 as: "Globalisation as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole" (Terhi Rantanen, 2005: 7). Marfleet and Kiely (1998:3) defined globalisation in reference to a world in which societies, cultures, politics and economics have in some sense come closer together. In buttressing their conception of globalisation, they refer to Giddens (1964:64) who took the conception as intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Karofi and Mwanza, 2006 :3).

2.3. Evolution of Globalisation Debates

The lack of an unambiguous definition of globalisation has resulted in vicious debate among scholars about when globalisation began. A few scholars proclaim that globalisation as a phenomenon has started with Genghis Khan's invasions or with the earliest human migratory routes; while few others consider it as far more contemporary. Many opined its starting point as not earlier than World War II and view globalisation in its recent form as a modern phenomenon. One view states that globalisation cannot be backdated past the late 1940s, the post war era when the United States established itself as the most powerful country in the world (Investopedia, 2015). As per Andre Gunder Frank, "There was a single global world economy with a worldwide division of labour and multilateral trade from 1500 onward" (Frank, 1998: 52). Some world historians attach globalisation 'big bang' significance to 1492[1] and 1498[2]. Such scholars are on the side of Adam Smith who believed that these were the two most important events in recorded history (O'rourke and Williamson, 2002: 23).

But one thing is for sure that globalisation phenomena of the late twentieth century is neither a new idea nor an instant movement. It has a long history. Ancient Greek culture, for example, spread across much of south western Asia, northern Africa, and southern Europe. The globalisation of Greek culture came with the conqueror Alexander the Great (*National Geographic*, 2011). The Silk Road, a trade route between China and the Mediterranean Sea, promoted the exchange of ideas and knowledge, along with trade goods and foods such as silk, spices, porcelain, and other treasures from the East (ibid). This is an example of economic trade, through which, corporations and people have been selling to and buying from each other in lands at great distances for centuries and likewise, they have invested capital for enterprises in global platform. Furthermore, Silk Road served as a channel of cultural transmission among the civilizations along its network.

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[1] Christopher Colombus stumbles on the Americas in search of spices (O'rourke and Williamson, 2002: 24).
[2] Vasco da Gama makes an end run around Africa and snatches monopoly rents away from the Arab and Venetian spice traders (O'rourke and Williamson, 2002: 24).

Globalisation was accelerated in the nineteenth century with the Industrial Revolution, as mechanical mills and factories became more common. Many companies used raw materials from distant lands. They started selling their goods in other countries (ibid). Movement of goods, people and ideas beyond national boundaries expanded considerably in the following centuries. Eventually, the evolution of new forms of transportation, namely railroads and the steamship, and advancement in communication technology compacted time and space and promoted rapid rates of global interchange. In the late 19th century and early 20th century, the increasing connectedness of the world's economy and cultural dimensions dramatically sped up globalisation. In the twentieth century, globalisation was accelerated with the growth in global movement of knowledge, the spread of free trade and mobility of capital around the globe, the expansion and development of road vehicles, air travel, intermodal transport and enhancement in Information Technology and telecommunications

Since 1980s and particularly since the mid-1990s, the term globalisation has been in increasing use. In 2000, the International Monetary Fund identified four basic aspects of globalisation: trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, migration and movement of people, and the dissemination of knowledge (Graham, 2013). Further, environmental challenges such as climate change, cross-boundary water and air pollution, and over-fishing of the ocean are linked with globalisation. Globalising processes affect and are affected by business and work organisation, economics, socio-cultural resources, and the natural environment (Kumar, 2015).

2.3.1. Driving Forces of Globalisation

Although globalisation is not a new development, its pace has increased with the advent of new technologies, especially in the area of telecommunications" (Albon and Mukherji, 2008). Today, news and information moves instantly on the internet. Sophisticated technology in the digital global economy of the internet era has broken the national limitation of time and space. The world begins to metaphorically shrink. The technological evolution and upgraded communication network has promoted the exchange of goods and services, resources, and ideas, irrespective of geographical location. In recent years, people across the globe have the means to communicate and can connect without any difficulty unlike that in past.

Advancement in transportation, such as the jet engine, steam locomotive, steamship, and container ship making global travel easier. From 1970, there was a rapid adoption of the steel transport container. This reduced the costs of inter-modal transport making trade cheaper and more efficient. There has been a rapid growth in air-travel, enabling greater movement of people and goods across the globe (Pettinger, 2013). With the speedy development and increase of air travel, road vehicles, intermodal transport; international business grew rapidly after the beginning of the 20th century.

Increased free trade is an important force of globalisation. To increase trade, many countries have created free trade agreements with other countries. With this, countries agreed to remove trade barriers, i.e. they may stop charging tariffs, or taxes on imports. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) which came into existence on January 1, 1995 with a view to ensure global cooperative trade environment, to raise incomes and to create ample job opportunity for the nations through fair and open trade, has added new dimension to economic globalisation (Pandey, 2008). Though, there are various trade barriers still in existence, gradual relaxation in the cross-border trade restrictions has promoted world trade over the years.

The surge in the development of Multinational Corporations around the 1980s bears a definite link to the pervasiveness of economic globalisation. In fact, modern day globalisation is identified by the actions of multinationals. Their operations span across multiple countries, cultural styles and they are acting as facilitators of economic globalisation (Cook, 2006). Reich (1994) notes that; "the increasing fleet footed-ness of businesses around the world via technological developments" has impacted greatly on global integration by making the process easier. It is also said that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) which is an empirical feature of multinationals is growing faster than global trade (Brinkman and Brinkman, 2002).

In recent years, the arena of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) action has expanded rapidly from local and national settings to the international level (Krut, 1997). NGOs play important roles both in democratisation and in globalisation. Many NGOs have maintained programs on the problems of democracy, while others have been the vehicles of civic movements fighting for the democratisation of their governments. Also, many organisations move in the international arena, forming

coalitions and networks, which seem to represent one of the symptoms of the globalisation (Gudynas, 1997). Many international NGOs[3] deal with issues that do not pay attention to borders such as, global climate change, energy use, or child labour regulations (Stief, 2017).

In the Internet Age, capital has become internationally mobile. Capital is being moved globally with the ease of electronic transference and a rise in perceived investment opportunities. Developing countries are a popular place for investors to place their capital because of the enormous room for growth (Stief, 2017). In past few decades there has been a general reduction in capital barriers, making it easier for capital to flow between different economies. This has increased the ability for firms to receive finance. It has also increased the global interconnectedness of global financial markets (Pettinger, 2013).

Mobility of individuals, information and knowledge, as agents of production and countries have smoothened the growth process of globalisation (Nirav, 2012). People are becoming increasingly mobile within and across borders to meet the social and economic challenges of globalisation with the search for employment at the heart of most movement in the 21st century (*World Migration Report*, 2008). With more than 200 million international migrants in the world today, two and a half times the number in 1965, and most States simultaneously being countries of migrant origin, transit and destination, WMR 2008 states that human mobility has become a life choice driven by disparities in demography, income and employment opportunities across and within regions (WUNRN, 2008).

Increase in consumer demand is considered to be a major force to accelerate globalisation. Over the years, the demand of consumers for various products has increased along with the development in standard of living and increment in level of income. Furthermore, consumers are concerned and well informed about services and products available in other countries, which urges organisations to work in partnership with foreign companies for catering to the demands of the domestic market.

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[3] A few examples of NGOs: i) Wikimedia Foundation ii) Partners In Health iii) Oxfam iv) Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee v) International Rescue Committee vi) PATH (Program for Appropriate Technology in Health) vii) CARE International viii) Médecins Sans Frontières ix) Danish Refugee Council x) Amnesty International xi) Doctors without Borders.

2.3.2. Dimensions of Globalisation

Globalisation as a concept refers to the ways in which developments in any part of the world can rapidly come to have spill-over consequences for the security and well-being of populations in other part of the globe. It involves economic integration; the transfer of policies across borders; the transmission of knowledge; cultural stability; the reproduction, relations, and discourses of power; it is a global process, a concept, a revolution, and "an establishment of the global market free from socio political control" (Khan, 2015: 12). Globalisation is primarily of three types, namely- economic, cultural and political. Economic globalisation is the increasing economic interdependence of national economies across the world through a rapid increase in cross-border movement of goods, service, technology and capital (Joshi, 2009:43). In the words of Herman E. Daly, on his work "Globalisation Versus Internationalization" (1999), "Globalisation refers to global economic integration of many formerly national economies into one global economy, mainly by free trade and free capital mobility, but also by easy or uncontrolled migration. It is the effective erasure of national boundaries for economic purposes. International trade (governed by comparative advantage) becomes interregional trade (governed by absolute advantage). What was many becomes one" (Daly, 1999: 31).

There are countless indicators that illustrate how goods, capital, and people, have become more globalized. As per International Monetary Fund, the value of trade (goods and services) as a percentage of world GDP increased from 42.1 percent in 1980 to 62.1 percent in 2007 (IMF, 2008). Foreign direct investment increased from 6.5 percent of world GDP in 1980 to 31.8 percent in 2006. The stock of international claims (primarily bank loans), as a percentage of world GDP, increased from roughly 10 percent in 1980 to 48 percent in 2006 (ibid). The number of minutes spent on cross-border telephone calls, on a per-capita basis, increased from 7.3 in 1991 to 28.8 in 2006. The number of foreign workers has increased from 78 million people (2.4 percent of the world population) in 1965 to 191 million people (3.0 percent of the world population) in 2005 (ibid).

Cultural globalisation refers to the transmission of ideas, meanings and values around the world in such a way as to extend and intensify social relations (Chhabra, 2015: 1). The global flow of ideas, knowledge and values is likely to flatten out

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cultural differences between nations, regions and individuals (Kansal, 2013). It is the spread of one culture across national boundaries. Cultural globalisation is marked by the universal use of cultures that has been facilitated by the common culture media, information revolution, the spread of satellite communication, telecommunication networks, information technology, international travel and the internet etc.

The wide spreading of certain cuisines such as American fast food chains like McDonald's, Burger King, Domino's Pizza and KFC demonstrates the aspect of cultural globalisation. Understanding more than one language is becoming more common as globalisation brings cultures into more direct contact. Some languages, such as English and Mandarin, have gained millions of speakers. Other languages, such as Quechua (S. Amer) and Tlingit (W. Canada) have become endangered. The process of globalisation has spread religious faiths far beyond their areas of origin. Roman Catholicism, a Christian faith that developed in the Mediterranean region, is now the dominant religion of the Philippines (Pietro, 2015).

Music plays an inevitable role in cultural globalisation. Music categories, such as reggae and jazz launched locally and eventually emerged as global phenomena. Globalisation promoted World Music by letting music flow from developing countries to broader audiences. The global extension of English movies is another image of globalisation. So, Cultural Globalisation, a phenomenon, relates to the increase of cultural objects between countries.

Economic and cultural globalisation caused nations to become more connected politically. Political globalisation involves the expansion of political interrelations at global platform. In the past, governments typically served and were confined to the welfare of citizens of their own nations. Today, political globalisation brings the whole world under one government and brings down the importance of nation states. Now, as the world is much more globally connected; political problems or issues in one part of the world directly or indirectly touch many other areas, which means politics oftentimes occur in a internationally connected environment.

Political globalisation refers to the phenomenon, when governmental action takes place on global level, where liability such as citizen's well-being and economical development, are performed in accordance with international political system. Political Globalisation focused on multilateral organisations, international

institutions; following common purposes. The member-states remain sovereign, but through their obligations and commitments, they have, to some extent, integrated themselves to the concerned international organisations (Samir, 2011). Supranational institutions, like the EU was created in the wake of the Second World War in order to foster economic cooperation and to prevent further conflict between European countries (Foster, 2016). Emergence and growing prevalence of intergovernmental organisation, such as International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, The G8, ASEAN, APEC, SAARC etc has taken the place of national functions or has extended national concern to promote international agreement.

2.4. Globalisation and Labour Market

The demand for labour comes from employers and is derived from their need to employ workers to produce goods and services. Firms choose their staffing levels according to a number of factors, including: the cost of labour; the productivity of the workforce; the current and anticipated level of production; and the price that the firm can command for its output. Job opportunities arise when firms expand their operations and when firms replace employees who are leaving their jobs, such as retirees (Government of Canada, 2005). Employment market is the place where workers and employers interact with each other. Employers compete to hire the best, and the workers compete for the best satisfying job (*The Economic Times*, 2013). It involves the interaction of labour demand and labour supply[4]. Within the labour market individuals can be classified as either economically active or economically inactive[5] (Spence, 2011).

Globalisation has been associated with profound changes in the labour market such as changes in the level and structure[6] of labour demand, in skill shortages and relative wages, and in employment elasticity, among others. All of these have far reaching implications on worker's welfare and therefore on the success of the process of adjustment to globalisation itself (Orbeta, 2002). Sweeping changes have taken

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[4] Labour demand refers to the amount of labour firms demand in order to produce goods and services and labour supply is primarily determined by the size of the population.

[5] Here, economically active talks about those who are employed and economically inactive refers to those who are unemployed.

[6] Here, Changes in the structure of labour demand means the shift in labour demand from unskilled to skilled over a period. Today, the employment of skilled workers has increased both in absolute figures and comparative to their less skilled counterparts than in the past.

place in the world's economies in recent decades, changes which have reshaped the structure of employment on a global scale. National economies are now more integrated into the global system than at any other point in the recent past (Heintz, 2006: 1).

Globalisation is clearly contributing to increased integration of labour markets and closing the wage gap between workers in advanced and developing economies, especially through the spread of technology. It also plays a part in increasing domestic income inequality (Dadush and Shaw, 2012). Mobility and lowering barriers, as a consequence of globalisation process, have opened up scope for people looking for jobs. Globalisation, through the abolition of economic barriers and the opening up of borders, has facilitated people to move from one's country of origin to other countries in search of work. Regional agreements which govern travel and conditions of employment have brought into prospect at both national and global levels.

Globalisation is characterized by two major aspects that have profound impact on labour markets. One is the increase in cross-border movements (trade) of final goods and services. The other is the increase in the cross-border flow of production inputs, namely, labour, capital and technology (Orbeta, 2002). The effect of globalisation on employment is mediated through its impact on overall and sectoral economic growth. With globalisation, economic structure would tend to correspond more closely to the comparative advantage of the country. Sectoral shares will change in different ways depending upon the country's natural and human resource endowments, existing infrastructure and technological capabilities, and the degree to which the domestic economy has already been exposed to international competition in the past (ILO, 1996).

Global trade and investment patterns are having a dramatic impact on employment relations and work arrangements around the world. The impact can be both negative and positive and differs by context, by industry and trade, and by employment status (Carr and Chen, 2001). The movement to lower trade barriers and open world trade has undoubtedly increased world growth in goods and services; it has increased incomes and raised standards of living globally, which doesn't mean, unfortunately, for each individual. It is clear that, so far, the countries that have

entered thoroughly and positively into this freeing of trade have gained the most. And the entire world has benefited from their gains (Spencer, 2011: 60).

Originally the globalisation of trade involved, principally, trade in goods; but now we have an explosion of trade in services, telecommunications, financial services, computer and information technologies, creating industries and frequently better paid jobs of a nature and on a scale undreamt of twenty years ago (ibid). Constructive impact can be seen in the increased ability of developing countries to produce new opportunities for employment and production following the alleviation of price distortions with reference to both capital and labour.

Foreign investment is increasingly important in the creation of jobs and improvement of living standards in developing countries. More generally, it allows companies to position themselves in an increasingly competitive world through geographical diversification. Individuals, companies, investment trusts, mutual funds, and pension funds seek returns on capital throughout the world on a scale and with investment instruments unknown twenty years ago (Camdessus, 1996)[7]. Those capital markets that have the ability to adapt will gain the greatest advantages. And it is those investors that diversify internationally that will best limit investment risks (ibid).

The advent of globalisation has spurred intra-and inter-country movement; which is not forced. Globalisation has resulted in new information technology (IT) and software companies being set up. Many international companies are investing in and opening new companies in developing countries; they look to outsource here because developing countries have qualified people in this industry with lower labour costs than in Europe. Furthermore, there has been a transfer of technology from one country to another, which can lead to innovative job creation (UN, 2011).

It is observed that, in advanced economies, globalisation is redistributing employment opportunities and incomes (Spence, 2011: 28). In highly developed economies, globalisation would result in more opportunities for the acceleration of capital outflows and a reduction in the share of manufacturing activities as production shifts to off-shore locations in search of lower costs and better access to overseas

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[7] 96/13 Address by Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, at the Sixteenth World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) Brussels, June 26, 1996.

markets. This is what is termed as 'deindustrialisation' where cheap imports from low wage economies flood highly developed economies' markets thus, destroying unskilled jobs (Orbeta, 2002).

Globalisation can offer many employment benefits to developing countries. This is because of the markets become more accessible, transport costs lower, information easier to get, technology easier to access and capital easier to raise: this promises more exports, faster transfer of technology and greater investment resources. On the domestic front, closer integration with the world economy also promises much (Lall, 2002). Trade liberalisation, according to received trade theory, promotes labour-intensity in (export and domestic -oriented) activities and so boosts employment.

Investment liberalisation leads to larger inflows of technology, information, capital, skills and various services, often in a 'packaged' form that lets them be deployed quickly and efficiently. It may also give access to the internal production systems of TNCs[8] that increasingly span the world and offer massive markets, rapid growth and technological as well as employment benefits (ibid). Opening the economy to international service and infrastructure providers can help create jobs, raise productivity and strengthen competitiveness. It is not just foreign firms that benefit: local enterprises can respond to more intense competition and new market opportunities by raising their productivity and collaborating with, learning from and supplying to TNCs (ibid).

The labour market is one of the main channels through which globalisation can affect developing countries. Increased import penetration, export sales, competition in services, foreign direct investment and exchange rate fluctuations prompted by international capital movements could all, in principle, have an impact on employment and labour earnings (Rama, 2001). A common concern is that 'cheap' labour and the 'race to the bottom' may be the flip side of globalisation. To become

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[8] TNCs is a very promising area, particularly in functions that can now be easily relocated by the use new ICTs. The explosion of software, data entry, back-office services and similar activities in India is one example (Lall, 2002). The Indian IT-BPO industry has received over $7 billion (nearly Rs 47,467 crore) in Foreign Direct Investment, including $5 billion (nearly Rs 33,905 crore) in start-up investments, in current fiscal (2015-16). The industry added 2 lakh employees in 2015-16 reaching a total employee base of 3.7 million. The industry is expected to add around 2 lakh jobs and is marching steadily to reach total revenue of $350 billion (nearly Rs 2,373.35 crore) by 2025 with digital revenues spearheading growth (DNA, 2016). A large part is handled by local companies subcontracting to clients overseas, but there is also rapid growth of foreign affiliates, many of which are expanding local design and development activities in India (Lall, 2002).

more competitive, countries may need to dismantle their trade barriers, abolish their legal monopolies, privatise their state-owned enterprises and reduce overstaffing in their bloated bureaucracies. These reforms could lead to the massive loss of 'good jobs' and boost unemployment rates (ibid). The macroeconomic fluctuations resulting from short-term capital movements could also increase job insecurity. On the other hand, the delocalization of production to developing countries in sectors such as food processing, textiles or garments could also increase the demand for labour, thus expanding employment opportunities and raising workers' earnings (ibid).

Over the past decade, world trade has expanded significantly. Few would contest that increased trade has contributed to global growth and job creation. However, strong growth in the global economy has not, so far, led to a corresponding improvement in working conditions and living standards for many (ILO and WTO, 2009). Absolute poverty has declined, thanks to the economic dynamism of recent years, the efforts of private companies, migrant workers and their remittances and the international development community. Nevertheless, in many instances, labour market conditions and the quality of employment growth have not improved to the same degree (ibid).

In many developing economies job creation has mainly taken place in the informal economy where around 60 per cent of workers find income opportunities. However, the informal economy is characterised by less job security, lower incomes, an absence of access to a range of social benefits and fewer possibilities to participate in formal education and training programmes–in short, the absence of key ingredients of decent work opportunities (ibid).

Globalisation has not had a systematic effect on formal sector employment in emerging developing countries. In some countries, it stimulated employment growth and depressed productivity; in others it stimulated productivity growth and depressed employment (Ghose, 2008: 497). Globalisation seems to have had a systematically adverse effect on employment conditions outside the formal sector; growth of output per worker in the non-formal part of the economy slowed down in most developing countries during the globalisation period (ibid). This resulted from the fact that the growing trade orientation induced a reallocation of investment from the non-formal to the formal part of the economy. Overall, even in those developing countries that have

derived growth benefits from globalisation, the employment effect has tended to be negative (ibid).

Former expert on employment in ILO, Ajit K. Ghose, has stated in his work, "Globalisation and Employment in Developing Countries", that "Globalisation has not had a systematically positive effect on employment in the modern sector while it has had a systematically negative effect on employment in the traditional sector; overall, therefore, globalisation can be said to have had a negative employment effect in developing countries" (Ghose, 2008: 497).

The forces of globalisation have been associated with both rising living standards and a deterioration in income distribution in advanced countries: Low-skilled wages have remained flat or even declined, while high-skilled wages have increased sharply. Labour income fell as a share of GDP by 3.5 percentage points from 1993 to 2009. And Gini coefficients, which provide an aggregate measure of income inequality, rose from the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s in all G-7 countries except France (Dadush and Shaw, 2012). Inequality also has increased in many developing countries. According to the International Labour Organisation, of the 28 developing countries for which data are available, 21 experienced increased income inequality from the early 1990s to the mid-2000s. As in advanced countries, openness to trade and foreign investment have increased the relative return to skilled labour and capital, while reducing the relative return to unskilled labour (ibid).

According to Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, at the Sixteenth World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) Brussels, June 26, 1996, "The greatest fear is that a global labour market allows extremely low paid workers in developing countries to undercut the wages of the less skilled workers in developed countries. Undoubtedly, in the last twenty years, there has been a marked increase in unemployment of the low skilled in most developed countries. There is also evidence in some developing countries of a large class of low skilled, usually poorly educated, workers employed at very low wages. But this is not exclusively related to an excessive globalisation of trade, but more so to do with the changing of product and production from that of unskilled/semi-skilled to that of much more highly skilled workers and manufacturing processes" (Spencer, 2011: 60). Even though competition from low-wage countries

has some negative effects on employment in OECD countries, the link between globalisation and job losses is less obvious than it first appears. In times of economic shock such as the recent recession, globalisation seems to create more jobs overall than it destroys. Likewise, the total increase in wage inequality of the past two decades seems more linked to (Huwart and Verdier, 2013).

2.4.1 Globalisation and Indian Labour Market

India is the second highly populated country of the world and has consequently big labour force. India like any other nation could not remain outside the forces of globalisation (Angrish, 2014). The 1980s turned out to be a turning point towards high growth and a better fiscal situation in India and therefore there was no room for interventions by the IMF or World Bank. The time of these institutions came in 1991 when the Indian economy ran into a crisis of high fiscal deficit, very low foreign exchange reserves and high level of inflation. Since 1991, the Indian economy has passed through a series of policy shifts making liberalisation and privatisation all pervasive, cutting across economic as well as social sectors (Reddy, 2012: 29-30).

Globalisation has its impact on social security laws as well. Due to preference for contract labour by the employer the job security of industrial workers are under threat (Angrish, 2014). Labour market in India is dominated by unorganised, low-wage, low-productivity and insecure jobs. There has been a further increase in the share of casual labour because of more pressure towards flexibility demanded by globalisation. Consequently, people shifted from self-employment to casual labour, the share of casual and contract labour has been increasing in the organised sector (Reddy, 2012: 32). This is labour flexibility of an extreme kind at the behest of promoting integration of the Indian economy with the global economy. Whatever increase there has been in employment has been in unregulated work with no job or social security. Stagnation in organised sector employment has been accompanied by growing non-permanent, temporary, casual and contract employment (ibid). There has been a growing "decent work deficit" characterised by the absence of social security or protection for workers. What was needed was protection from the vagaries of flexibilisation and this would have done by the state by extending social protection to increasing number of casual workers (ibid: 33).

The processes of globalisation and privatization, with their emphasis on growth as the primary objective and employment generation as a trickle-down effect, have affected labour and employment conditions in India. The impact has varied across sectors and segments of the economy, depending on their direct or indirect linkages with the integration process (ibid: 34). The structural shift in employment from agriculture to non-agricultural activities was long overdue. Unlike the conventional experience, in India, shifts in the share of employment from agriculture to non-agriculture have not much gone into manufacturing, but services, especially private investment-driven services (ibid: 37). Most of these shifts in the share of employment have been in the post-reform period. The process of integration of the Indian economy with the global economy appears to have directly and indirectly caused more shifts towards services than the non-agricultural goods sector (ibid: 37-38).

The interpretation of labour laws has been continuously changing in India since independence. At present many Multinational Companies and Business Process Outsourcing have started operating in India. They are pressing for amendments in different present labour laws, since these companies feel that the labour laws in India are very strict and believe in the policy of Hire and Fire (Angrish, 2014).

Though globalisation does not facilitate movement of labour as easily and in as high numbers as capital, there has been considerable international migration of Indian workers. Though large-scale international migration began during the oil boom period of the 1970s and 1980s when semi-skilled and unskilled workers moving to Arabian Gulf countries, the character of migration has changed with globalisation. Since the 1990s, labour migrants have mainly been highly-skilled workers, particularly in IT, relocating on temporary work permits to Australia, Canada and the United States (Reddy, 2012: 32).

2.5. Globalisation and Women Employment: The Global Scenario

"Globalisation is a gendered phenomenon" (Hawkesworth, 2006: 2). This implies that globalisation affects men and women differently; so, while discussing the impact of globalisation on employment, at the present global scenario; it is essential to discuss the impact of globalisation on women employment in particular. "Women do two thirds of the world's work, receive ten percent of world's income and own one

percent of the means of production" (Lips, 2017: 292) and within the past two decades, globalisation has had a huge impact on the lives of women and is paving a way for them to involve in different spheres of life like economic[9], political[10], sports[11], social[12] and cultural[13]. Globalisation is helping most of the countries to eliminate the discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child. Policies are framed for helping women to know about their rights and enhancing their skills at the competitive edge (Singh, 2012: 107-109). Globalisation has coincided with a global increase in female labour force participation rates which has narrowed the gender gap[14] from 32 to 26 percent. A number of factors associated with globalisation have contributed to this, including the growth of production and export in the developing world (Camila et al, 2012).

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[9] The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India is a union of women labourers willing to work hard and seize any work opportunities they might get. Globalisation has aided their opportunities in various ways. SEWA has established a Women's Cooperative Bank with 125,000 members, and through the aid of globalisation, they have even reached the women in the rural areas of India. Markets in different areas can now be reached by Indian women who have a part in businesses, or by craft-making women who have licenses to export their goods. With more freedoms and opportunities, these women are raising their standard of living by generating more income (Kaur and Kaur, 2010).

[10] In recent years, in India, there have been explicit moves to increase women's political participation. In the Panchayati Raj system, women have been given representation as a sign of political empowerment. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level (Islam, 2014: 95). At the central and state levels too women are progressively making a difference. The Women's reservation policy bill is slated to further strengthen political participation (Dr. Deb and Dr. Sen, 2016: 338).

[11] Soccer has become globalized, from its recruitment of players from other countries to games being broadcast all around the world, and it is developing into something that is more than just a game. Women's soccer, an uncommon term in most regions of the world, due to globalisation is increasing in popularity worldwide, along with women's rights in general. Soccer has allowed women in all regions of the world to be given the chance to improve their rights. The globalisation of soccer is the reason that women's rights are reaching new heights around the world ("Soccer Globalisation and Women's Rights", Megan Price-http://meganglobalisation.blogspot.in/p/final-globalisation-project.html).

[12] Increase of women's employment due to globalisation is impactful in their social choices since most young women have their own income or in some cases, they have more income and more job opportunity compared to men. Through this, they can develop to be independent in choice. They will have freedom in choosing to marry whomever they please or they can choose to remain single as they will (http://eng.suboot.org.af/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23:globalisation-and-its-impacts-on-women&catid=9:report&Itemid=6).

[13] Media can be viewed as a positive aspect of globalisation. Media has the opportunity to reach people, and convey a message to people all over the world. A magazine called Femina is the top women's magazine for Indian women. It was created in 1959 and since it showcased its website in 1996, it has received much feedback from Indians all over the world. Femina shows the accomplishments of different Indian women from all over and provides inspiration to the women who read it (Dr. Deb and Dr. Sen, 2016: 338).

[14] When economists speak of the "gender gap", they usually are referring to systematic differences in the outcomes that men and women achieve in the labour market. These differences are seen in the percentages of men and women in the labour force, the types of occupations they choose, and their relative incomes or hourly wages (Tararani, 2017).

Over the past 30 years, the driving forces of globalisation such as, greater trade openness, growing global economic integration and interdependence, the spread of Information Technology and telecommunications have expanded economic opportunities for female workers and in some cases increased their wages as well. Increases in world trade, particularly in the services, has increased the involvement of women in the service sector. Women around the world have made impressive inroads into professional services such as law, banking, accounting, and computing; in tourism related occupations; and in the information services, including offshore airline booking, mail order, credit cards, word-processing for publishers, telephone operators etc. (United Nations, 1999).

The world trade in services also favours women's labour migration, in contrast to the demand for men manufacturing workers during the earlier periods of industrialization in Europe and the United States (Moghadam, 1999:373-374). Mexican, Central American, and Caribbean women have migrated to the United States to work as nurses, nannies, or domestics; Filipinas and Sri Lankans to neigh-boring countries as well as to the Middle East to work as waitresses, nurses, nannies, or domestics; Argentine women to Italy to work as nurses; and an increasing number of Moroccan, Tunisian, and Algerian women migrating alone to work in various occupations in France, Italy and Spain (ibid).

The expansion of the labour market increased employment opportunities for women in non traditional sectors, thus enabling them to earn income. This is enhancing women's capacity to negotiate their role and status within the household and society (United Nations, 1999). More women are gaining access to global, domestic, and local information primarily through wider exposure to television, cell phones and the Internet. Increased access to information allows women to learn about life and social customs in other places—knowledge that can change perceptions and ultimately promote adoption of more egalitarian attitudes. In 1998, only 20 percent of people in developed countries and about 1 percent in the developing world had a cell phone subscription. By 2009, these shares had climbed to 100 percent and 57 percent

(WDR[15], 2012: 255 and 271). Internet access and use have also grown. In high-income countries, Internet users increased from 12 percent of the population in 1998 to 64 percent in 2009, and from near 0 to 17.5 percent in developing countries (ibid).

In last two decades, globalisation has created a tremendous impact on the lives of women in developing nations. With the establishment of international free trade policies, such as North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and GATT, transnational corporations are using the profit motive to guide their factories toward developing nations in search of 'cheap' female labour. Corporations prefer female labour over male labour because women are considered to be 'docile' workers, who are willing to obey production demands at any price.

In developing nations, certain types of work, such as garment assembly, is considered to be an extension of female household roles. Cultural influences in developing nations also impacts employment stratification (Bacchus, 2005). Bringing a high demand of employment opportunities for women in developing nations creates an instantaneous change within the social structure of these societies. Although the demand for female employment brings about an array of opportunities and a sense of independence, the glass ceiling continues to exist with the 'feminization of poverty' (Moghadam, 1999:388).

Globalisation underlies the nearly universal increase in women's share of the non-agricultural labour force among high growth or semi-industrialized developing economies in the past few decades; a result of the tremendous growth in manufacturing trade and export processing from the developing world. Increases in women's employment have also occurred among exporters of non-traditional agricultural goods, such as designer fruits and vegetables or cut flowers, in sub-Saharan Africa and Central America, as well as in countries engaged in the more traditionally feminine aspects of the services trade (for example lower-paid and lower-skilled work such as data entry and call centres). The relative increase in demand for female labour is not just a matter of expanding the available labour force when male labour is in short supply (Braunstein, 2012). With labour costs such

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[15] The World Bank's World Development Report (WDR), published annually since 1978, is an invaluable guide to the economic, social, and environmental state of the world today. Each report provides in-depth analysis and policy recommendations on a specific and important aspect of development—from agriculture, the role of the state, transition economies, and labour to infrastructure, health, the environment, and poverty (https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2124).

crucial parts of international competitiveness, labour-intensive exporters prefer to hire women because women's wages are typically lower than men's and women as more productive in these types of jobs (Leach, 2016: 40).

Foreign investors looking for low-cost manufacturing platforms conform to the same pattern, at least on the lower rungs of the value-added ladder. At the same time, women may lose their comparative advantages in these job markets as industries upgrade, leading to a de-feminisation of manufacturing employment as has happened in Mexico, India, Ireland and many parts of East Asia (Michie, 2011:201). One of the reasons the employment effects of FDI are difficult to gauge is the increasing prevalence of subcontracting and informalisation, part of the trend toward creating more flexible structures of international production. These jobs are often directly connected to specific TNCs via local intermediaries, weakening the distinction between foreign and local ownership. Subcontracting also cuts off some of the pathways in which FDI may ultimately benefit women, as women are increasingly limited to jobs in the least valued part of the production chain, further removed from the potential benefits of formal employment (ibid).

The greater bargaining strength of internationally mobile capital has allowed both local and international capitalists to impose tough conditions on their workers. Such conditions not only reduce the power and rights of workers but also demean their working conditions, at many instances women workers especially get the brunt of such exploitative, aggressive and capitalist policies of the global labour market (Sarkar, 2007). In the area of 'foreign trade sector' (FTS), both export and import policies have been restructured paying attention mainly to keep the capital productive and globally mobile both by national and international agencies. This severely affects the status of working women and their work situations[16] (ibid). In the case of paid employees, mainly within the MNCs, women are employed to gain more flexible labour with much cheaper bargain on the part of employers. Hence, global capitalism makes use of existing patriarchal ideology whereby women are perceived to be more sub-servient to (male) managers' authority, less prone to organize unions, more

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[16] For example, export has boomed up in Southeast and East Asia in the last quarter of the 20th Century, as fuelled by the contribution in export related activities and through the remittances made by migrant workers. In Malaysia, electric and electronic products comprised about 60% of the manufactured export and they generate one-third of the manufacturing employment in the country. A majority of the employees in such industries are Malay women.

willing to accept poor working conditions and easier to dismiss using lifecycle criteria such as marriage and child birth (Ghosh, 1999; Sarkar, 2007).

The world of flexible labour, sub-contracting and the process of casualisation raise many other complex issues in the context of 'gender' based exploitation in global economy. The informal sector is one of the most affected areas which even otherwise has been plagued by arbitrary gender discrimination, low wages and lack of job security (Sarkar, 2007). Then there is a trend towards informalisation of women's labour. For example, the economic processing zones (EPZs) especially in the form of informal sector be it in the agro based production or the manufacturing, is one area where exploitation is much higher. In Indian, EPZs consists of a majority of women workers as compared to any other areas of production. These women are un-skilled, between the age 18-24, with no unionization and ready to work even at cheaper wage rates. They are exploited at job in many ways (ibid).

Globalisation and the changes in economic and political structures also seriously affect women in the labour force. For the most part, the social progress of women has not kept pace with economic progress, even in nations where economic development has fastened (Bednarek, 1998:220). While the forces of globalisation impress upon all American workers, they strike women the hardest. For example, the trends of globalisation damage women by: driving wages and worker protections downward in the United States and Canadian economies; forcing immigrant women from Mexico and other areas in the South to urban sweatshops in the North; compelling rural women throughout North America into a 'triple day' of harder farm work, additional wage work, and reproductive work in the home; and intensifying the 'casualisation' and 'flexibilization' of women's labour. Women are thus relegated to part-time, home-based, low-wage and low-protection work (ibid: 220-21).

Global economic restructuring and the ensuing international labour force are vital components of globalisation that increase competition levels in the United States and cheapen American labour. By taking advantage of this cheap feminized labour force, firms responding to global pressures can carry on operations without pushing up wage rates too far. In this regard, in Asia and other developing nations, foreign-owned electronics or textile factories employ eighty to ninety percent women labourers (ibid: 221). Indeed, the pattern of shunting women into low paid positions

and occupations that has been historically evident in local and national economies is also evident in the globalised sectors of the economy (Kenneth, 1996: 56). Consequently, though the number of women participating in the labour force is increasing, but they are mostly low-wage employees.

In 2015, the global labour force participation rate was 50 percent for women but 77 percent for men. Worldwide in 2015, 72 percent of working-age (ages 15 and older) men were employed, compared with only 47 percent of women. Female participation in the labour force and employment rates are affected heavily by economic, social and cultural issues and care work distributions in the home (UNDP, 2015: 12).

Of the 59 percent of work that is paid, mostly outside the home, men's share is nearly twice that of women—38 percent versus 21 percent. The picture is reversed for unpaid[17] work, mostly within the home and encompassing a range of care responsibilities: of the 41 percent of work that is unpaid, women perform three times more than men—31 percent versus 10 percent (ibid). Even when women are in paid work, they face disadvantages and discrimination. The evidence of the glass ceiling is just one of them.

Women are underrepresented in the senior business management position globally: They hold only 22 percent of senior leadership positions, and 32 percent of businesses do not have any female senior managers, with regional variations (ibid). Occupational segregation has been pervasive over time and across levels of economic prosperity in both advanced and developing countries men are over-represented in crafts, trades, plant and machine operations, and managerial and legislative occupations; and women in mid-skill occupations such as clerks, service workers and shop and sales workers (ibid).

Between 1995 and 2015, the global female labour force participation rate decreased from 52.4 to 49.6 percent. The corresponding figures for men are 79.9 and 76.1 per cent, respectively. Worldwide, the chances for women to participate in the labour market remain almost 27 percentage points lower than those for men. In 2015,

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[17] Unpaid work includes housework, such as preparing meals for the family, cleaning the house and gathering water and fuel, as well as work caring for children, older people and family members who are sick—over both the short and long term (Human Development Report, 2015).

the gender gap in the employment rate amounted to 25.5 percentage points in women's disfavour, only 0.6 percentage points less than in 1995 (ILO, 2016: xi). Women are more likely to be unemployed than men, with global unemployment rates of 5.5 per cent for men and 6.2 per cent for women (ibid: xii). Globally, the gender wage gap is estimated to be 23 per cent; in other words, women earn 77 per cent of what men earn. Even when considering hourly wage rates (given the fact that women are working shorter hours than men), women continue to face a persistent gender wage gap, amounting to 10 per cent or more in countries for which data are available (ibid: xvi).

Inequality between women and men persists in global labour markets, in respect of opportunities, treatment and outcomes. Over the last two decades, the significant progress in women's education has not translated into a comparable improvement in their position at work. In many regions in the world, in comparison to men, women are more likely to become and remain unemployed, have fewer chances to participate in the labour force and – when they do – often have to accept lower quality jobs (ibid). Progress in surmounting these obstacles has been slow and is limited to a few regions across the world. Even in many of those countries where gaps in labour force participation and employment have narrowed and where women are shifting away from contributing family work and moving to the services sector, the quality of women's jobs remains a matter of concern. The unequal distribution of unpaid care and household work between women and men and between families and the society is an important determinant of gender inequalities at work (ibid).

Globalisation has "reduced the ability of women…(in developing nations)…to find paid work that offers security and dignity" (Naples and Desai, 2002: 32). Rather, with the new direction of public policy what we are witnessing today is that poor women in many developing countries are being deprived 'of even the prospect of the progressive realisation of a non-discriminatory system of decent jobs and public services and broad-based social security systems' (Elson, 2001: 14). Although women's roles in the labour force have changed from traditional agricultural and domestic roles, to manufacturing and assembly production, the overall effect of globalisation has proven to be negative. The limited advanced of women in the formal sector shows a great disregard for their social and economic responsibilities within developing nations. Female labour is not rewarded in relation to the impact they have

on society. Therefore, women's work continues to be stigmatized as inferior, in comparison to males work, regardless of their increased responsibilities in society (Bacchus, 2005).

Women continue to face significant obstacles in gaining access to decent work. Only marginal improvements have been achieved since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, leaving large gaps to be covered in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations in 2015 (ILO, 2016: xi). Recently, some progress has been made in reducing these gender wage gaps, but improvements are small and, if current trends prevail, it will take more than 70 years for gender wage gaps are to be completely removed (ibid: xvi).

2.5.1 Contemporary Global Trends of Women Employment

In a recent study[18] conducted by Accenture PLC[19] reveals that, digital skills will help achieve gender equality at the workplace, at a much faster rate than in the normal course. For instance, developing countries will achieve gender equality at the workplace in 85 years, but a two-fold increase in digital fluency among women can make this happen in 45 years. Similarly, in developed markets, gender equality at the workplace can be achieved in 25 years instead of the normal 50. While work-life balance can bring more women to the workplace, digital skills can help improve work-life balance (HRK[20], 2016).

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[18] The study is a result of an online survey conducted--in December, 2015 and January, 2016-- of more than 4,900 working women and men in 31 countries. The sample has equal representation of both sexes, representing three generations (Millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers) across all workforce levels from companies of varying sizes.

[19] Accenture PLC is a global professional services company and provides consulting services in digital, technology and operations. One of the leading multinational companies in the field of management consulting and outsourcing, Accenture Incorporated has now become the global leader in consulting services and is also a Fortune 500 Company. Not only is the brand now on Fortune's list, but also offers efficient services and solutions to multiple companies who are on the Fortune Global 100 and Global 500 lists. The company reported net revenues of $32.9 billion for fiscal 2016, with approximately 401,000 (6,600 Accenture Leaders) Employees. It has Offices and operations in more than 200 cities in 55 countries. Accenture's current clients include 94 of the Fortune Global 100 and more than three-quarters of the Fortune Global 500 (https://newsroom.accenture.com/fact-sheet/ and http://www.vault.com/company-profiles/management-strategy/accenture/company-overview.aspx and https://successstory.com/companies/accenture)

[20] HRKatha is a news and information portal for the Human Resources (HR). HRKatha is a place, where every HR practitioner can visit, discuss, opine and share her/his knowledge and experience. It is founded by a group of journalists under the guidance of Prajjal Saha and some senior professionals whose knowledgeable views and opinions are of great substance (http://www.hrkatha.com/about-us).

Digital technologies can empower women economically and socially. Because of social norms, time and mobility constraints are often more severe for women than for men, women could benefit greatly from technology. Digital technologies can reduce gender gaps in labour force participation by making work arrangements more flexible, connecting women to work, and generating new opportunities in online work, e commerce, and the sharing economy (WDR, 2016). Business Process Outsourcing in India employs more than 3.1 million workers, 30 percent of them women. Four in ten online shop owners on Alibaba are women (ibid). Evidences show that technology can help improve women's access and accumulation of productive assets. These improved opportunities, in turn, can increase investments in young girls' human capital (ibid), with a focus on women.

The demand for female workers in the export and ICT (information and communication technologies) enabled sectors has increased, and as women have filled these new jobs, the gender distribution of employment across sectors and across countries has changed (WDR, 2012: 255). Women have moved out of agriculture sector and migrated to manufacturing and service sector. These changes have taken place across all countries, but female employment in the manufacturing and service sector has grown faster in developing than developed countries, reflecting broader changes in the global distribution of production and labour. Changes in male employment shares were qualitatively similar but different in magnitude (ibid).

Improvements in ICT have allowed women around the world to access markets in growing numbers by lowering information barriers and reducing the transaction costs associated with market work. Because time and mobility constraints are more severe for women than men, women stand to benefit more from these developments. Greater access to economic opportunities and, in some cases, higher returns to economic activity provide stronger incentives to accumulate human capital, particularly for women, and are likely to increase investments in the skills of girls and young women as tomorrow's workers (ibid).

The early years of trade liberalisation were mainly characterized by the move of textile and information technology manufacturing from developed to developing countries. New employment in manufacturing often consisted of labour-intensive assembly line jobs, and the initial gains in manufacturing employment were greatest

in countries with abundant unskilled labour and a comparative advantage in producing basic manufactures (ibid). This shift in geographic location of production promoted female labour force participation and the feminisation of employment in manufacturing in developing countries—particularly in Asia and Central America (ibid).

The spread of ICT based industries has expanded trade in services and has, to a lesser extent, promoted the growth of ICT sectors in developing countries. As a result employment shifted from manufacturing, where jobs could be automated, to services. In the process, demand for nimble fingers on the assembly line gave way to demand for computer literacy as the tasks became more sophisticated and direct interaction with clients and customers more common (ibid: 257).

As technology advanced, low-skilled women in light manufacturing were often displaced by men. In Malaysia, women made up to 80 percent of manufacturing workers in the first phase of globalisation, but by 1987 that percentage had fallen to 67 percent and has since continued to decline. In Latin America, too, low-skilled female workers in light manufacturing, particularly electronics, lost their jobs as various aspects of production became automated (ibid: 258).

New ICT-enabled jobs in services particularly information processing in banking, insurance, printing, and publishing were mainly taken up by women, but not the same women who lost their manufacturing jobs, because the new jobs required a different set of skills, including computer and language skills. Female employment in data entry and processing was initially highest in Barbados, Jamaica, and Philippines. Later, ICT-related jobs were concentrated in software, call centers, and geographical information systems, and clustered in Malaysia and India, particularly in Delhi and Mumbai, where call centers employ more than 1 million people, most of them women (ibid).

In both manufacturing and service exports, growth in female employment was faster than ever before and faster than in other sectors. And although exports in many countries initially accounted for a small fraction of total female employment, their importance grew over time as a result of rapid employment growth (ibid).

2.6. Globalisation and Women Employment: The Indian Scenario

Globalisation has opened by broader communication lines and brought more companies as well as different worldwide organisations into India. This provides opportunities for not only working women, but also women who are becoming part of the work force. With new jobs for women, there are opportunities for higher pay, which raises self-confidence and brings about empowerment among women (Jaiswal, 2014). This, in turn, can promote equality between the sexes.

Globalisation has the power to uproot the traditional treatment towards women to afford them an equal stance in society (Sharma, 2017: 290). After 1990, India became connected to a fast globalising world. Especially during 1995-2000 India witnessed Information technology enables service (ITES) sector boom. Many organisations in this sector adopted work styles and organisational practices from developed countries in the west. The IT sector was meant to have more opportunities for working women (Patel, 2014). All these developments created new job avenues also for women. The number of women engaged in various occupations (both organized & un-organized) has been substantially increased. They are even found in highest ranks. The efficiency of women employees/workers in job also increased. Legally and theoretically, woman is now recognised as equal to man as they are moving to all careers (ibid).

This is only one side of the reality. Although more women are now seeking paid employment, a vast majority of them obtain only poorly paid, unskilled jobs in the informal sector, without any job security or social security (Lal, 2017). Additionally, working women in India are more likely to be subjected to intense exploitation as they are exposed to more and more risks that cause health hazards and are forced to endure greater levels of physical and mental stress. Thus, it would appear that globalisation has made many international corporations richer by the billions at the expense of women who are suffering enormously due to this expansion of corporate empires (Subhalakshmi, 2012).

Though the overall literacy rate has increased and the workforce participation has risen over the years, the male-female gap has not narrowed (Patel, 2014). There are many openings and opportunities emerged in various organized and un-organized sectors due to globalisation (ibid). Lack of proper education is one hindering factor.

Indian women have to be given modern education and professional skills. The experiences of professional women in most of the developing countries indicate that the problems faced by them are essentially the same. The issues are tuned towards in equality, gender representation and social justice (ibid).

India is the first among countries to give women equal franchise and has a highly credible record with regard to the enactment of laws to protect and promote the interests of women. Despite this, women continued to be denied economic, social and legal rights and privileges. Though they are considered to be equal partners in progress, yet they remained subjected to repression, marginalisation and exploitation (Kurian and Kumar, 2014). But, gradually due to the fight for women's rights and increasing participation of women in the job market, women have emerged from the strictly private sphere and become active where they were formerly restricted. Women have broken the implicit social contract that for more than hundreds of years confined them to home, child bearing, household tasks and fieldwork, while men worked outside the home (Sobha, 2014). In employment opportunities too, women in India today have stormed all male bastions. Be it piloting aircraft, heading multi-national corporations, holding top bureaucratic positions, leading industrial houses, making a mark as photographers, filmmakers, chefs, engineers and even as train and lorry drivers, women have made it to all hitherto considered male bastions in India (Vinitha, 2015).

While talking about the recent trends of woman working class, we noticed and observed the change brought by the Information Technology and Business Process Outsourcing to Indian women and to the young Indian generation in particular. Being world's second most populated country, our country is renowned for the large quantity and easy availability of its qualified and skilled professionals; who happen to be the key to success in several sectors particularly in IT-BPO industry and hence female section of the country is impacted largely by the industry.

Women, in India have found out that, a BPO job help them to experience good earning, freedom and autonomy, self-sufficiency and empowerment; which is elaborately discussed in Fourth and Fifth Chapters. The role of Indian women is consistently changing and the sector is definitely helping them to get their due place,

dignity and respect. They can now better take care of their finances, career and family in a sound manner; thus the scope provided by the sector help them in their liberation.

Outsourcing makes incredible contribution by bringing more jobs, extensive career opportunities and acknowledgement about the external world with high salaries and attractive facilities; however at the same time, with the availability of higher disposable incomes, a strong move towards consumerism is quite clearly visible among youth BPO employees. Several young employees have had to relocate to outsourcing hubs and live independently. Naturally, this has led to the creation of a large section of the workforce; which is addicted to the western way of living and undertakes lifestyles that are environmentally unfriendly for their social and mental well-being.

2.7. Gender Equality in Employment

In the era of globalisation, in order to compete at global level, it has become significantly important for a nation to reduce gender discrimination. In today's integrated world, increasing global sensitivity towards women's rights performs the role of a watchdog. Gender imbalance can curtail nation's global standing-peculiarly for nations with export potential in goods and services with high female employment. While growing consumer's demands and media exposure for better treatment of workers has obliged multinationals towards better working conditions and fairer wages for women, international peer pressure has also guided more nations than ever to ratify treaties against unjust or prejudice treatment.

Since 1919, ILO has sought to guarantee labour rights and improve working conditions for women and men. Equality is enshrined in the ILO Constitution. The principle was first made operational in 1951, when the ILO adopted the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100). Acknowledging that discrimination in remuneration cannot be tackled effectively without ensuring more general protection against discrimination in employment and occupation, the ILO adopted the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) in 1958. The ILO's commitment to the elimination of discrimination was reaffirmed in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation, 2008, also reaffirms that gender

equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting issues in all the ILO's work (ILO, 2008).

Pressure from media and consumers in developed countries can also lead multinational firms to offer better working conditions to their workers in developing countries. For instance, both wages and nonwage working conditions (such as hours worked, accidents, contractual characteristics, work environment, and other benefits) among formal workers (most of them women) in the export textile and apparel industries in Cambodia, El Salvador, and Indonesia were found to be at or above the average in the rest of the economy (WDR, 2012).

The establishment of various NGOs around the globe and the collaborative efforts of these organisations have improved the lives of women in developing nations. The U.N. Decade[21] recognized the importance of female labour in developing nations and the fact that economic policies fail to address the needs of females. Representatives from NGOs agreed that global feminism should be established to reduce the inequality facing women in these nations and to improve the advancement of women in society (Bacchus, 2005). As a result of The U.N. Decade, NGOs in throughout the developing world have reached out to women to meet their needs in farming, environmental protection, healthcare, domestic issues, employment conditions, and to reduce the financial strains in their everyday lives (ibid). The collective organisation of women's groups throughout the world has also generated the attention of the media, which is necessary in educating the general public about the current issues facing women in developing nations. The continued efforts of these groups and the economic realization of the importance women's work will eventually create greater social awareness about the inequalities facing women in these nations (ibid).

In India, the Ministry of Women and Child Development is administering schemes for gender equality/socio-economic development/empowerment of women in the country. The information was given by the Minister of Women and Child

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[21] United Nations Decade for Women, United Nations program that began on January 1, 1976, the goal of which was the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women around the world. The UN Decade for Women concentrated mainly on women and development. The UN Decade for Women and its conferences helped establish the legitimacy of women's issues regarding their roles as workers in the home and outside it. The decade also brought the many inequalities women face in education, health care, and work to the attention of national leaders and the general public (Gemelli, 2016).

Development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi in reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 10 December 2015 (Government of India, 2015). A few of the schemes are- 'Swadhar and Short Stay Homes' is to provide relief and rehabilitation to destitute women and women in distress. Another scheme 'Working Women Hostels' is for ensuring safe accommodation for working women away from their place of residence. Scheme 'Support to Training and Employment Program for Women' (STEP) is to ensure sustainable employment and income generation for marginalised and asset-less rural and urban poor women across the country. Scheme 'Rashtriya Mahila Kosh' (RMK) is to provide micro-finance services to bring about the socio-economic upliftment of poor women self employment. 'Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers' (including single mother) is to provide day care facilities for running a creche of 25 children in the age group 0-6 years from families having monthly income of less than Rs 12,000 (Government of India, 2015).

In order to improve employability a separate Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has been created. Equal Remuneration Act, 1973 provides for payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for the same work of similar nature without any discrimination. In order to ensure social security to the workers including women in the unorganised sector, the Government has enacted the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act 2008. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) Scheme is being implemented as Conditional Maternity Benefit for pregnant and lactating women to improve health and nutrition status to better enabling environment by providing cash incentives to pregnant and nursing mothers to partly compensate wage loss both prior to and after delivery. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 has been enacted, which covers all women, irrespective of their age or employment status and protect them against sexual harassment at all workplaces both in public and private sector, whether organised or unorganised (Government of India, 2015).

2.8. Conclusion

As we have seen, globalisation is the worldwide movement towards political, economic and cultural integration. This process has influenced on culture, on government structure, on economic expansion and prosperity, on the environment, and on welfare of mankind around the globe. Economic, social, political and

environmental globalisation cut across national boundaries and results in higher integration or interdependence of human societies.

Economic globalisation integrates worldwide markets. Over the past 60 years, this integration has accelerated steadily through advancement in technological and telecommunications, development in transportation, role of Multinational Corporations and Non Government Organisations, mobility of capital and labour, increase in consumer demand, dismantling cross-trade barriers and reduction in other man-made barriers to international trade. Now, the emerging economies (developing countries) impact on the global economy and the advanced economies (developed countries) is rising rapidly.

As discussed in the chapter, globalisation, particularly in terms of the mobility of capital and the spread of advanced communication technologies, has had a radical impact on employment relations in countries that are finely incorporated into the world economy. In India, its effects were mainly seen in the service sector. This rapid increase in service sector during the last decade resulted in the phenomenal growth of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. Indian BPOs are known for delivering effective business solutions along with quality and cost advantage by engaging developed technology. The speedy growth of the outsourcing industry has resulted in greater employment opportunities to a new group of employees: young college graduates and women in particular.

At the international level, it has been noticed that women participation in the paid workforce has been increasing and their employment has expanded to all the productive sectors – services, agriculture and manufacturing; with a particularly strong arise in the service sector. Women have also proceeded towards occupations that have been typically ruled by men. It simply means that, beyond household-based production, the section of female workers has moved to various sectors of the economy. This direction of women employment is influenced by the process of globalisation and it is not only limited to high-income countries. As we have discussed, women's representation has been escalating as a share of total employment and to varying degrees, their employment has been developing faster than men's. Studies reveal that the gap between percentage of women employment and percentage of men employment has been narrowing.

Globalisation has the capability to contribute to greater gender equality. Globalisation has indeed worked as a catalyst in women's efforts to get fair rights, impartiality and opportunities and certainly has nurtured the ideas and norms of equality for women that provided a platform of awareness. Economic dimension of globalisation gives rise to new scope and benefits to women. Growth in cross-national exchange and upgraded communication encourage improvements in women's status and equality.

What is to be done is that to implement suitable policies to effectively address gender disparities and to bring social justice. In a fast developing country like India, progress and development do not confine to increase in production, health and social welfare alone (Patel, 2014). It is not possible to have any major development by marginalizing the majority of educated women with professional skills. The first step in national development is to recognize their merit and their contribution. Women should really feel proud of their accomplishments and status in the society. That will strengthen themselves to fight against the social evils. The entire success of the family and nation depends of the women of the house and at the working place (ibid).

CHAPTER 3

Business Process Outsourcing in India

3.1. Introduction

The BPO industry in India started with the call centre business, with people taking on American names, speaking in American accents and trying to sell credit cards or insurance policies to Westerners. But now the sector is not only confined to call centre business; the industry has come a long way from being an employer of English-speaking undergrads to an end-to-end managed services provider. The industry has demonstrated an added value and created huge impact in economic growth and employability. This chapter discusses BPO industry in India. The chapter begins with the concept of global Business Process Outsourcing, which also includes-components and BPO business models. Eventually, the chapter moves to the evolution/history of global BPO and BPO industry in India. This section broadly presents the emergence and evolution of the sector in the country, it discusses about the major BPO-ITES cities and major players of the sector. It also takes a look at the major services offered by Indian BPO companies. The final part discusses comprehensively the impact of BPOs in Indian economy and growth of the sector in recent years including the future outlook of BPOs in the country. In the end, the chapter analyses the challenges in Indian BPO industry.

3.2. The Concept and Evolution of Global Business Process Outsourcing

Business Process Outsourcing or BPO is the contracting of a business to a third party service provider. It is a type of outsourcing in which a company outsources non-core business processes to another company. BPO is the most flexible form of outsourcing, involving a close relationship between the customers and outsourcing provider. A BPO service provider usually administers and manages a particular business process for another company. It can be defined as the act of utilizing the services of a third party by a company in order to perform its back office operations. In the boundary-less global economy, BPO is a proven management strategy helping businesses survive and thrive. A BPO service provider differentiates itself from a typical third party Application Service Provider (ASP) by either putting in new technology or applying existing technology in a new way to improve a business

process. The application of BPO usually means that a certain amount of risk is transferred to the company that is running the process elements on behalf of the outsourcer (Gopal and Singh, 2009: 36-37). To authorise a company to invest more time, money and human resources in crucially active items without losing value and name is the prime motive behind business process outsourcing. The focus in BPO is on reducing transaction costs, optimising process efficiency and providing size and scale to handle a large volume of transaction processing engagements (Miryala and Aluvala, 2015:30). 'People' is one of the cardinal operators of BPO sector.

BPO is the delegation of one or more of IT intensive business processes to an external provider, which in turn owns, manages, and administers the selected processes based on defined and measurable performance criteria (Rudzkiet.al, 2006: 193). Based on work BPOs are typically categorized into Back-office outsourcing (non-voice) and Front office outsourcing (voice). The back office outsourcing refers to internal business functions includes data encoding, business support, database development, market research, account management and account payables, processing loan, property purchase and sale, handling of credit billing problems etc. Back office or non-voice process is a subdivision of BPO in which employees perform their duties by sitting behind the desk and hardly use their vocal skills. In non-voice outsourcing, the representatives are recruited to carry out back office tasks like, data entry, database management, data processing services, accounts and finance operations and customer support (via email or live chat). Their hiring qualifications basically include typing and analytical skills. After recruitment they are provided with formal training in their designated field to accomplish duties.

On the other hand, front office outsourcing or voice process has to deal with customer-related services such as company's client and customer's queries, complaints or other related customers concerns over phone or email voice. They take calls regarding telemarketing, customer service, technical support, order processing, debt collection, appointment settings etc. Voice process is further bifurcated into 2 categories: i) Inbound support and ii) Outbound support. In inbound outsourcing, in order to rectify customer's queries the employees receive calls from the customer on behalf of a business or client. In outbound outsourcing the employees make calls to the customer or client for the purpose of sales or fund-raising calls, telemarketing,

verification services or surveys, contact list updating etc. Prior moving on to processes, the focal point of training in a voice process is communication, grammar and accent.

Figure 3.1. Concept of Business Process Outsourcing
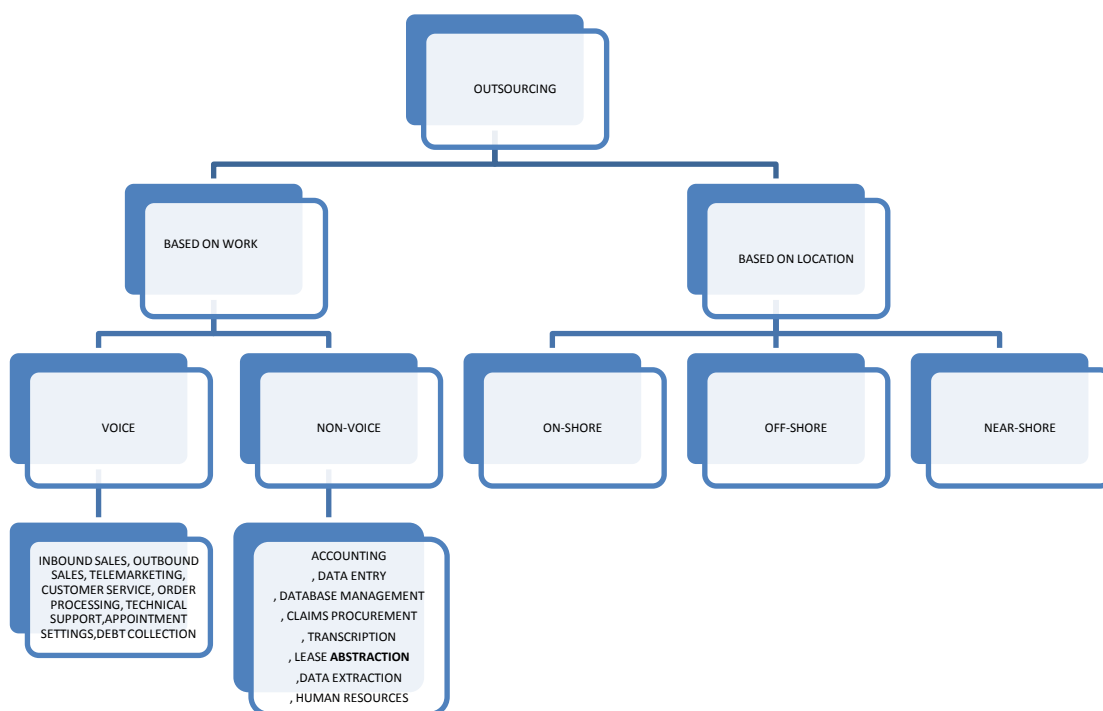
Based on location, outsourcing can be divided as-Offshore, Nearshore and Onshore. Offshore outsourcing refers to outsourcing the operations of the company to other companies that are located in a foreign country and most likely have a different language and culture. Offshore outsourcing offers benefits like higher cost savings and access to highly skilled labour (Iyoob, 2012). It enables a company to spend time on core business processes and help to balance the workload during peak times. Offshore workers often have a different mindset and this usually translates to a faster response time and efficient project management skills, which may help keep short-term projects on track. With a wide offshore talent pool, a company may have more flexibility in turnaround time and can have labour working around the clock, helping to get projects off the ground and completed in rapid fashion (Young, 2014).

Near Shore outsourcing means outsourcing the operations of the company to an adjacent or nearby country having similar culture and language skills. Near shore

outsourcing offers some cost savings over onshore and has the added benefit of proximity for more frequent site visits, while retaining a highly skilled labour pool (Iyoob, 2012). Being in a similar time zone nearshoring can allow a company's internal staff and external developers to meet in person more frequently. Nearshore also offers the opportunity for project managers to visit their team regularly and it allows companies to rotate staff easily. In addition, temporary work visas take weeks, rather than months or years to process. All of these make face to face interactions more readily available. That in turn, makes project success more likely (Agnese, 2015).

Onshore Outsourcing is the outsourcing operations of the company to another company located in the home country or region. Companies can reduce labour costs somewhat and benefit from highly skilled labour with little or no language or cultural barrier, but the cost of such operations is high compared to offshore or near shore locations (Iyoob, 2012).

3.2.1. Major Components of BPO

The Business Process Outsourcing model comprises of 3 elements as: The client, the vendor and the project (Power et al, 2006:4).

a) **The Client:** A client is the person or organisation that would like to outsource a given project. Normally, this entity is thinking about utilizing outsourcing as a strategic tool. A client can be an entire organisation or a unit within an organisation. If the project being outsourced is the entire IT department of the organisation, we can say that the organisation is the client. However, if we are only outsourcing the payroll functionality of the human resource department, the client is the human resource department, though indirectly the entire organisation is also the client (ibid).

b) **The Vendor:** The vendor is the service provider who will take over and conduct the outsourced work. Vendors come in many shapes and sizes. For instance, a vendor can be an external organisation, which is most often the case. However, a vendor can also be a subsidiary of the organisation. Vendors can be differentiated based on where they are located. Some vendors are located onshore or in the same area as the client. Others are located near-shore, as in the case of potential

Canadian companies for US clients. Finally, vendors can be offshore, as in the case of Indian companies for British clients (ibid).

Figure 3.2. The Major Components of BPO
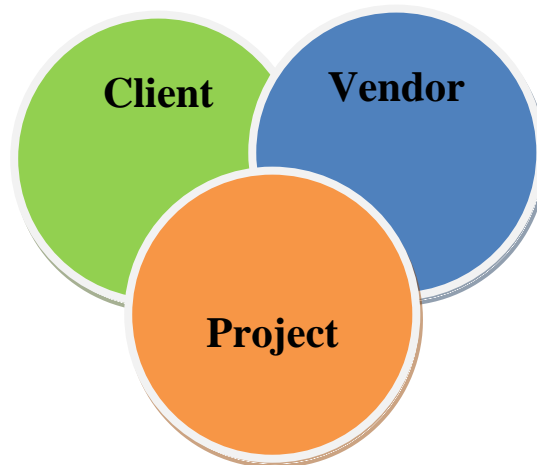
Source: Mark J Power; Kevin C Desouza and Carlo Bonifaci, 2006.

c) **The Project:** The third component is the actual work being outsourced. In the past, the most common form of such work was manufacturing or labour-intensive projects. Today, however, there is move towards the outsourcing of more complex forms of work, such as software development or Research and Development (ibid).

3.2.2. BPO Business Models

As per Outsource2india[1], the BPO industry features five business models:

a) **The global delivery model -** also called **blended outsourcing**, combines onsite, offsite, onshore, and offshore resources. Large multinational outsourcing service providers offer this model where work can be 'bestshored' or 'multishored' to the location where optimal cost and labour efficiencies are met to predetermined performance standards. In case of a disaster in a particular region, work can be

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[1] Outsource2india is a premium outsourcing company located in Bangalore. Established over a decade ago, the company offers a wide range of outsourcing services including Data Entry, Call Center services, Engineering services, Web Analytics, healthcare BPO, Software Development, Photo Editing, Creative services and Research and Analysis (https://www.outsource2india.com/why_india/why_india.asp).

immediately transferred to another region to ensure on-going, interruption-free business processes.

b) **The hybrid model or dual-shore model** leverages onsite-offshore efficiencies to deliver results to clients at reduced costs. Clients are involved in the process as the Global team of the offshore vendor works onsite alongside the client's team to perform around 20% of the work while the local team executes 80% of the work offshore to leverage the cost, labour and time-zone advantages of outsourcing.

c) **The offshore multi-sourcing model or hub-and-spoke model** uses multiple offshore suppliers to offset the risk of a single monopoly supplier. Users of this model typically have their own offshore operations, plus three or more partner outsourcing vendors with whom they collaborate. The partners get first-hand training on how the outsourcing company operates its hub center, and then apply their learning at the spoke centers.

d) **The build-operate-transfer or BOT model**-The client partners with an offshore company to set up and operate a foreign outsourcing subsidiary with the option to transfer ownership back to the client company after a specified time period. The risks of setting up an outsourcing subsidiary in a foreign country are completely borne by the partner company which takes care of the costs and ownership of the new venture until such time as the client chooses to take it over.

e) **The global shared services model**-Global shared services centers, also called offshore insourcing or captive centers create huge service enters from the company's internal service operations resources. They also have assured markets for their services. These centers can be run as independent businesses and have the advantages of a similar corporate culture, with less of the control issues that third-party BPOs face.

Outsourcing is not a new concept. Classical Economist Adam Smith discussed about outsourcing in his book "The Wealth of Nations". Similarly, Michael Porter's 'Value Chain Concept' and the theory of 'Cost Advantage' also helped in developing the idea of BPO. The idea of outsourcing has been in use since the beginning of the 20th century, when Henry Ford, an American industrialist and the founder of the Ford Motor Company, decided to outsource rubber plantations to produce its own tires

instead of owning. The concept of outsourcing got under way when Henry Ross Perot, an American businessman and philanthropist founded Electronic Data Systems[2] in 1962 (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2004). Outsourcing gained greater attention in the 1970s, when large corporations were considered to be underperforming, a trend that became even more pronounced in the early 1980s with the onset of global recession (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2000). Furthermore, the 1980s seen a shift and change of direction in business strategies focusing on cutting down the number of activities (Peters and Waterman, 1982). As a result, vertically integrated and self-sufficient corporations were achieved by managers who re-evaluated the core functions of the organisation (Mullin, 1996).

The period and events of the evolution of global Business Process Outsourcing have been explained using the following table 3.1:

Table 3.1. Evolution of Global Business Process Outsourcing

Period	Event
1776	Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations propagates competitive advantage through outsourcing. Though the term 'outsourcing' itself was not used then.
18th –19th Centuries	With whaling fleets and floating factory ships, the concept of 'offshore manufacturing gets a fillip.
Early 20th Century	Companies like Ford Motors own everything, even forests to make rubber for car tires. General Motors runs a 2,000 people HR and travel desk to cater to its employee needs.
1940s	ADP starts with handling payroll outside companies. Today the $8 billion, 41,000 employee payroll expert handles payrolls for one in six US workers and recently opened office in India.
1960s	EDS develops an integrated system to process health insurance claims, accelerates growth of transaction processing business.
1970s-1980s	Hundreds of call centre's spring up in the US and the UK Convergys, the largest call centre company (70,000 employees today) started as a captive unit of Cincinnati Bell. US companies from oil majors, telecom operators, pharma firms to FMCG firms outsource customer care, telemarketing, payroll and other functions
1980-1990	US and European companies start shifting work to Ireland, Israel and Canada. Ireland particularly benefits as costs are lower and it offers

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[2] Electronic Data Systems was an American multinational information technology equipment and services company founded by Henry Ross Perot. EDS headquartered in Plano, Texas. Henry Ross Perot sold this company twenty years later for $2.4 billion.

	Multilanguage capability. At their peak the over 100 call centers in Ireland employ over 300,000 staff.
1990-1999	C.K. Prahlad's core competency theory expounded in a Harvard Business School paper caught the imagination of big corporations around the world. The basic lessons of the theory – identify your core competencies, focus on them and get out of everything else. American Express, Swissair, British Airways and General Electric (GE) start captive units in India.
1999	The New Telecom Policy of 1999 ended the state monopoly on international calling facilities. This heralded the growth of inbound/ outbound call centers and data processing centers. One of the first outsourced services to third party players was medical transcription. Though outsourcing of business processes like data processing, billing, and customer support began towards the end of the 1990s when MNCs established wholly owned subsidiaries.
2000	Third party players spring up in India. By 2005 end, over 300 open shop in India and beyond. Some of them even set up operations outside. About 45global destination BPO bandwagon are now competing to get a slice of the annual $300 billion outsourcing pie.

(Source: Business World-BPO Industry Report, 2008)

The National Association of Software & Service Companies (Nasscom)[3], has divided the phases of growth of BPO sector into 3 (Ezhilarasi, 2015:110). First phase is known as Pioneers (1996-2000). This phase was basically into captive model. The companies use to have their own call centre. Phase 2 (2000-2003) is the rise of third party vendors. Processes were outsourced to different vendors who used to work on behalf of the companies (clients). In phase 3 (2003-Ongoing) cautions followers are able to survive. Vendors who are able to survive cost reduction and provide good 'customer satisfaction' are able to resist this cut throat competition (ibid).

3.3. The BPO Industry in India

As of February 2015, there were over 16,000 Indian information technology and business process outsourcing organisations in the industry, including over 3,000 software product firms, and these collectively accounted for over 90% of the global incremental growth of US $11-12 billion. During this period, it also accounted for 8.1% of India's GDP. It is thus a global colossus with US$125 billion as revenues,

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[3] The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) is a trade association of Indian Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. Established in 1988, Nasscom is a non-profit organisation. Nasscom is a global trade body with over 1500 members, of which, over 250 are companies from the United States, UK, EU, Japan and China (Czinkota, 2016).

US$100 billion as exports and a strong workforce of 3.5 billion (Pereira and Malik, 2015). Due to the growth in the domain of information technology and business process outsourcing, life in India has changed. It has transformed an entire generation (Anandkumar and Biswas, 2008: 1). In the last few decades, BPO has changed the way the world does business. BPO is the fastest growing segment of the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) industry of India and BPO has achieved in less than a decade what the IT industry took over 20 years to achieve (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2008: 6). India has been recognized for almost two decades as a source of expertise and capability in information technology outsourcing. BPO draws upon similar skills and capabilities from the deep Indian talent pool of highly qualified, well-trained, IT-literate, English-speaking professional (Hirschheim et.al, 2009:550-551).

The BPO revolution has been possible in India due to two important factors-the strong legacy of English language education left behind by the British, who ruled India for nearly for nearly 200 years, and adoption of English as the national language by the Indian government in 1965 (Anandkumar and Biswas, 2008: 2). Robust communication infrastructure, a large English-speaking workforce, low labour costs, appropriate time-zone difference with the West and the brand equity built by the software services sector are compelling reasons for choosing India as the BPO destination (Nakkiran and Franklin, 2008: 11). International enterprises utilizing global information and communications technologies, for example-email and the internet, voice-over IP[4] (VOIP) and most importantly taking the advantage of India's lower cost but educated and English-speaking resources, have been able to lower their cost base by establishing outsourced knowledge-worker operations in the country.

India has won its spurs as the world's outsourcing destination of choice. Currently the country has a commanding share (approximately 56%) of the global outsourcing market (Miryala and Aluvala, 2015: 30). India acquired a share of around 38 percent in the overall BPO market (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2017). It is now the world's favoured market for BPO companies. The sector has moved from

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[4] VoIP (voice over IP) is the transmission of voice and multimedia content over Internet Protocol (IP) networks. VoIP is enabled by a group of technologies and methodologies used to deliver voice communications over the internet, enterprise local area networks or wide area networks (http://searchunifiedcommunications.techtarget.com/definition/VoIP).

being only voice-based call centres to data processing and management units, to the current phase; where it is mostly about knowledge gaining and transfer.

The Indian BPO industry is constantly growing. Looking to the growth and government's support to it, BPO is being recognized as a specialized sector in the country. IT-BPO sector has become one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy, contributing immensely to the country's GDP (9.3%) and public welfare (Government of India, 2017). The sector ranks 4th in India's total FDI share and accounts for approximately 37% of total Private Equity and Venture Investments in the country (Choice IT and ITES Brochure, 2017). The IT-BPO sector in India expanded at a CAGR of 13.7% over 2010–16, which is 3–4 times higher than the global IT-BPO growth and is estimated to expand at a CAGR of 9.1 % to USD350 billion by 2025 (ibid) The industry is projected to grow nearly 8% in 2017–from USD 143 billion in 2016 to USD 154 billion (excluding eCommerce), an addition of over USD 11 billion (Nasscom, 2017).

In addition to fuelling country's economy, this industry is also positively influencing the lives of its people through an active, direct and indirect contribution to the various socio-economic parameters such as employment[5], standard of living[6] and diversity[7] among others. IT-BPO industry has played a significant role in transforming India's image from a slow moving bureaucratic economy to a land of innovative entrepreneurs and a global player in providing world class technology solutions and business services. The industry has helped India transform from a rural

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[5] IT-BPO sector is the largest segment of ITES with 3.5 million jobs (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2016). Total employment in IT/ITES Industry employees is 4 millions as direct employment and 1.3 Crores as indirect employment (MeitY, 2017). As per Nasscom, 2.5-3 million new jobs will be created by 2025 (ibid).

[6] IT-BPO industry is additionally creating a livelihood for the economically backward sections of the society, with 5 per cent of the workforce from these areas. The differently-abled have also benefited from the sector, gaining employment in the sector and joining the mainstream. 60 per cent of the companies provide employment to differently-abled people (Nasscom, 2012). The industry is meeting the changing aspirations of India's youth by providing them high paying jobs (ibid).

[7] Currently, the share of women participation in the sector is 34% (Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit 2017) and by 2020, the industry is projected to increase women employee's participation at workforce to 50% (Nasscom (Vedashree), 2012). In India, IT-BPO organisations are leading the way in the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwDs). In 2015, there was an approximately 110% increase in participation from organisations who initiated the inclusion of PwDs, as compared to 2014. This indicates an increased awareness and maturity of practices within this space (PwC, 2016:8).

and agriculture-based economy to a knowledge based[8] economy (Erling and Seargeant, 2013).

In the early 1980s several European airlines started using Delhi as a base for back office operations, British Airways being one of them. The BA (British Airways) captive was finally spun off as a separate organisation called initially WNS World Network Services; it eventually became WNS Global Services in 2002[9].

In the second half of the 1980s, American Express consolidated its JAPAC (Japan and Asia Pacific) back office operations into Gurgaon region. This centre (called the Financial Resource Centre East or FRC-E) was headed by an Expat Harry Robertson, a veteran American Express employee with Raman Roy reporting to him. Raman Roy later on quit Amex to join GE and later on started his own enterprise called Spectramind which got later on merged with Wipro and then later on started Quatrro BPO (ibid).

In the 1990s, Jack Welch was influenced by K.P. Singh, (a Delhi-based realtor) to look at Gurgaon in the NCR region as a base for back office operations. Pramod Bhasin, the India head of G.E. hired Raman Roy and several of his management from American Express to start this enterprise called GECIS[10] (GE

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[8] Knowledge economy is basically an economy that creates, disseminates and uses knowledge to enhance its growth and development. A country's success in the knowledge-based economy depends on the creation, acquisition, dissemination and application of knowledge (Pillai, 2008). Having made an ineffaceable mark in the BPO business, India has now become an important Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) destination (ibid). The size of this sector has increased at a rate of 35 percent per year during the last ten years. The Indian IT-BPO industry has grown almost tenfold in the previous decade. India is now one of the biggest IT-BPO capitals in the modern world and has presence of all major players in the world IT-BPO sector. HCL, TCS, Wipro and Infosys are few of household names of IT-BPO companies in India. A unique industry crafted by Indian IT-BPO's, which has found global recognition and draws huge foreign investment. The sector accounted for over ten percent of India's total FDI in the last decade (Singh, 2016: 33). India continued as the world's No. 1 sourcing destination with a share of 56 per cent. New delivery centres set up worldwide in 2015 grew 13 per cent to 169 centres with India and Europe together accounting for over 55 per cent share (NASSCOM, 2016). By 2020, India's IT-BPM sector total revenue is projected to reach USD 200-225 and between USD 350-400 billion by 2025. Digital technologies will continue to define the sector and revenue from these is likely to have a 23 per cent share by 2020 and 38 per cent by 2025 (ibid).
[9] http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/eng/business_process_outsourcing_in_india
[10] Genpact is a global business process management and services and IT corporation with key offices in New York City, United States. It's listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol G. It was founded in 1997 as a business unit within General Electric. In January 2005, Genpact became an independent company to bring its process expertise to clients outside of GE, and changed its name from GECIS to Genpact ("generating global impact"). In 2016, the company reported net revenues of US$2.57 billion with more than 77,000 employees in 20 countries. Genpact has a few hundred clients, including approximately one-fifth of the Fortune Global 500 (http://www.genpact.com/about-us/our-history and https://readtiger.com/wkp/en/Genpact).

Capital International Services). Raman, for the first time, tried out voice operations out of India, the India operations also was the Beta site for GE Six sigma enterprise. The results made GE ramp up their Indian presence and look at other locations. In 2004, GECIS was spun off as a separate legal entity by GE, called Genpact. GE has retained a 40% stake and sold a 60% stake for $500 million to two equity companies, Oak Hill Capital Partners and General Atlantic Partners (ibid).

Until G.E., most of the work was being done by 'captives'- a term used for in house work being done for the parent organisation. In 2000, Raman Roy and some team members from GECIS quit, and with VC[11] (Venture Capital) funding from Chrysalis Capital started Spectramind. At the same time an organisation called Efunds started in Mumbai and Gurgaon, vCustomer in New Delhi and Daksh in Gurgaon. One of the current big pure play BPO firms, EXL Services, started in April 1999 and in 2012 hit $442.9 million in revenues (ibid).

Recently most of the Indian BPOs, even smaller and mid-sized ones, are setting up their onshore presence in the markets they serve. Most of the large players are improving the outsourced business processes by leveraging on their years of experience, and now some are offering more than just plain vanilla BPO processes. KPO, transformation and consulting opportunities is gaining favour among large third party BPO providers like Genpact, WNS and EXL Services (ibid).

In 2015, the Indian IT-BPO industry is estimated to account for revenues of USD 146 billion, growing by 13 per cent over the last financial year. Industry exports are over USD 98 billion growing at 12.3 per cent, while the domestic segment, which has benefited from the inclusion of ecommerce and mobile app industry, is estimated to touch USD 48 billion (ibid). The industry today is India's largest and most diverse private sector employer, with a direct workforce nearing 3.5 million, and effecting over 10 million indirect jobs (ibid). At the same time the industry's relative share in India's GDP has swelled to 9.5 per cent, it offsets more than 70 per cent of India's oil

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[11] Venture Capital (VC) is a type of private equity, a form of financing that is provided by firms or funds to small, early-stage, emerging firms that are deemed to have high growth potential, or which have demonstrated high growth (in terms of number of employees, annual revenue, or both). Venture capital firms or funds invest in these early-stage companies in exchange for equity–an ownership stake–in the companies they invest in (http://www.businessfundingshow.com/funding/funding-glossary/).

import bill, attracts a major share of PE/VC investments into the country, has effected balanced regional growth and empowered diverse sections of the society (ibid).

India's IT-BPO industry has grown 8.5 per cent in 2016 from USD 132 billion in 2015 to USD 143 billion, an addition of USD 11 billion. Exports in 2016 are USD 108 billion, a 10.3 per cent annual growth (Nasscom, 2016). By 2020, India's IT-BPO sector total revenue is projected to reach USD 200-225 and between USD 350-400 billion by 2025. Digital technologies will continue to define the sector and revenue from these is likely to have a 23 per cent share by 2020 and 38 per cent by 2025 (ibid).

3.4. Major BPO-ITES Centers in India

Hyderabad, Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata are Tier I[12] cities that are dominating IT-BPO sector in India. Due to increasing infrastructure costs in these cities, many BPO operations are shifted to Tier II[13] cities like Nashik, Pune, Chandigarh, Srinagar, Mangalore, Bhopal, Lucknow, Dehradun, Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Belgaum, Mysore, Thiruvanathpuram, Kochi, Indore, Pondicherry etc.

Lower business process overhead is offered by Tier II cities, compared to Tier I cities. However Tier II cities have a less dependable infrastructure system which may get in the way of appropriate operations. The Government along with the partnership of private infrastructure corporations is working to achieve all round development and to deliver strong infrastructure all over the country.

Table 3.2 depicts the IT-BPO landscape of key Indian cities.

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[12] Tier I cities have a developed, established real estate market. These cities tend to be highly commercialized and developed with desirable schools, facilities, and businesses. These cities have the most expensive real estate (http://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/real-estate-tier-classifications-tier-1-tier-2-and-tier-3.asp).

[13] Tier II cities are the next level down from Tier I, and are basically smaller cities, statistically 1 million in population and are usually regional hubs such as state capitals or industrialized centres. (http://blogs.siliconindia.com/facilitymanagementservices/Miscellaneous/What-are-Tier-II-and-Tier-III-Cities-bid-52pLs73x43343767.html).Tier II cities are in the process of developing their real estate markets. These cities tend to be up-and-coming and many companies have invested in these areas, but they haven't yet reached their peak. Real estate is usually relatively inexpensive here; however, if growth continues, prices will rise (http://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/real-estate-tier-classifications-tier-1-tier-2-and-tier-3.asp).

Table 3.2. IT-BPO Landscape of Key Indian Cities

City	Focus	Prominent Firms
Delhi (includes Gurgaon and noida)	Call centres, transaction processing, chip design, software	GE, American Express, STMicroelectronics, Wipro, Spectramind, Convergys, Daksh, ExL
Mumbai	Financial research, back office, software	TCS, MphasiS, i-flex, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup
Bangalore	Chip design, software, boi-informatics, call centres, IT consulting, tax processing	Infosys, Wipro, Intel, IBM, SAP, Dell, Tisco, TI, Motorola, HP, Oracle, Yahoo, AOL, E&Y, Accenture
Hyderabad	Software, back office, product design	HSBC, Satyam, Microsoft
Chennai	Software, transaction processing, animation	Cognizant, World Bank, Standard Chartered, Polaris, EDS, Pentamedia
Kolkata	Consulting, software	PwC, IBM, ITC Infotech, TCS
Pune	Call centres, chip design, embedded software	MsourcE, C-DAC, Persistent Systems, Zensar

Source: Impact of Globalisation on BPO Industry in India by B. Sathish Kumar and A. Elgin, 2007.

3.5. Major Players in BPO Sector in India

Nasscom, since the past few years has been ranking the top 20 IT-BPO Export Companies, top 15 BPO Export Companies and top 20 IT-BPO Employers based on a survey conducted annually, which is open to all Nasscom members. Through this survey Nasscom collects financial and other information from its member companies and the participating companies are ranked based on the data submitted.[14]

Nasscom published its annual rankings of top 20 IT-BPO Employers in 2015-16 based on India based headcount (See Table 3.3). The top 20 employers are account for 1.34 million India based employees; almost 40% of the total; good mix of Indian, MNC, IT and BPO Firms. The employers are account for 1.34 million India based employees; almost 40% of the total; good mix of Indian, MNC, IT and BPO Firms. They are also account for over 50% of net new hiring in 2016; same levels as 2015. 4 firms employ over 100,000 people each; almost 60% of the total employee pool of

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[14] There are four parameters on the basis of which Nasscom prepares the annual rankings of top 20 IT-BPO Employers. Those parameters are 1. revenue of the organisation 2. Y-o-Y growth of the organisation 3. total number of employees in the organisation 4. number of added employees in current year in compare to the previous year (Paresh Degaonkar, Nasscom 2013).

Top 20. While 14 companies increased their employee strength, 6 companies reduced their headcount over the previous year (Gupta, 2016).

Table 3.3 Top 20 IT-BPO Employers in India, 2016 (Nasscom)

Rank	Company Name	Rank	Company Name
1	Tata Consultancy Services Ltd.	11	Hinduja Global Solutions Ltd*
2	Infosys Limited	12	CSC, India
3	Cognizant Technology Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.	13	WNS Global Services (P) Ltd*
4	Wipro Ltd.	14	Syntel Ltd.
5	Capgemini India Pvt Ltd.	15	Mphasis Ltd.
6	HCL Technologies Ltd.	16	EXL*
7	Tech Mahindra Ltd.	17	L&T Infotech
8	Genpact Ltd.	18	Firstsource Solutions Ltd*
9	Intelenet Global Services*	19	MindTree Ltd.
10	Aegis Ltd.	20	CGI

Source: Top 20 IT-BPO Industry Employers, Sangeeta Gupta, Nasscom, 2016

This list is based on the India-based FTE headcount of firms with IT-BPO operations in India, as reported to Nasscom in its annual survey. Based on publicly available information, few other MNCs such as Accenture, HP India, Convergys and IBM would have also featured in this list. However, as they have not participated in the survey, Nasscom does not have all the required details and is unable to rank them. Most firms on this list are engaged in IT as well as BPO. Firms marked with an * indicate pure-play BPO firms[15] (ibid).

3.6. Major Services Offered by Indian BPO Companies

Indian BPO companies offer jobs in various verticals like (Semat, 2016)-

a) **Data Entry and Data Processing:** Data entry is purely a back office job. It undertakes tasks like data entry from paper, books, images, e-books, yellow pages, web sites, business cards, printed documents, software applications, receipts, bills, catalogs and mailing lists (ibid). The process of data entry, though a non-core activity, is an indispensable part of any business activity.

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[15] Pure-play BPO firms are companies that generate all of their revenue from BPO. This is in contrast to a host of IT services organisations that may have some measure of BPO competency as a part of their services portfolio (for example, Braxton, IBM and EDS) but do not solely focus on process outsourcing (http://www.bus.umich.edu/KresgePublic/Journals/Gartner/research/113500/113528/113528.html).

Every organisation in the process of doing business generates data. This data has to be entered into the system so that it can be processed and stored for future use. This process of entering data into a computerized database or spreadsheet is defined as data entry. The data entry process can be performed by an individual by typing on a keyboard or by a machine entering data electronically (Gulipalli, 2015). It is a critical task in a BPO. It needs accuracy and an extremely time consuming process.

b) **Form Processing Services[16]:** Outsourcing any particular form processing services include services such as capturing data filled in form by customers, digitizing data and then processing it so the data can be stored in a database for easy access and quick research. The service of handling and maintaining all the raw data and arranging it in such a way for best utilization for the system is known as form processing services. Form processing services includes online form processing, payroll processing, medical billing, insurance claim forms processing and medical forms processing etc.

c) **Insurance Processing:** Insurance processing in a BPO includes the processing of tasks such as routine data entry, invoicing, rating, ordering and reviewing MVRs, generating loss run reports, issuing policies, etc. on behalf of an insurance agency. An insurance agency in order to gain more profit assign such internal talent tasks which require risk control judgment and high-level interpersonal skills to a BPO.

d) **Telemarketing Services[17]:** Telemarketing refers to the business of marketing goods or services via telephone. It is the act of selling, promoting a product or process to the prospective customer over phone. Telemarketing includes the use of persons trained in conversational skills to enhance sales, promote new product and update the customer with current available services. And in some cases, recorded sales pitches are used over the phone by automatic dialers which are known as automated telemarketing. Thus the outbound

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[16] http://www.bpodataentryhelp.com/content/services/form-processing
[17] http://www.infosearchbpo.com/outbound-inbound-callcenter-services.php

telemarketing services can increase the profits of the business by using the best of personnel, process and development technologies.

e) **Bookkeeping and Accounting Services:** Bookkeeping is the process of recording daily transactions in a consistent way, and is a key component to building a financially successful business. Bookkeeping is comprised of: recording financial transactions, posting debits and credits, producing invoices, maintaining and balancing subsidiaries, general ledgers, and historical accounts and completing payroll. Maintaining a general ledger is one of the main components of bookkeeping. The general ledger is a basic document where a bookkeeper records the amounts from sale and expense receipts (McCool, 2017).

Accounting is a high-level process that uses financial information compiled by a bookkeeper or business owner, and produces financial models using that information. The process of accounting is more subjective than bookkeeping, which is largely transactional. Accounting is comprised of preparing adjusting entries (recording expenses that have occurred but aren't yet recorded in the bookkeeping process), preparing company financial statements, analyzing costs of operations, completing income tax returns and aiding the business owner in understanding the impact of financial decisions (ibid).

f) **Debt Collection[18]:** This is one of the outbound outsourcing processes performed to follow and ensure the payments on debts owed by individuals or businesses. This collection processes are commonly found in the mortgage, insurance and financial markets. Thus, it saves the money and time of the companies in debt collection when it is outsourced. The agents should convince the debtors to pay their debts in a right manner and not through unfair practices.

g) **Customer Support Services** (ibid): Customer service is defined as the name depicts, servicing the customers to satisfy their needs. This is the facility of

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[18] http://www.infosearchbpo.com/outbound-inbound-callcenter-services.php

servicing customers before and after a purchase of the product or service to ensure the customers satisfaction. Customer service has great significance in any business as they build a good customer relationship through interaction and bringing back the customer to the business (repeated customers). Thus, the agents in the inbound call centers are trained well to service the customers to deal with their complaints and mal functions of the product and to take immediate action to solve their problems. Good Customer Service will bring good customers and ultimately profits the business.

h) **Technical Trouble Shooting** (ibid)**:** Technical trouble shooting is the repair or advice service provided to the customers over phone for their IT related issues. The role of tech support has expanded to include telesales-pre and post sales technical support, product support, technical applications and support, network tech support, onsite tech support, remote support, remote IT infrastructure management services. The goal of tech support call centres is to provide product information and technical assistance that are accessible 24 hours a day. Thus, the technical support is significant in delivering greater value to the business.

i) **Help Desk** (ibid)**:** Help Desk is a service provided by the agents who assists, guide, trouble shoots and offers solution to computer problems and IT related products. Help desks have quite a lot of responsibilities and functions. They supply the users with vital information on computer issues and queries. The help desk in call centres not only provide the technical answer but also evaluate the problem. Help desk is indeed a very important part of each company as it is essential to help and support the clients and customers in all possible way. Keeping customers happy is one of the most important objectives of the company. Having an excellent help desk service can resolve any inquiries are the first step to keep them loyal to the company.

j) **Order Taking** (ibid)**:** Order taking service will help the customers to place their orders directly via telephone to the order taking agent. The agents will process the order and answer the customers to their doubts that may have about the products. Order taking service has become a major part of the

inbound call center services as they have too many advantages and the most important is increasing the sales of the product. The offshore order taking service includes taking the order and shipping information. This makes the process much easier and thereby increases the sales and profits the business.

3.7. Impact of IT-BPO Industry in Indian Economy

The three-decade-old Indian IT-BPO industry has had great impact on the Indian economy and society, more than any other sector, and within a much shorter time frame (Nasscom, 2012). Not only has the industry helped India to emerge as a global force, it has also given a major fillip to the country's growth, helping it to narrow down the several 'divides' that separate its society. In order to understand the extent of the impact that the IT-BPO sector has had on India's growth story, Nasscom has worked on a special study that explores the transformational nature of its role. Broadly speaking, the study shows that India's IT-BPO industry has made a lasting, sustainable, phenomenal and multi-fold contribution to the country's economy over the last decade (ibid). It has not only driven balanced regional development, the sector has empowered the country's diverse human resources, created an innovation platform and most importantly, put India on the global map (ibid). Going forward, India expects the IT-BPO sector to play an even bigger role in creating balanced, socially responsible and inclusive growth for the country (Vedashree, 2012; Nasscom, 2012).

According to the Nasscom report, the Indian IT-BPO industry has undergone a rapid evolution, as it has kept abreast of what the global markets require in terms of products and services (Naidu et.al, 2015: 3). Having learnt the ropes quickly in the technology sector, which was traditionally never ever a stronghold for India, the country has now positioned itself as an IT hub, a sourcing destination for IT-BPO products and services that spell trust, high quality, and cost-effectiveness (ibid). IT-BPO industry has shaped itself into a process-oriented, Best Practices-focused and skill-rich entity that has found favour with global customers (ibid).

While the industry's value proposition in the late 80s and mid-90s was more about providing scalability and lower operating costs to clients, today it has to do with domain expertise that drives end-to-end services as well as research and development

(Nasscom, 2012). The industry is creating more and more value for customers, having achieved scale and complexity in its offerings (ibid).

One of the biggest contributions of the Indian IT-BPO industry is its creation of the brave new world of global outsourcing. A 'unique' industry has been crafted by Indian IT-BPOs, which has found global recognition and draws huge foreign investment (ibid). The sector in fact, accounted for over 10 per cent of India's total FDI in the last decade. Around USD 8 billion have been invested by PE/VCs over the last 10 years, with 700 deals getting signed (ibid). B. Sathish Kumar and A. Elgin has presented the Indian BPO position among the world's fifty best managed BPO vendors in their study "Impact of Globalisation on BPO Industry in India" 2007, where IBM GLOBAL/DAKSH (Indian Vendors) holds the topmost position followed by other 15 Indian Vendors (Kumar and Elgin, 2007).

Multinational firms continue to prefer setting up global captives, or global in-house centres (GIC), in India. According to a report, in the past two years, 70 companies set up GICs in India, taking the number to more than 1,448, with a headcount of 74,500. GICs are an integral part of the Indian IT-BPO sector. GICs have been viewed as cost-saving centres for parent organisations. But, with the growth of the global sourcing sector, GICs in India are evolving into centers of excellence, profit centres, and program management offices (*Business Standard*, 2015).

Going global has meant that Indian IT-BPO companies are also helping boost the economies of the countries where they play, by participating in the development of the local economy (Nasscom, 2012). The Nasscom study indicates that the sector employed around 3 per cent foreign nationals, and created savings of USD 25-30 billion in source economies in 2009 (ibid).

It also generated quality employment and infrastructure. The high standards of the industry in the areas of governance and quality are reflected in the fact that it has 35 per cent of all CMMi[19] 5 registered companies, the highest proportion in the

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[19] CMMI is a Process Model Framework for process-improvement developed by Software Engineering Institute (SEI), Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Pittsburgh, USA. CMMI, standing for Capability Maturity Model Integration, is a structured and systematic collection of best practices for process-improvement (http://cmmi-assessment.com/).

S&P[20], ESG[21] index. Indian IT-BPOs have invested in over 200 million sq ft of space for employees and facilities (Naidu et.al, 2015).

The industry has also emerged as a global hub for ER&D[22] (Engineering Research & Development), an area it will continue to lead in the years to come. Today, India houses over 750 captives, including the world's six largest software corporations that employ nearly 20 per cent of the workforce in the country. Over 200 cross-border acquisitions between 2005-09 have enhanced the global presence of Indian IT-BPOs (ibid).

The ITES industry can be credited with leading India's transformation from an agrarian to a services economy, repositioning the country as a knowledge hub and helping drive economic growth (Singh and Majumdar, 2016). The service sector in India has surpassed agriculture with a greater share of GDP and the country has evolved from being an agrarian to a services-based economy. In the year 2014-15, the services sector contributed about 61 percent to India's GDP, growing strongly at approximately 10 percent per annum, placing India among the top-10 countries around the globe in terms of services (The Indian services sector: Poised for global ascendancy, 2016). As Subroto Bagchi, founder and former chairman of Mindtree, an Indian multinational IT and outsourcing company, says, "What makes me really proud of the ITES industry is the number of jobs it has created. Now, millions of

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[20] Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC (S&P) is an American financial services company. It is a division of S&P Global that publishes financial research and analysis on stocks, bonds and commodities. S&P is known for its stock market indices such as the U.S.-based S&P 500, the Canadian S&P/TSX, and the Australian S&P/ASX 200. S&P is considered one of the Big Three credit-rating agencies, which also include Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings. Its head office is located on 55 Water Street in Lower Manhattan, New York City (https://www.nextio.com/position/1792Standard-&-Poor's/49/Analyst).

[21] Environmental, social and governance (ESG) refers to the three central factors in measuring the sustainability and ethical impact of an investment in a company or business. The ESG Criteria is a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to screen investments. Environmental criteria look at how a company performs as a steward of the natural environment. Social criteria examine how a company manages relationships with its employees, suppliers, customers and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits and internal controls, and shareholder rights. Investors who want to purchase securities that have been screened for ESG criteria can do so through socially responsible mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (http://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/environmental-social-and-governance-esg-criteria.asp).

[22] ER&D companies are providing global engineering consultancy that can lay out a roadmap for rationalising R&D activities, change management and ramping up. They are providing frugal engineering capabilities, helping clients develop cost-competitive products, especially for emerging markets (http://www.nasscom.in/india-shinning-global-erd-space).

people in India earn more than Rs.5 lakh per annum—often much higher than their parental incomes" (ibid).

Industry's contribution in transformation of India's image from a slow moving bureaucratic economy to a land of innovative entrepreneurs and a global player in providing world class technology solutions and business services (Nasscom, 2010) is remarkable. Due to the open market and the demand for outsourcing, more and more BPO companies in India are setting up bases in various parts of the country (Maps of India, 2015). The sector has dominated this domain by accounting for nearly 10 per cent of India's service sector revenues and evolving a unique 'service directed' export-oriented model. IT-BPO industry is currently contributing 9 per cent of India's incremental GDP and the per capita GDP contribution of IT-BPO employees is over 80 times that of agriculture (Nasscom, 2012). By 2020, industry body Nasscom forecasts the IT-BPO industry to account for 10% of India's GDP, almost a fifth of its exports and about 30 million direct and indirect jobs (Singh and Majumdar, 2016).

IT-BPO Industry has made significant contribution to GDP which has increased from 1.2% in 1998 to 7.5% in 2012 (Vedashree, 2012). It is on the exports side however, that the sector has had the highest impact. IT-BPO industry accounts for 14 per cent of the country's total exports. Having grown twice as fast as India's total exports over the last 10 years, it has modified the country's export mix, from traditional commodities to services. By 2020, nearly 18-20 per cent of India's exports are expected to come from the IT-BPO industry (Naidu et.al, 2015).

Indian IT-ITES industry revenue was estimated at USD 119.1 billion in 2014-15 as compare to USD 106.3 billion in 2013-14, registering an increase of around 12.0% (Government of India, 2016). Revenue of IT and ITES industry was estimated about USD 129.5 billion in the year 2015-16 that is rose upto 9% as compared to last year's USD 118.8 billion (Meenu, 2016: 17).

Export of IT and ITEs industry is estimated about USD 107.8 billion in the year 2015-16 that is rose upto 9% as compared to last year's USD 97.8 billion (Meenu, 2016). IT-ITES exports is estimated to gross USD 98.1 billion in 2014-15, growing by 12.4% over 2013-14 and contributing nearly 82% of the total IT-ITES revenues (excluding hardware). A combination of solutions around disruptive

technologies such as SMAC (Social media, mobility, analytics and cloud), artificial intelligence, embedded systems etc. have become the life-force of the industry (Government of India, 2016).

During 2015-16, IT services exports (excludes BPO, Engineering, R&D and Software products) is expected to register an y-o-y growth of over 10.3%, generating exports of USD 61.0 billion, driven by collaboration, communication, business intelligence projects, and integration of SMAC services with traditional offerings (Government of India, 2016). During 2015-16, ITES/BPO exports are likely to be USD 24.4 billion with a growth rate of 8.4% over 2014-15. Software products and ER&D segment is estimated to generate exports of US$ 22.4 billion in 2015-16 with y-o-y growth rate of 12% (ibid). The domain specific solutions focusing on convergence, customization, efficiencies and localization, M2M[23] technology and newer technologies around SMAC are playing a significant role in driving the growth of ER&D and software products. With over 3,100 firms, India is emerging as a hotbed for software products with SMAC and a supportive ecosystem creating successful stories (ibid).

As per the Fact Sheet* of IT & BPO Industry presented by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, the IT- BPO sector has become one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy, contributing immensely to the country's GDP (9.3%) and public welfare (Government of India, 2017). India has captured a sizeable portion of the global technology sourcing business. The Indian IT industry's (including hardware) share in the global market stands at 7% and growth has been largely due to exports. The Fact Sheet says, 60% firms use India for testing services before taking software products global. As per the report, cost Leadership – savings of USD 200bn for clients in the past 5 years and expected growth is 10.7% over 2016. India has a rapidly growing urban Infrastructure fostering several IT centres in the country; 50 cities for service delivery, the report added (ibid).

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[23] Machine to machine (M2M) is a broad label that can be used to describe any technology that enables networked devices to exchange information and perform actions without the manual assistance of humans (http://tracktio.com/machine-to-machine-m2m-internet-of-things-iot/).
*See appendix no. 1.

As per India Brand Equity Foundation[24] (IBEF), total exports from the IT-BPO sector (including hardware) were estimated to have been USD108 billion during 2016; exports rose at a CAGR[25] of 13.5 per cent during 09–16 despite of weak global economic growth scenario and is estimated to expand at a CAGR of 9.1 per cent to USD350 billion by 2025 (IBEF, 2017). As of 2015, India is a prominent sourcing destination across the world, accounting for approximately 56 per cent market share in the global services sourcing business. India acquired a share of around 38 per cent in the overall Business Process Outsourcing market (ibid). The sector ranks fourth in India's total FDI share and accounts for approximately 37 per cent of total Private Equity and Venture investments in the country (ibid). In 2016, revenues of Indian IT-BPO market crossed USD160 billion (ibid).

BPO sector's contribution in creating employment for young India is large and impressive. The sector is changing the aspirations of India's youth by creating high paying jobs and emerging as a 'Skill Factory'. Now, the country is able to face the major challenge of 'unemployment' with the help of exploding BPO industry. With a multicultural, large and highly ambitious workforce of over 3.1 million employees, the industry today is the largest private sector employer in India. India continues to lead in cost competitiveness. Flat entry level salaries, flattening employee pyramid, Tier II/III service delivery, alternate talent pool hiring and fast career growth and helping India stay 7-8 times cheaper than source locations and 30 per cent cheaper than the next nearest low-cost country (Nasscom, 2014).

India is the world's largest supplier of employable human capital with 5.3 million graduates (in 2014), second highest number of English speakers in the world, and a large workforce enabling versatility and agility for customers (ibid). IT-BPO sector gave employment to 61,000 additional people in the second quarter of 2013-14, second only to textile industry (*Business Standard*, 2014). The industry has given the opportunities and global platform to the talented youngsters beyond

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[24] India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) is a Trust established by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. IBEF's primary objective is to promote and create international awareness of the Made in India label in markets overseas and to facilitate dissemination of knowledge of Indian products and services. Towards this objective, IBEF works closely with stakeholders across government and industry.
[25] The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is a useful measure of growth over multiple time periods. It can be thought of as the growth rate that gets you from the initial investment value to the ending investment value if you assume that the investment has been compounding over the time period.

Engineering, Medical, CA, CS, Teaching etc. by setting new standards of work environment. A major chunk of students and Indian youngsters from the humanities background and miscellaneous education streams, have got a bright prospect, career option and hence a better future. The industry provides the fastest growth path for the people with multiple domain expertise. Starting with a job to sustain personal expenses, they can convert it into a professional career.

The employment generation figures of the sector are equally impressive. The BPO industry added direct employment of 2.8 million; indirect employment 9 million and 45% of total incremental urban employment in the last decade (Vedashree, 2012). As per Nasscom, there is 10 times increase in direct employment in the industry from 2000 to 2012 (ibid).

Since the manpower costs in Metros like Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Gurgaon, NCR, Mumbai and Pune is exceeding profits, BPO companies are now shifting their operations to smaller towns and sub-urban areas like, Belgaum, Nashik, Mysore, Ahmedabad, Mangalore etc to attract cost-effective but quality talent to service global clients. This horizontal growth of BPO companies in sub-urban areas is not only providing employment opportunities to millions of unemployed youth, but also giving companies a competitive advantage to fuel the next level of growth.

At the same time, the industry has also played a major part in bridging India's gender divide, by providing equal work opportunities to the country's women. Of the IT-BPO industry's total workforce, 34 percent is constituted by women in February 2017, accounting for 45 percent of new intake (Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2017). Nasscom's research shows that 26 per cent of the female employees were chief wage earners, while 20 per cent were at the managerial level or above. By 2020, five million women are expected to join the IT-BPO workforce (Vedashree, 2012).

Clearly, women are not the only beneficiaries. As an industry that is the 'youngest' in terms of demographic profile and employs the highest number of Indians in the 25-45 years age group, the sector has done a lot to empower the youth. According to the Nasscom study, today, 74 per cent employees are less than 30 years old and 35 per cent are less than 25 years of age (Nasscom, 2012).

IT-BPO industry is additionally creating a livelihood for the economically backward sections of the society, with 5 per cent of the workforce from these areas. The differently-abled have also benefited from the IT-BPO industry, gaining employment in the sector and joining the mainstream. 60 per cent of the companies provide employment to differently-abled people (ibid).

3.8. Growth of IT-BPO Sector in India

When the demand for outsourcing work to India has been noteworthy among western companies, BPO has been providing massive contribution in India's economic growth and employment opportunities. BPOs are aiming at contributing towards bringing in more earnings to the country and IP creation. The following are some useful reviews with regard to the growth of the IT-BPO sector in recent three years as per Nasscom:

Speaking at the press meet, on the occasion of releasing the key findings of Indian IT-BPO sector performance for 2011-12, Mr. Rajendra Pawar, Chairman, Nasscom, said, "The industry performance this year demonstrated the sector's ability to innovate and deliver differently in order to maintain the growth trajectory. The Indian IT companies are investing in building platforms and productised solutions to drive future growth opportunities. More importantly, the industry is expanding into newer geographies and verticals where the growth is 1.4 time that in the mature markets. Emergence of a vibrant start-up product ecosystem creating solutions for India and the world also enhanced the product opportunity for India" (*Business Standard*, 2012).

The year 2011-12 characterizes a landmark year as aggregate revenue for the Indian IT-BPO sector is estimated to cross USD 101 billion. Continuing as the bastion for the sector, exports accounted for USD 69 billion, growing by 16.3 percent over the last fiscal year. Despite challenges in the global market conditions, India sustained its growth trajectory. Some of the other pivotal factors that have been contributing to this growth include new business models, organisation efficiencies, services around disruptive technologies such as cloud, mobility, analytics, social media, and flexible product portfolios and verticalized solutions. For 2013, the export revenues are

expected to grow by 11-14 per cent while the domestic revenues will grow by 13-16 percent (Nasscom, 2012).

IT-BPO sector continues to be one of the largest employers in the country directly employing 2.8 million professionals, with over 230,000 jobs being added in 2012. During this period, a large share of revenue (approximately 42%) and employment (approximately 45%) is generated from the customer care services such as Call Centers (Agarwal, 2014: 157).

India retains its number one position among the world's favourite sourcing locations for IT-BPO services, despite the rise of several alternative sourcing locations, with a share of over 58 percent in 2011. India-based resources are estimated to account for about 60-70 percent of the offshore delivery capacities across the leading multinational IT-BPO players (*Voicen Data Bureau*, 2012).

Despite challenges in the global market, Indian IT-BPO industry sustained its growth trajectory and is expected to clock export revenues of USD 75.8 bn with a Y-o-Y growth rate of 10.2 per cent (Nasscom, 2013). Domestic market also witnessed a growth rate of 14.1 per cent on Y-o-Y basis, increasing the domestic revenues to Rs. 1,04,700 crore (*Business Line*, 2013). The Indian IT-BPO sector continues to be one of the largest employers in the country directly employing nearly 3 million professionals, adding over 180,000 employees. As per Nasscom, "FY2013 can be characterized as the year of rapid transition and transformation leading the industry into expanding into newer verticals and geographies, attracting new customer segments, and transforming from technology partners to strategic business partners" (Ammachchi, 2013).

India continues to be a dominating offshoring location, with 55 per share in global outsourcing market. Driven by an improvement in the global economic climate and rise in the technology spend, 2014 brought optimism for the Indian IT-BPO industry. Rapid technology transformation is leading to altered and dynamic client engagement, which in turn is fueling business transfiguration, speeding up delivery services, and driving innovation capabilities across practices and operations (*India Infoline News*, 2014).

Despite challenges in the global market, Indian IT-BPO industry sustained its growth trajectory and is expected to clock export revenues of USD 86 billion with a Y-o-Y growth rate of 13 per cent. Domestic market also witnessed Y-o-Y growth rate of 10% taking the domestic revenues to INR 1150 billion (Nasscom, 2014). The Indian IT-BPO sector continues to be one of the largest employers in the country directly employing nearly 3 million professionals, adding over 1,60,000 employees. 2014 can be characterized by rapid evolution, expansion of verticals and geographic markets, attracting new customer segments, and offering a considerably wider spectrum of solutions (ibid). In the words of Mr. R. Chandrasekaran, Vice Chairman, Nasscom, "The future looks exciting and positive as the IT-BPO industry is evolving dramatically in terms of scale and complexity. The sector will leverage collaboration, innovation, technology shifts and build a transformational agenda for India" (*The Hindu*, 2014).

The overall industry (along with domestic consumption and hardware) has reached the estimated $143 billion (nearly Rs 9.70 lakh crore) in 2015-16. The global IT-BPO spending rose 0.4% in 2015. "Amidst a volatile global economic environment, the industry has been able to set new benchmarks by sustaining its double-digit growth", Nasscom Chairman BVR Mohan Reddy told reporters (*Business Standard*, 2016). "Start-ups and e-commerce are the new champions of the industry and I expect these segments to increase their contribution to industry growth in the years to come" he said, adding that India has increased its market share in global sourcing from 55% to 56% (ibid).

In the words of Nasscom President R Chandrashekhar, "We had estimated that the domestic segment will grow at a certain pace on the back of the announcements made by the government and trends that we saw. However, many of those have not taken off. As and when they do, we will see a larger impact". The industry added 2 lakh employees in 2015-16 reaching a total employee base of 3.7 million (*Business Today*, 2016).

As per Nasscom, the Indian IT-BPO industry has received over $7 billion (nearly Rs 47,467 crore) in Foreign Direct Investment, including $5 billion (nearly Rs 33,905 crore) in start-up investments, in 2015-16 (*DNA*, 2016). It is forecasted, in year 2017, industry revenue will be touching USD 154 billion, up from USD 143

billion in 2016 and showing a growth of 8 per cent and eCommerce will fetch USD 33 billion (Nasscom, 2017). In its contribution to the national exchequer, IT-BPO continues to fare favourably on several parameters - share in total service exports is estimated at 49% and it contributes 7.7% to India's GDP. Overall, the industry is estimated to employ nearly 3.9 million people, an addition of 170,000 people (approx.) over 2016 (ibid).

In 2017 IT-BPO exports from India is expected to reach USD 117 billion, a 7.6% Y-o-Y growth. ER&D continues to be the fastest growing segment at 10.5%, driven by global OEMs (Oracle Enterprise Manager) increasingly embedding software & services into their products. IT services growing at 7% is driven by growth in software testing and ISO. BPO exports, at 7.5% Y-o-Y growth is being driven by cloud (BPaaS), mobility and advanced analytics. The trend and the factors contributing to growth are similar to global markets and encouragingly, at a faster rate (ibid).

In 2017, India's domestic IT-BPO market is likely to grow 8.5% Y-o-Y to reach USD 38 billion (excl. eCommerce). Rapid digitisation and GST implementation is expected to further catalyse growth. With 375 million Internet subscribers, India has the 2nd largest user base after China. It is most aggressive in global market shares across segments, be it the number of internet users, smart phone users, app downloads, and online payments. There is significant push from the government to go digital and recognised by the global technology giants. The year-end also witnessed demonetisation of higher value notes, which is giving a significant boost to digital payments – leading to a cashless, paperless economy (ibid).

3.9. Future Outlook of the BPO Industry in India

"It is believed that the services industry will be able to notch up $300 billion in revenue by the year 2020, and continue to contribute a big share to the country's GDP" as quoted by Sangeetha Gupta, senior Vice President, Nasscom, traces the sector's trajectory in an interaction with D Govardan (*Financial Chronicle*, 2015). By 2020, India's IT-BPO sector total revenue is projected to reach USD 200-225 billion and between USD 350-400 billion by 2025. Digital technologies will continue to define the sector and revenue from these is likely to have a 23 per cent share by 2020

and 38 per cent by 2025. Indian service providers face a significant opportunity as digital technologies continue to be embedded in an ever widening range of products and services (Nasscom, 2017). A Nasscom Study "Indian IT-BPO industry: Driving India's Socio Economic Transformation" by Rama Vedashree in 2012, stated the Indian IT-BPO industry will have the following impact by 2020 (Vedashree, 2012):

a) It will account for 10 per cent of India's GDP and 14 per cent of total services sector revenues.

b) Nearly 18-20 per cent of India's exports are expected to come from the IT-BPO industry

c) The sector will create direct employment for 10 million people and indirect employment for 20 million.

d) Four million people will be directly employed by the IT-BPO industry from Tier 2/3 locations.

e) The sector will employ five million women in its workforce. The sector will provide significant global career opportunities due to location-independent models.

f) ICT can provide solutions at a fraction of the cost of traditional solutions and reduce public spend on these areas (healthcare, education, financial services and public services).

g) BPO industry will account for additional revenues of USD 50 billion-80 billion through innovation, driving additional GDP contribution of 1.5-2% (Vedashree, 2012).

India continues to reinforce its position as the only country in the world from where one can do anything and everything. At the foundation of this value proposition are four robust growth pillars (Figure 3.3), which defines it attractiveness as a key destination (Nassscom, 2015).

India remains a high potential market worldwide, offering multiple opportunities for unmet needs. With the world's second largest population (1.2 billion), India also presents a large, burgeoning end-user market. Additionally, with 937 million mobile subscribers, 278 million internet users, an USD 14 billion ecommerce market, and an economic growth rate that is soon expected to surpass that of China, India is set to leapfrog into the digital world (ibid). The Government's Digital India and Make in India initiatives are only expected to accelerate India's plunge into the connected digital world (ibid).

Currency movements and increased operational efficiencies have ensured that India's position as the world's most cost competitive sourcing destination has only become stronger in the past year. Even Tier I cities in India like Bengaluru continue to be between 8-10 times cheaper than source countries and significantly cheaper than other low-cost destinations. Additional cost benefits have been passed on to customers through astute internal initiatives including moderate wage inflation, adopting automation and non-linear models to control salary expenses, introducing newer career bands, flattening organisational pyramid, etc. (ibid).

India is home to the highest volume of diverse, employable talent in the world. India is expected to churn out nearly 5.8 million graduates and postgraduates in 2015, out of which 1.5 million people form an industry suitable, ready to hire pool (Nasscom, 2015). At the same time, the IT-BPO industry has been growing in size, scale, maturity and domain expertise and focused in addressing what customer businesses' demand. The industry has been catalyzing business transformation for global clients through its established global delivery chain 640 ODCs (Oracle Developer Cloud Service) across 78 countries, acquiring local talent for language skills and cultural compatibility with clients (ibid).

Figure 3.3. Fundamental Growth Pillars
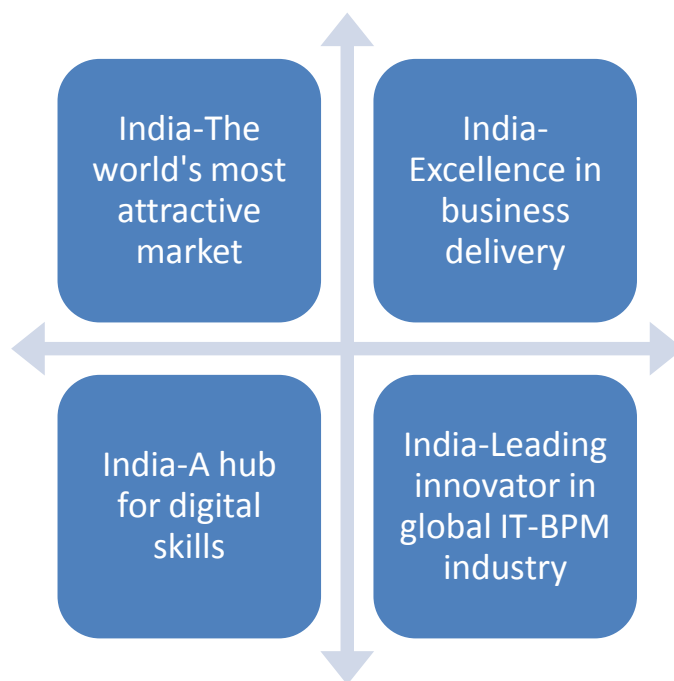
The variety and scale on offer in India again allows for multiple collaborative models to exist. This unique diversity gives ample opportunities to providers to choose their organisation size, business models to adopt, and what kind of partnerships to create. The agile start-up ecosystem (3,100+ start-ups) in the country has impacted large enterprises too – the need to be nimble has prompted larger firms to re-organize their structure with advanced decision-making capabilities, while the need to offer innovative, unmet needs has led them to build partnerships with smaller firms (ibid).

Today, the country hosts 7,000 digital focused firms with start-ups fueling innovation by investing further in futuristic technologies (ibid). India has been creating a future-ready digital workforce, with more than 1, 50,000 employees with SMAC skills. 50,000 employees are skilled in analytics, 30,000 people in enterprise mobility and 50,000 in cloud and social media & collaboration (ibid).

In order to deliver enhanced value propositions to the clients, organisations in India are consistently innovating around products, processes and business models. While, large firms are looking to benefit by investing, co-creating and partnering with

innovative startups, start-ups are increasingly driving innovation around emerging tech-dependent areas like edu-tech, health-tech, ad-tech etc.

3.10. Government Initiatives in Indian BPO Sector

The Indian BPO industry has witnessed phenomenal growth over the past few years. Acknowledging the growing demand of India as the preferred BPO destinations globally, the Government of India has commenced various initiatives and policy concessions to strengthen the flourishing of the IT enabled outsourcing market. Nasscom has over the years, successfully established the brand "Made in India" in the global outsourcing market. Sandip Sen, CEO of Aegis, one of India's larger BPO firms which employs 25,000 people in the country, said, "There is a lot of talk around 'Digital India' and 'Make in India'. However, the Indian BPO industry has undergone a paradigm shift to 'Serve in and for India'. In collaboration with Nasscom, we are making a concerted effort to get the central and state governments involved in providing improved citizen services, industry friendly policy frameworks, growth subsidies and grants" (*ET Bureau*, 2015).

A few of the steps initiated by the Government and industry for the ITES/BPO sectors are mentioned below:

a) In May 2002, the Government of India has accepted the recommendations of Nasscom and removed certain procedural bottlenecks that were hampering the growth of the Indian call center industry (Tiwari and Tiwari, 2007: 246).

b) The Government of India (Central Board of Direct Taxes - CBDT) has allowed total income tax exemption on the export of IT enabled outsourcing services under Sections 10A/10B of the Income Tax Act, 1961 (ibid).

c) FDI for 100 percent equity has been permitted in BPO companies. Norms for raising capital abroad by the Indian companies has also been liberalized. Permission is also provided for duty-free imports of capital goods (under the Export Promotion of Capital Goods scheme) for BPO companies (Shukla, 2008: 84).

d) A five-year tax holiday is available to companies providing telecom services including Internet services and broadband networks. Moreover, 30 percent

deduction from profits for the next five years in any 10 consecutive years out of the first ten years is also offered. (Mehrotra, 2005: 70).

e) A ten-year tax holiday is available to ventures engaged in developing or maintaining an operating an infrastructure facility. A ten-year tax holiday is also applicable to undertakings, which generate or distribute power (ibid: 69).

f) The Government has promoted several Software Technology Parks (STPs) which provide ready-to-plug IT and telecom infrastructure. STPs also allow single-window clearance for all regulatory compliance issues. Currently, several STPs have been established across India covering most of the major towns/cities (Tiwari and Tiwari, 2007: 246).

g) The government is offering funding and dedicated contracts to the Business Process Outsourcing industry to create jobs in regions such as the Northeast and Tier 2-3 towns in the country as part of incentives to focus on one of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's key priorities. The government has created a North East BPO Promotional Scheme (NEBPS) to help fund the creation of 5,000 jobs in the region (*ET Bureau*, 2015). In the month of March, 2015, Ravi Shankar Prasad, minister of communication and information technology, said in the Lok Sabha, "The administrative approval for implementation of NEBPS to incentivise creation of 5,000 seats with capital support in the form of viability gap funding with an outlay of Rs 50 crore has been issued" (International Chamber for Service Industry, 2015:4). Prasad added that the government would also look at providing incentives to BPO firms to create jobs in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns (*ET Bureau*, 2015).

h) Realizing the promise the sector holds in terms of employment, the government has also taken several steps to help students make a career in the industry. Certain educational institutions and universities have started offering industry-specific courses (Tiwari and Tiwari, 2007: 247). In the interest of enabling employees to build skills and expertise in domains like Accounting,

Insurance, Software etc, many BPO organisations have tie-ups[26] with internationally recognised universities and educational institutions.

3.11. Challenges before Indian BPO Sector

India, which has been an unexcelled force in the global BPO domain, has been facing firm competition from several emerging BPO service provider like Philippines, Brazil, Russia, Fiji, South Africa, Mauritius, New Zealand China, Malaysia, Ireland, Poland, Ghana etc since last few years. Though China faces challenges like language proficiency, it may emerge as a threat to India as it is making large investments to increase English language proficiency. On the other hand, Philippines has focused on voice services and is becoming a better choice for call centre even with high staff cost due to the history of cultural exchange with the US. Regarding the pure voice operations Philippines has already replaced India and occupied the no 1 position. Also the reduction in wage difference between India and other western countries is causing concern. "In the last five years, India has lost one million jobs in the customer contact business to countries like the Philippines," says T.V. Mohandas Pai, former director of Human Resources at Infosys Technologies (*India Today*, 2013).

India has focused on BPO and IT, whereas Malaysia has zeroed in on transaction processing and South Africa on non-IT BPO operations (King, 2010:138). Apart from these competitors, Egypt can also be considered as threatening remark as its costs are comparable to that of India and it is getting many projects from West Asia. According to executive search firm Mancer Consulting, "Over 40,000 jobs were lost to Egypt itself from 2008-2013" (*The Economics Times*, 2014). Simultaneously, by reason of increase in BPO salaries and rise in the costs of training, Indian manpower is becoming more expensive and also the secured transport arrangements for women in night shifts, in particular, is raising the cost. As a result, the cost pressure on several companies has also been increasing.

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[26] A few examples of mentoring relationship between a higher educational institution and a firm are those of Zensar with Vellore Institute of Technology, Tamil Nadu, India; Pune Xansa with Jammu University; Pixtel Technologies with the ISB Engineerging College, Ghaziabad; and Pixtel Technologies with the Galgotia College of Engineerging, Greater Noida. In addition, companies such as ITC InfoTech, Accenture, Sun, MindTree, Microsoft and Patni are undertaking faculty training programs (Lin and Pleskovic, 2010:311).

The language gap can also be considered as a challenge. Cathy Tornbohm, Vice-President, BPO research, at Gartner, based in the UK, says "India as a delivery location is still challenged by English being spoken with strong accents, which can sometimes be hard to understand" (*India Today*, 2013). In spite of intense training conducted by BPOs, many times, US companies find the customers being offended and displeased with the heavy accent of Indian representatives. In this situation, countries like as Philippines, Malaysia, China, Egypt, Morocco, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Columbia, Poland and Ireland are emerging as attractive destinations for voice contracts, posing a significant threat to Indian firms (*Hindustan Times*, 2013). The pre-Budget Economic Survey 2012-13 said, "According to Nasscom, in the last five years, India has lost about 10 per cent market share to the rest of the world in the world BPO space, most of which is in the voice contract segment" (*Business Line*, 2013). Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) has lost its pole position as the most preferred BPO destination in the global banking and capital market space to Manila (*The Economic Times*, 2014).

Although India is still retaining the number 1 position in the BPO sourcing landscape, Indian BPO industry has to address several challenges in order to retain this pole position in near future. Mr. Srinivas Raju Penmatcha, Senior Director and Head for BPO Services at Department of Science and Technology (DST), India on his article "Vote on Account 2014: Steps needed to salvage the Indian BPO industry" has discussed some important challenges the industry is facing today (*The Economic Times,* 2014). The first among these is BPO service buyers environment**.** Outsourcing to India has become the focus of mainstream political rhetoric/narrative within many of the major outsourcing economies. The legislators are continually talking about bringing regulations to protect domestic jobs. This idea is more prevalent in USA, the largest buyer of India's BPO services. In this environment, companies are facing immense pressure and Public Relation image issues to project a patriotic Image and resort to near shore sourcing (Penmatcha, 2014).

Rising costs is the second major challenge**.** Cost base to provide BPO services from India has risen significantly. It has in fact risen to an extent that Poland, Ireland and some East European countries are able to compete with Indian service providers as being almost equally cost effective alternatives. Now, there is a need to find more

economically viable locations (ibid). Slowing growth is identified as the third major challenge. In 2013, the \$13 billion Philippines BPO industry grew by 15.6%, compared with the 8.9% growth of India's \$20-billion BPO space. While the Indian BPO Industry has matured in many ways including an increased array of offerings, non-linear growth and innovative outcome based pricing models, there is scope to adopt creative sourcing strategies like Impact Sourcing (ibid).

3.12. Conclusion

BPO sector is one of the fastest growing sectors that has got lot of growth prospect in present-day as well as in coming times. If we compare today's India to 15 years back, it would not be untrue to refer the industry as 'Wonder' in our country. This industry paves the way for perfect utilization of million of man-power, whose employment was a burning question few years back. The sector is not only reducing the unemployment issue to a large extent; but also offering great possibility, delivering better career option and the best platform to those who are competent, smart, having the right skills without higher formal educational qualification or market demanding course. The industry is a blessing to the large amount of low-cost English speaking talent who belong to Indian middle class family. For these sections BPO as 'Miracle'. They are getting a chance to prove their talent, learning new and exciting things at international level and at the same time adding revenue too. One major point needs to be mentioned here is that, the skill addition and the value adding work has shaped these employees self-reliant and pioneering and transformed them to very much professional workforce; who is ready to take up challenges of global level.

To sustain and increase BPO industry growth rates, and to withstand international competition, the Indian BPO industry has started to consider employing various strategies including scaling up the value chain, increasing the absolute numbers of skill pool availability, bringing the training and access to niche skills to a larger group of trainable population, setting up Rural BPOs and employing Impact Sourcing (IS) (*The Economic Times,* 2014). Impact Sourcing in the BPO context can be referred to as initiatives such as rural BPOs, which encourages the mainstream companies to hire excluded population, and setting up specialized BPOs for vulnerable communities like the disabled (ibid).

Thus, it is understood that, with the sustained growth and perceived stability of the IT-BPOs, one cannot deny the fact that Indian IT-BPO sector has now become an evolution and playing a major role in fueling country's recent economic growth. IT-BPO industries have transformed Indian economy and have served as catalysts for development. The emergence of India as a leading and favourite outsourcing destination has paves the way for tremendous job opportunities for the young populace. Today, its IT-BPO sector is a flourishing bed for young India and one of the highest employment streams in urban India. Significant impact on the lifestyle of the common Indian is seen with the growth of jobs in the outsourcing sector.

CHAPTER 4

Women Employees in BPO Industry in India

4.1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, women have no longer been lagging behind in terms of career development and career goal. It is observed that BPO is one of the sectors, which has witnessed high growth of women participation in recent years. Women give significant contributions to the sector in several ways. This chapter focuses on BPO sector with special emphasis on women workers. The chapter begins with a general discussion on women participation in the industry. Then the chapter examines gender diversity with reference to the number of women participation in a few leading BPOs. The second part tries to analyse the challenges before women employees from both professional and personnel point of view; which includes employee's health problems owing to BPO work culture. The last part consists of an analytical discussion on the initiatives by BPO organisations to address the challenges women face caused by BPO work nature, to accelerate the diversity and inclusion across the industry at large and for recognizing, implementing and supporting woman oriented work policies. The chapter also puts focus on how the industry is handling the important issues of women's safety and security.

During the initial stage of the establishment of BPOs in India and till few years back this sector was not considered to be a well suited and convenient career option for women. However, of the entire female candidate base in BPO sector, around 30% have rated corporate culture to be the best feature of BPO sector. Male candidates, on the other hand, are not satisfied with the sector's corporate culture, as compared to their female counterparts (TimesJobs.com, 2014). Vipul Doshi, CEO, InterGlobe Technologies[1] stated, "The IT-ITES sector has evolved in the past few years. Today it is seen as a gender-balanced sector and working in for BPO company gives the feeling of empowerment to women, which is still missing in some traditional industries. The sector provides a level platform for personal, technical growth and personality development to men and women alike" (ibid). According to Kumar

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[1]InterGlobe Technologies (IGT) as business consulting company offers best travel technology solutions and reliable BPO services for hospitality and travel (https://datafox.com/competitors/interglobe-technologies-ltd-igt).

Shwetabh, CEO, Pacific Global[2] Inc, "BPO companies are equal employment opportunities provider in the true sense, and do not differentiate between a male and a female employee. Thus women employees feel truly empowered in the BPO culture" (ibid).

Of the entire workforce of 400 million in India, 30-35 percent are female, and only one-fifth of these women work in the urban areas (Nasscom-Mercer[3], 2008). This figure can largely be attributed to the growth of IT-BPO industry, which is one of the largest recruiters of a qualified workforce in recent times (ibid).The Indian IT-BPO industry has always been an equal opportunity employer and is strongly focused on hiring women (Nasscom, 2014). Currently (February, 2017) women constitute 34% of the IT-BPO workforce (i.e. over 1.3 million women employees)-an increase of around 1.8 times since FY2009. Nearly 10% of these women are in senior management roles (approximately 1% in the C-suite). Further, around 28% of the women employees in the sector are primary breadwinners, thereby indicating the changing trend of women's employment and inclusion in the sector (PwC, 2016: 8).

Figure 4.1.Share of Women in BPO Workforce
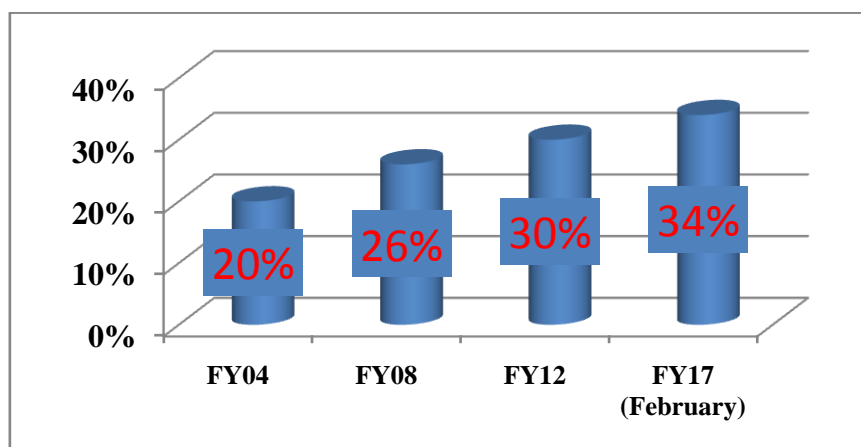
Source: Women Safety 2013, Nasscom and Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit 2017

As shown in figure 4.1 the share of women participation in BPO sector in 2004 was 20 percent, which increased to 26 percent in 2008. In the financial year 2012, the percentage of women participation was 30percent and as per Ms. Sangeeta

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[2]Pacific Global Solutions is a Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) company focused on providing qualitative business process services to its customers (http://www.pacificglobalsolutions.com/).
[3]Mercer is the world's largest human resources consulting firm. Headquartered in New York City, Mercer has more than 20,500 employees, is based in more than 40 countries, and operates internationally in more than 130 countries. Mercer is a subsidiary of global professional services firm Marsh & McLennan (https://www.levo.com/sean-mcardle).

Gupta, Senior Vice President, Nasscom, India's IT-BPO industry currently (February, 2017) employs nearly 3.9 million people, of which more than 1.3 million or over 34 percent are women (Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2017). The findings in the above figure revealed that women participation have gone up a mere 14 percentage points from 20 percent in 2004 to 34 percent in 2017, indicating that women are constantly rising as a proportion of Indian IT-BPO workforce.

4.2. Gender Diversity Challenge in BPO Industry

In compare to other traditional job profiles, for example-teaching, nursing; BPO job was considered as a less respectable profession for women in India caused by the call center's night shift, western culture and lifestyle and an image of young workforce. BPO work profile was viewed as less dignified job profile for Indian women. Few years back, BPO employment put question not only to the reputation of the women but also impacted her family's image in a negative way. In other words, call centre's employment has created a wide–ranging social division within family and outside.

Though slowly but notably, with the changing time, the attitude of society towards BPO industry is changing and women are not seen with suspicious eyes as before. Women are now liberated and are more successfully leading and balancing a peaceful family life and contributing to its economic aspect as well. BPO employment no longer leads to social and mental isolation of female workers from their family and social network. It has been found during the survey that, with the popularity of BPO jobs and specially the remarkable attention given by the government and the industry towards women employee's safety, security and as a whole to empowerment, the negative image of the industry is transforming. Women as well as the educated society have started accepting it as a decent career option. Beyond that, in recent times, BPO sector is even considered as an agent of empowering women by making them financially independent at an young age, providing them an opportunity to utilise their potential and introducing them to a bigger world. As a whole, the industry is gradually becoming an attractive and preferred career goal for Indian women.

Though, gradually BPO sector is becoming more and more women-centric (as revealed in the survey), the existence of gender biasness in the sector cannot be underestimated. In order to analyse gender diversity in the industry, first we have to

examine the proportion of women participation in the industry and their ratio of representation at various career levels of an organisation. The career levels at BPO sector can be defined as Entry Level, Manager Level, Director Level and Top Level (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008). Graduate employee without a supervisory role belongs to the entry level. This career stream ranges from entry level through to technical or subject matter experts in the IT space. The Manager Level consists of employees with a supervisory role. Supervisory level is ranging from Team Leader to General Manager. They may provide mentoring and coaching to less-experienced staff. Process Trainer and Quality Control[4] belong to the Manager Level. Heads of programmes, divisions and functions occupy the Director Level. Top Level refers to Executive Team, senior Vice Presidents and Vice Presidents of the organisation (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008).

In order to commence research on women representation in the industry, some percentage of women participation in a few leading IT-BPOs is collected from various sources. The number of female employees at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has crossed the one-lakh mark, making it India's biggest employer of women in the private sector (*Times of India*, 2014). Rajiv Krishnan, partner and leader (people and organisation) at consulting firm EY[5] said, "This makes TCS the largest employer of women in private sector, overtaking even banking and retail sector, which have traditionally had more number of women" (*Live mint*, 2014)."We have a lot of female talent in India, especially in the technology space. It's great to see that the company has been able to attract them. From 10,000 to 1,00,000, that is a growth of about 10x in 10 years," as quoted by N Chandrasekaran, CEO and MD, TCS (*Times of India*, 2014). TCS employed 42,500 women employees out of its total headcounts 142,000 employees in 2009 (*The Economics Times*, 2009) and on 31st March 2014, TCS had 98,122 women employees out of its 305,431 consolidated workforce (*Times of India*, 2014). Speaking on the sidelines of the company's June quarter earnings, Ajoyendra

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[4]Quality control (QC) is a procedure or set of procedures intended to ensure that a manufactured product or performed service adheres to a defined set of quality criteria or meets the requirements of the client or customer (http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/quality-control-QC).

[5]EY (formerly Ernst & Young) is a multinational professional services firm headquartered in London, United Kingdom. EY is one of the largest professional services firm in the world and is one of the "Big Four" accounting firms. The organisation operates as a network of member firms which are separate legal entities in individual countries. It has 231,000 employees in over 700 offices around 150 countries in the world. It provides assurance (including financial audit), tax, consulting and advisory services to companies (https://corporateinteractive.com.au/portfolio/ernst-young/).

Mukherjee, Executive Vice-President and head of global human resources at TCS said, "We are on track to hire 55,000 this year. We made 25,000 campus hires of whom 3,000 joined us this quarter, with the rest slated to join us in subsequent quarters. About 38%-40% of campus hires are women" (*Live Mint*, 2014). Importantly and notably 40% of TCS women employee are either new recruits or at junior level; while about 11% are at the senior management level (*TNN*, 2014).

Wipro employed almost 28,000 women in its total headcounts of 97,000 employees in 2009 (ET Bureau, 2009) and in 2014, it has 45,276 women employees out of its 1,47,452 total staff (*TNN*, 2014). Wipro Joint CEO Suresh Vaswani says that the male to female employee ratio is almost 50:50 at fresher level. But the percentage of women employees drops to about 15-20 percent at middle management levels and further 5-10 percent at senior management level (*ET Bureau*, 2009). Similarly, Infosys Technologies has 33.4 percent women employees in 2009, though among 232 title holders (position at Assistant Vice President and above), less than two percent are women (ibid) and in 2014 of its 1,61,284 total staff 54,537 are women employees (*TNN*, 2014).

From a dedicated Web site to mentoring programmes aimed at engaging women employees, HCL Technologies has been rolling out initiative to recruit and retain women. Earlier, in 2011, it organised a 'women only' recruitment drive across Delhi NCR, Bangalore and Chennai and received an overwhelming response-over 2,500 walk-ins (*Business Line*, 2011). Ms. Robin Abrams, a board member at HCL Tech says that the company has reached a tipping point. In 2011, 24.5 Percent female workforce is a significant achievement-compared to 21 percent in 2009 (ibid). She adds About 80 per cent of the women who work in the company are at entry level, and the other 20 per cent are spread through the ranks. Within this 20 per cent, about 15-18 per cent are first or second level managers; the rest are senior managers (ibid).

Amit Kumar, Head of Human Resources (HR)[6], Convergys India, says that, "Female employees are approximately 30 percent of our employee population in Convergys India today" (Vasudevan, 2014). In terms of those in leadership positions, he noted that, females are 30% of those in supervisory/managerial and above roles in

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[6]Human resources are the people who work for the organisation; human resource management is really employee management with an emphasis on those employees as assets of the business (http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/human-resource-management-HRM).

Convergys India, same as the ratio of female to male total employee population. Additionally, one of the two Senior Directors for Operations in Convergys India is a female. In fact, she heads the operations teams responsible for Convergys largest technology client (*Dataquest*, 2014).

According to Mukund Menon, Director HR for India& Singapore, Steria India says, women account for about 35 percent of their total workforce in 2012 (*Hindustan Times*, 2012). Mumbai-headquartered BPO Company Aegis has a workforce of around 24,000 employees of which, 20% constitute women (*TNN*, 2012).

The above figures in the leading IT-BPOs revel that women make up a considerable proportion of the workforce in the sector at the entry and junior levels. As Nasscom says, the percentage of women workforce in BPO-IT industry is close to 34 percent and majority of them are at the entry level (Nasscom, 2014). What is evident here is that, the percentage of female employees steadily increased from 35 percent in 2006 to 36 percent in 2008 (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008) especially at junior levels. It can be said that woman employment has become decisive part in BPO sector as they constitute 51 per cent of entry level recruitment and have a 50 per cent higher chance of getting job offers in the sector (Nasscom; Diversity and Inclusion Summit, 2016). This is due to the excellent employment opportunity that BPO sector provides towards Indian women.

Today, BPO is on a steady growth rate and is offering wide and better opportunities to women than a lot of other traditional industries. Apart from employment, one of the attractive aspects of BPO sector is the good and higher starting salaries with regular increment every year. Typically, today, in India, monthly income of an employee at entry level in this sector can vary between Rs.15,000 to Rs.30,000 or even higher. This figure at entry level is much higher than employees in most other traditional professions like teachers, nurses, police/armed forces, clerks etc. Apart from the salary, excellent remuneration[7] package is also provided to the employees, which is missing in other industries. The employees with a few years of

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[7] Remuneration package in BPO sector refers to the award that employees achieve purely on the basis of their performance at workplace. It neither includes monthly salary nor the annual bonus. Remuneration package may differ from organisation to organisation. For example, Capita BPO offers a UK trip to the best performers for the process 'next' twice a year. They also provide a television to the best performer every six months. Likewise Sopra Steria provides award namely, "Pat on the Back", ACE Award, Gem Award, Star Award etc to the best performances. In few processes of WNS provide excellent incentive bonus.

experience are in great demand and capable of switching their jobs to a competing BPO organisation for a better position and salary.

The requirement of minimum educational qualification to get an employment is another factor that leads more women towards the sector. To get a BPO job, a candidate requires neither higher academic education nor technical qualification. Rather, majority BPO jobs need a bachelor degree like BSC, B.COM or BA, good typing skills and fluency in English (for calling process in particular). Command on other languages like Chinese, German, Spanish and French and having technical knowledge certainly can add to employee's advantage. Though the sector needs minimum educational qualification for employment, it opens the way for larger scope and lays the foundations for higher growth for women. BPO is the only industry in India that provides a woman with limited education, the opportunity to earn more money, confidence, self-respect, career growth and achievement, higher economic and social status like any other highly qualified individual in the society.

BPO culture is vibrant, dynamic and women friendly. It renders women the scope to explore a better world, to understand western culture, self professional improvement, to work overseas and many more. In addition, the door to door pick up and drop down facility, safe and secured workplace, medical insurance, bonus, allowances, gratuity, provident fund, recreational activities like gym, library, indoor games, excellent infrastructure etc are added attraction that motivates women towards BPO employment.

Women participation in BPO sector is significantly increasing in recent years and well represented in entry and middle management roles. At the same time, it is important to mention that while women participation is quite satisfactory at the entry level, there is still lack of female involvement across all jobs functions. That indicates fewer women engagement in senior levels than men within many organisations. To get more clarity on this and to examine how are the companies faring in terms of treatment towards female employees in senior position of authority, the number of members of Board of Directors and Executive Officers of a few Indian leading IT-

BPO companies are examined[8], which is discussed below.

The percentage of women participation, both in Board of Directors and Executive Officers, at Infosys Ltd is significantly low. The Infosys Board of Directors consists of 9 members and 3 of whom are female. There are 8 Executive Officers at the organisation and none of them are women[9]. Likewise, TCS has eleven members in Board of Directors with no female as a member. The report also lists a Leadership Team consist of three members and woman does not hold a leadership position at the same (TCS Annual Report 2013-14). This demonstrates a poor participation of women at top level. Similarly, Wipro's Board of Directors is made up of thirteen members, in which only one director is women. There are 17 executive leaders in their Executive Committee, and only two of them are female, which is again a cause of disappointment on the part of women participation (Wipro BPO Annual Report 2013-14).

Identically, as per WNS Global Services Annual Report 2013-14 it has 10 Board members, only one of them are women director. Further, WNS website lists 17 individuals in their management team, one of whom is a female member[10]. Mphasis Ltd Annual Report 2013-14 says that there are nine members in the Board of Directors without a female employee. Organisation's website lists 10 Executive leaders in their management team, only one is a woman[11]. In the same way, according to Automatic Data Processing[12] (ADP) website, it has 10 Board members, two of whom are women. Website[13] reports, Executive Profile of 12 members and two of whom are female. This report is definitely a cause of concern in regards to women workforce representation.

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[8] It is important to note that while the collected information on Board of members are quite reliable and correct and appropriate to use for comparative analysis as the information is taken from Companies Annual Reports but, statistics on executive or management team can be misleading as some numbers are taken from organisation's website and we are not certain of how recently each company has updated their website.

[9] Infosys Annual Report 2015-16 and Infosys Website (www.infosys.com)

[10] WNS Annual Report 2013-14 and website (http://www.wns.com/)

[11] Mphasis Limited Annual Report 2013-14 and website (http://www.mphasis.com/)

[12] Automatic Data Processing is a comprehensive global provider of cloud-based Human Capital Management (HCM) solutions that unite HR, payroll, talent, time, tax and benefits administration, and a leader in business outsourcing services, analytics and compliance expertise. ADP was formerly one of four American companies to get a AAA credit rating from Standard & Poor's (S&P) and Moody's, but S&P and Moody's downgraded ADP to AA in April 2014, after the dealer services unit spin off (https://marketplace.workspaceone.com/company/adp/).

[13] http://www.adp.com/

By the same token, a completely male dominated Board of Directors and Leadership Team is found at Capita India Pvt Ltd, where female employee holds neither a position of Director nor an Executive Leader. Board of Directors and Leadership Team is consists of 3 and 8 male employees respectively (Capita India Pvt Ltd website[14]). At Convergys India Services Pvt Ltd, there are total 10 members in Board of Directors and one of them (not Indian) are female holding the position of Chief Executive Officer (Annual Report2012-13). As of 28 January 2015, with two Non Independent Directors and eight Independent Directors, there are total ten employees in Convergys's Board of Directors. Two of them are female members; but not Indian (Convergys Annual Report, 2012-13).

Importantly, the above data on Board of Directors of few leading IT-BPOs reveals that even though all these organisations promote and follow the policy of gender equality and no discrimination on the basis of gender at any level, the reality is different. Indian IT-BPO sector continues to be almost entirely male-dominated at senior levels and women representation is clearly fewer. This is really a big concern for the women employees especially when BPOs are booming (*Hindustan Times*) and is being recognized as a specialized sector in India.

To, many women employees, belonging to middle and upper-middle class families BPO job is only a supplement to the family income but neither an economic necessity nor their primary career option. Therefore, they take it as only 'for time being' and they continue their job as long as it does not hamper their family life. They have less desire to get promoted or for upward mobility. As Preeti Singh and Anu Pandey (2005) have rightly pointed in their study 'Women In Call Centres' most of the women employees are unmarried. They take up the jobs and drop out of their jobs to get married or bear children. Although Singh and Pandey's study is entirely dedicated to the women employed in the call centre business, during the survey for this study, it was clearly visible (discussed details in Chapter 5) that the above mentioned inclination towards work is still applicable and prevails throughout the BPO industry. Many female workers join BPO right out of class XII or graduation and start earning. Some of them used this opportunity solely to save up money for higher education or marriage purpose. This intention simply leads to decline of

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[14]www.capita.com

promotion or other growth ladder within the organisation. This tendency basically prevails among relatively young workers, who prefer to work at entry level and unwilling to take further responsibility at workplace.

These are also definitely a few reasons why women participation is insufficient at senior level. But apart from the above mentioned, as most of the interviewed and surveyed employees revealed, there are a few barriers or challenges that prevent women employees to deliver their best potential, when they have equal emerging opportunity and desire to show their excellence in the field. On the basis of the existing literatures and the survey, the following stress-generator[15] factors for women employees in the BPO sector can be identified. These are the challenges that prevent a dedicated and competent employee to grow within the organisation and to get a responsible and challenging position. These challenges[16] discussed below are the prime reasons of inadequate women representation at senior and top levels.

4.2.1 Dual Accountability of Women Employees

BPO organisation works for 24 hours in a day, and seven days a week. An employee needs to stay at office for minimum eight to nine hours in most of the companies and in some companies like TCS the shift timing is of 10 hours. Apart from long working hours, many spend at least two hours commuting; which means leaving home for ten to twelve hours a day. This hectic schedule, most of the times becomes the first and foremost barrier and stress generating factor. The responsibility of a married female employee can be divided into two parts-household responsibilities and office accountability. Apart from that many of them simultaneously have to perform childcare liabilities and thus bound to face additional constraints, which is not the case with married men.

While young bachelors finds a social life in office and that often works as a motivating factor to stay late, many women do not wish to or incapable in putting as many hours as their male counterparts. Sometimes, they fail to work with the same passion or devotion in compare to male co-worker. There are numerous instances of women not being promoted despite successful performances because, 'she had the

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[15] Stress-generator factor is a common term in BPO work culture. It refers to those circumstances that prevent an employee to deliver their best potential at professional and personnel levels.
[16] The challenges are perceived during survey and interviews and recognized as significant.

flexile timing' (Murty et. al, 2012: 73) to balance work and family commitments. Often due to their personnel obligation, when there is work pressure or priority to meet deadline, women are criticized by their fellow worker for being absent or inadequate contribution in the team. Survey data suggested that a considerable proportion of women employees prefer to continue at the entry level. They are not enthusiastic and keen to progress to higher levels of pay, skill, responsibility or authority. This is mainly due to the need of balancing work-life and personnel bindings. Promotion with greater authority and duty, with less flexibility is not a preferable proposal for them. Thus, due to various reasons, a number of women professionals cease to continue their career development at the early stage. It often becomes a challenge to balance work, family, society and self and stand against professional plan and determination.

4.2.2. Child Care[17]

According to Harsh Manglik, the chairman of National Association of Software and Services Companies one of the major issues facing the IT-BPO industry is that women wanted to raise their families at some stage (*The Economic Times*, 2010). Child care is observed to be the biggest barrier in raising women participation at higher positions in the sector. The dominant role in childcare is admitted to be the mother and this responsibility affects the working life of women more than a men in a distinct way. Many employees find returning to work difficult after having responsibility of raising a child. The same challenge was exhibited during a telephonic conversation with an ex BPO employee, who was a promising employee of a reputed BPO. In the words of the respondent, "After completing my maternity leave of 3 months I resumed to work leaving my child with her grandparents. But within a week I realized that it had become difficult for both me and my daughter to stay apart for more than 10 hours. Finally, I decided to find out a solution and spoke to my manager regarding the same. Within an hour my line manager arranged a meeting with Vice President, Assistant Vice President and HR. After a discussion they granted

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[17] Here, child care is considered as the most crucial matter and is differentiated from dual accountability as according to most of the surveyed women, dual accountabilities namely, study, personnel work, household and other family bindings can be rescheduled or in some cases may be arranged to perform by others; but child care is an emotional attachment for a mother. For a mother it is the priority and more than a responsibility and the separation from the infants and toddlers makes her mentality and emotionally stressed. In many cases a mother does not want to compromise on the quality of child care and as a result discontinues her work.

me unpaid leave of 3 months on the basis of my written promise to resume to work on a specific date. But after 3 months also the challenge was the same and I decided to put an end to my work" (Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune). In well paid and demanding BPO job profile, it becomes a challenge for female employee to serve sufficient childcare and hence ends up leaving employment.

Maternity leave also may work as a hindrance in their professional progress and personnel advancement as many women find it hard to cope up for the loss of learning process and working experience during their maternity leave period. In their professional life, due to the rapid changes in technology, employees need to keep themselves in a row with the new technological developments. Hence, the gap or interruptions in woman's career due to child birth or child bearing forced her to be lag behind and thus have adverse impact particularly on her professional growth.

In re-entering office after child birth, women get trouble in getting promoted. On the subject of promotion to the higher level, employer always considers employee's current performance and dedication towards work. A potential and efficient women employee, after child birth, is bound to shift her commitment and preferences towards her child. For example, one of the interviewed employees refused her promotion to the Training Team Manager, as her 19 months old child became her priority. She denied the extra professional responsibility which is bound to come with the promotion as she did not want to compromise on her son's care (Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune). Thus, the change of direction of loyalty and devotion acts as an obstruction in woman employee's professional progress.

A higher position needs a fully committed employee with less flexibility and more responsibility. An employer generally finds it difficult to expect the same from an employee with a child. Thus, the employer tends to see the employee as less than fully committed and lees potential for promotion. Hence, question mark comes to women's professionalism and competence after child birth and many times child care turns to be an obstacle on the way of their career furtherance.

4.2.3. Requirement of Professional Travelling

Professional travel requirements have been a challenge for women workers in this sector. While, in general, onshore or onsite assignment is a desired proposal for

male employees and single women, the same works as a cause of professional disadvantage and personnel concern for married women. Many times they prefer and sometimes they are bound to deny onshore assignments due to domestic responsibilities. Though, in the industry, organisation is not authorized to direct or influence any employee to accept onshore assignments, refusal of such an initiative is unfavourable for her career enlargement and leaves an imperfect reputation on her record. Thus repetitive declination for such projects results in her slow career growth, which can be referred as one of the reasons of fewer women involvement at senior levels. Here, it will be appropriate to mention the story of Ratna Kumar, who discontinued her role as project manager at a top IT firm in Gurgaon, where she had been working for the last 14 years. "The issue was not the firm but the sector", says the 36-year-old mother of two school going children. She relinquished her six figure salary. The job also involved a trip to Europe every quarter because her choices ran down to the wire: job or home (*The Economic Times*, 2009).

Professional travel requirements are a big concern for many women who occupy a top position in an organisation. At higher positions, frequent professional travel is an inevitable part of the work profile and an employee simply cannot stay away from such responsibilities. For a married woman, especially with children, frequent travel disorganizes her personnel life and children's upbringing. BPO job is demanding and the expectation of professional commitment at top position is much more demanding and challenging. So, at some point, it becomes tough and inconvenient to keep a smooth balance between work and life and sooner or later woman has to come down in favour of either one of them. Generally, in most of the cases, women decide to sacrifice career plan and ambition for the sake of family adherence. Thus, there are examples of hundreds of Ratna Kumar who do not hesitate to give up bright career in order to lead a smooth personnel life.

4.2.4. Relocation

Table 4.1. Top Reasons for Leaving Organisation

Woman	Man	Common
Marriage	Better job profile	Growth opportunities
Family/children	Better compensation	Education
Relocation		

Source: Mercer-NASSCOM Gender Inclusivity In India: Building Empowered organisation study, 2008

Another factor that affects women's careers in BPO sector is the husband's career (Murty et.al, 2012:75). The top reasons for men quitting organisations are to get better job profile, better offers or growth opportunities; on contrary women usually leave their job when they get married, due to family responsibilities, childcare and due to relocation specially when the husband moves (See Table 4.1). An interviewed employee, who had six years BPO work experience moved to Delhi from Pune as her husband got better professional opportunities in Delhi (Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune). While asking about her future work plan over the phone, she said, "I was working as a Process Trainer and my plan was to join a BPO here in Delhi. But now I am expecting my twins. My parents and in-laws are in Pune. So for the next 2-3 years there is no planning to resume work". Another ex BPO employee also shared her experience. In her words, "I had been working in a call center prior to my marriage and continued even after marriage. Recently we moved to our native land as my husband got a government job here in Assam. In Assam, there is hardly any scope for a BPO work. So, I am forced to switch my profession and currently looking for a teaching job" (Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune).

In case of husband's transfer or overseas assignments the priority is usually given to husband's job, which results in wife's career or opportunity breakdown. If preference is given to wife's career, they have to leave apart which again adds to the stress on women. This situation was experienced in the interview of an employee, a Senior Group Manager of a renowned BPO and the mother of two school going children. She found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance after her husband got transferred to Bangalore. Therefore she decided to shift to Bangalore and joined as a Team Manager (one level lower of her previous position) at the Bangalore branch of her organisation (Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune). Thus, in order to get relocated every time their husband gets transferred, many women simply fall off their career track and resign themselves and put their own careers at risk.

The Leaking Pipeline Report[18] showed that across globally, the percentage of working women in the 30-plus age group is significantly lower than that of women in their 20s, indicating that this is the stage when women tend to leave the workforce. This is true of India as well, where women often leave the workforce due to the

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[18] A landmark study by PwC6 in 2008 called the depletion of female talent the "leaking pipeline" (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008).

inability to achieve a strong work-life balance. Women who choose to take a break at this stage typically miss the critical step that takes them to the next level of management. And when they do choose to return to their careers, they find that they have lost leadership roles to their peers who remained in the workforce (Mercer-Nasscom, 2008).

4.2.5. Health Issues of Women Employees in Call Centres

While discussing women participation in BPOs, it becomes essential to discuss the health issues of BPO women workers with especial reference to those who work in call centers or calling processes in the night shift. The calling or voice processes recruit most BPO staff today, has brought little risk to the health of thousands of employees working in the wee hours for clients or customers half a world away.

"BPO workers face heavy workloads backed by performance targets combined with tight rules and procedures, all this enforced via electronic monitoring", senior ILO researcher Jon Messengersays (ILO, 2010). "This type of high-strain work organisation is well known to produce high levels of job-related stress", he adds (ibid). Heavy and variable workloads along with performance targets, salaries and hikes, relatively low levels of job discretion (particularly in call centers), loss of identity, odd timings, strict rules, reading pre-scripted conversations on the phone endlessly-often to irate customers from across the world, repetitive nature of work, need of concentration on listening, watching and talking simultaneously, performance monitoring, limited breaks etc together puts enormous stress on the employees.

The Department of Health (India) conducted its own study in 2012, where 1,500 call center agents underwent a 'bio impedance analysis'. The DOH found that 60% of the respondents have higher metabolic ages than their actual chronological ages, which is attributed to their bodies being under a lot of stress. That means their bodies are older than their real age (Ricardo Saludo, 2013).

A study conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry in India (ASSOCHAM) in 2006 among 272 women working on night shifts found that high percentages of the women were found to have the problem of high blood pressure accompanied by sleep disorders (60 percent). The other health issues

revealed by the study are cold and headache (55 percent), digestive and menstrual related problems (50 percent), respiratory illness (45 percent) and backaches (30 percent) (see Figure 4.2) (ASSOCHAM, 2006).

Women do not get enough sleep during daytime as majority of them have to perform their domestic liabilities, family or social obligations and additional bindings. It is not possible for women with young kids to get proper sleep during daytime as children need mother's attention and child's demand keep them busy. The sleep for short periods throughout the day is inadequate to make up for a night's sleep. Sleep deprivation increases risk of many problems for women. Insufficient sleep affects vigilance, can make drowsy and body feels tired, increase irritability, making it difficult to interact with family and friends and thus disrupts social life. The night shift also disrupts body's eating schedule.It becomes difficult to continue with the regular schedule or to adjust with a new one during weekends. Disruption to regular schedule may have painful results and affect health in the long-term.Because of the time differences, the natural order of things is reversed and working against the cycle of the sun and having an irregular lifestyle affects body's ability for lifetime.

Figure 4.2. Health Problems Faced by Women Employees of Call Centres
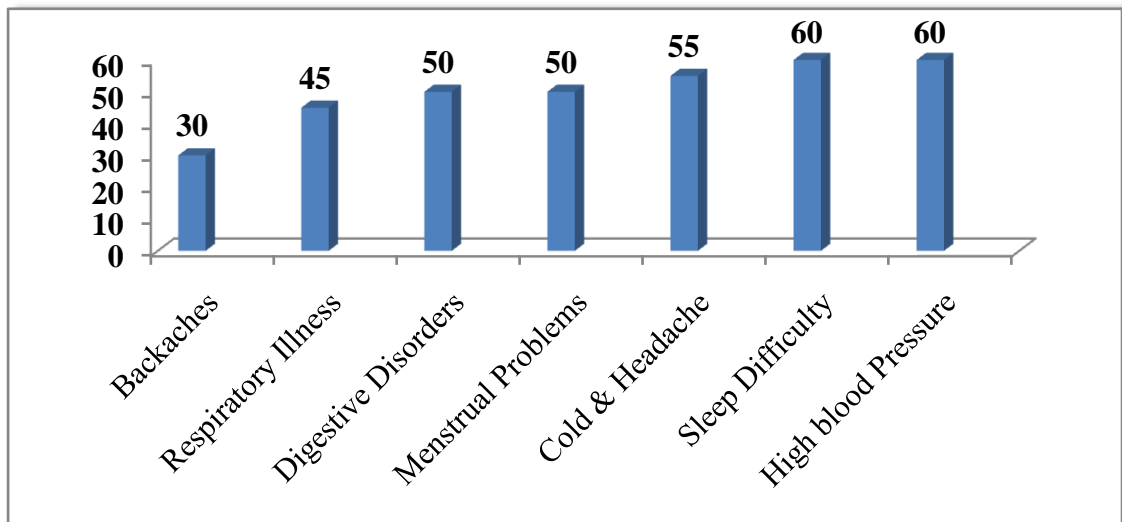
(Source: ASSOCHAM, 2006)

Studies on the physical, psychological and medical effects of night work comes on a consensus that if night shift work regularly performed, causes negative effects on the health, social and family life of workers (Amrita Gupta, 2012:10). Night shift workers face physiological, emotional and biological problems, based on

disturbed rhythmic patterns of sleeping and waking. While hormones and chemicals are produced when a person is awake, body organs are at rest and are at their lowest during sleep (ibid: 11). A change in the working schedule effects all this balance and leads to sleep deprivation, disturbing the rhythm of the body and negatively affecting the concentration, job performance, social interactions and general health (ibid).

A 2012 survey of 34 studies published in the British Medical Journal shows that shift work raises the risk for vascular diseases. Shift work was defined as evening shifts, irregular or unspecified shifts, mixed schedules, night shifts and rotating shifts. According to the survey, whose reports covered more than 2 million people combined, shift work was associated with a 23% increased risk of heart attack and a 24% rise in coronary events. Night shifts were linked with the highest increase of 41% for coronary events (Ricardo Saludo, 2013).

Another study led by Dr. Christopher Morris of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School concluded that people who work at night have an increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (ibid).

An April 2012 study, published in Chronobiology International surveyed 1,206 Brazilian poultry-processing plant workers aged between 18 and 50. It found a higher prevalence of overweight (42.2% vs. 34.3%) and abdominal obesity (24.9% vs. 19.5%) than in day-shift workers. Another article, on the same month available at the Laborers' Health and Safety Fund of North America explains why night-shift work causes obesity. Because they are up when people normally sleep, shift workers end up consuming more high-calorie sugary food (ibid). A study conducted by Singh and Pandey in 2005 on women employees of the transnational Call Centers in Delhi, Gurgaon and Noida has also found the adverse impact of the Call Center employment on the health of the women. In this study, a total of hundred women employees of call centers were interviewed (Amrita Gupta, 2012:11).

What is clear in all these studies is, though the employment of women in call centers has several advantages like attractive pay packages, the health hazards from working in the night shifts outweighs the benefits. Some of the respondents in the studies also considered themselves as security guards who stayed awake all night to attend to their duties and slept the whole day through, and in doing so they suffer from health problems like sleep disorders and indigestion. In order to keep awake

against the body's natural rhythm, they start smoking and drink innumerable cups of tea, coffee and cigarettes, which subsequently lead to more health problems (ibid: 12).

4.3. Initiatives at Organisational Level to Address the Challenges of Women Employees

Despite the fact that many women leave the workforce as they progress through the ranks, data show that women are more loyal to their employers than are men and leave for very different reasons. While men leave for career opportunities, women tend to leave for personal reasons (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008). The reduction in the quantity of female talent is a global phenomenon, which prevails across industries and countries. As Wipro Joint CEO Suresh Vaswani says "It's a loss for us when a trained and talented women employee leaves us" (*The Economic Times*, 2009).

One of the key challenges on the part of BPO sector is to improve the number of female members joining the sector, retain them and enable them to become leaders in the industry. In order to do that, it is of vital importance to observe and catch out the obstructions and address them through a structured policy. The efforts undertaken by organisations to get rid of the challenges of women at their workplace are highly impacting and make it possible and easier to build an inclusive workplace.

Women employees usually look for an organisation, where it is possible for them to deal successfully with both work and life. The industry now clearly understands the significance of work-life balance for a woman worker and therefore has started implementing policy that promotes adjustable work environment for women involved in bring up children. This attempt is definitely going to restraint drop-out rates and will encourage female worker's involvement in mid-level and senior management positions.

Smita Gaikwad, Global Head, Marketing and Corporate Communications, Firstsource Solutions Ltd, stated that the sector offers HR benefits such as flexibility in work timings, work from home options, sabbatical policy to study further and return to work post maternity policies help women manage a work-life balance. Forums are created to help women employees grow their career and reach leadership levels. Overall the industry focuses on providing a safe and secure work place (*Times jobs.com*, 2014). The industry has also opened up new and exciting avenues and

opportunities for women. Global by nature, it has broadened job prospects for women who can now work from home (assuming that adequate infrastructure and bandwidth issues are provided) or in a data/contact center close to home (ibid).

InterGlobe Technologies (IGT) has special forum called 'Women in Leadership' for counselling and leadership coaching program for women. Such sessions allow women employees in the organisation to connect, collaborate, discuss and learn from women leaders across the industry. Such programs go a long way in fostering a sense of belongingness and making women feel cherished in the organisation (*Times jobs.com*, 2013). Vipul Doshi, CEO, IGT, believes that the flexible shift timings of the sector provide leverage to women to effectively balance work and home life. Additionally, BPOs also provide some percentage of hiring indents as women-only roles. Mr. Doshi has also experienced the increasing focus of women towards effective management of the work-life balance (ibid).

A survey, on gender inclusivity, conducted by HR Consulting firm Mercer and IT Association Nasscom revealed that HR practices such as transportation policy of a company, besides flexible working hours and leave policy play, a major role in attracting women to an organisation. Other practices that women workers appreciate are anti-harassment policy, healthcare and awareness programs, women's lounge or recreational activities (*The Economic Times*, 2009). Sucharita Eashwar, Senior Director, Nasscom said the shared child-care services model in IT hubs has worked well and has addressed the major reason why women drop out when they are mid-way in their careers (*The Economic Times,* 2010). The availability of a creche or day care centre at office premises enables a women to balance both work and child care in an effective manner. The provision of a quality day-care center at office premise, where children are engaged, cheered up and exposed to a positive attitude motivates women employee to re-enter and deliver their best at workplace.

Shruti Jain, Chief Communications Officer and Global Head of Corporate Social Responsibility[19] at EXL Services, believes, "a pronounced emphasis on internal job rotation ensures employees settle in for long-term relationships with the

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[19]Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to business practices involving initiatives that benefit society. A business's CSR can encompass a wide variety of tactics, from giving away a portion of a company's proceeds to charity, to implementing "greener" business operations (Aluvala, 2013:52).
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organisation" (*Hindustan Times*, 2012). The women-friendly nature of her organisation was revealed when she shared that EXL is an equal opportunity employer and has a sizeable women workforce that constitutes 35 per cent of the total workforce. The organisation has taken several initiatives to make the company a woman-friendly. Women employees are allowed to extend their maternity paid leave by one month. They also have a sabbatical policy that allows employees to go on leaves of up to six months, which can be used to take care of different scenarios such as education, training and family responsibilities, she adds. EXL has a policy that allows employees to work in flexible time arrangement or from home if the situation so demands. For expecting mothers, institution provides them the option of a program by United Health Care that covers education, counseling and engagement for expecting mothers (ibid). Thus the implementation of these special facilities can be considered as promising and friendly strive towards woman workforce.

The high attrition rate in the middle and senior management levels, less than a decade ago directed TCS to thoughtfully design its gender diversity programme by facilitating women to get the right work-life balance. The TCS management under the leadership of CEO Chandrasekaran, went all out to ensure that their women force stayed on. The company offered extended maternity leave, flexibility on the kind of roles one would like to opt for and even long leave during their kid's Class 10th or 12[th]exams (*Business Today*, 2014). Ajoyendra Mukherjee, Executive Vice President and Head, Global HR, TCS, says that they have always believed in hiring people who grow with the organisation and when women began to drop out at the mid-management levels, it was not just difficult but also an expensive proposition (ibid). TCS has iExcel, a specialized executive education program for women employees, grooming women managers for leadership roles (*Livemint*, 2014). The company also has interactive forums, mentors and women discussion circles that address the aspirations and needs of the women employees (Bagchi, 2014).

Executive Women in Leadership (WIL) founded in 2001 as a grassroots organisation of senior-level executive women at ADP, a leading BPO. WIL promotes leadership and career advancement opportunities for women executives. "ADP is proud of its long-standing commitment to diversity and the advancement of women in

the workplace,"[20] said Pam Durkin, division Vice President and General Manager, ADP Employer Services and chairwoman of ADP's WIL group. The Executive Women in Leadership annual meeting provides an excellent forum for senior-level executives at ADP to exchange insights and ideas, hear from outside experts, and participate in meaningful dialogue that can help groom future women leaders at ADP[21].

Wipro BPO also launched the 'Women of Wipro'(WOW) programme in 2008 with its CEO T.K. Kurien being recognized as a recipient of the 2014 Women's Empowerment Principles Leadership Award for the company's commitment to gender equality (Bagchi, 2014). "Women of Wipro" is Gender Equity program that has spearheaded several programs to enhance capability building, capacity building and retention of talented women employees at Wipro (Wipro Annual Report 2013-14). Wipro aspires to create a sensitive organisation where men and women alike can flourish and grow in their careers with holistic approach towards performance and work (Wipro's Women Focused Initiatives, 2012). Apart from these Wipro has provided day care facility at their large campuses. In addition, if husband gets a transfer to another location, they try to relocate their women employees there. As a motivation to stay back, Wipro offers women overseas assignments too.

Meanwhile, the 'Infosys Women's Inclusivity Network' (IWIN) program says that it "works towards creating a gender-sensitive and inclusive work environment for women employees and trains them for managerial and leadership roles" (*Livemint*, 2014). IWIN recognizes the unique aspirations of women by providing avenues for their professional and personal development[22].

In order to control drop-out rates of women engaged in child care, WNS Global Services has recently launched a new maternity leave policy based on the employee's length of service in the organisation. Every female employee in WNS is entitled to Maternity Leave for 84calendar days. An employee working with WNS for last 1-2 years, is eligible to avail120 days of leave for maternitypurpose.2-5 years of employment in the organisation, enables a woman to resort to 150 days of maternity

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[20]ADP Press Releases, February 15, 2012, http://mediacenter.adp.com/ releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID = 853359
[21]ADP Press Releases, February 15, 2012, http://mediacenter.adp.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID = 853359
[22]https://www.infosys.com/about/awards/Pages/gender-inclusive-practices.aspx

leave. For availing maternity leave of 180 calendar days, the qualifying criterion is the continuous employment in WNS for more than 5 years (See Table 4.2).

Table 4.2. Maternity Policy of WNS Global Services Pvt Ltd

Tenure	Statutory Leave	Additional Leave	Total Leave (Calender Days)
Up To One Year	84	0	84
One-Two Years	84	36	120
Two-Five Years	84	66	150
More Than Five	84	96	180

(Field Survey, April-September, 2016, Pune)

In WNS, maximum of six calendar weeks (42 days) leave for miscarriage is granted in accordance with the Maternity Benefit Act/ESI Act[23] to female employees.

The Parliament of India has recently approved a Bill granting women working in the organised sector paid maternity leave of 26 weeks, up from 12 weeks now, a decision which will benefit around 1.8 million women (*The Times of India*, 2017). This law will apply to all establishments employing 10 or more people and the entitlement will be for the first two children. For the third child, the entitlement will be 12 weeks. The bill provides for 12 weeks of maternity leave to a woman who legally adopts a child under three months of age and a commissioning mother (defined as a biological mother) who uses her egg to have a surrogate child (ibid). The bill also requires every establishment with 50 or more employees to provide creche facilities within a prescribed distance. The woman will be allowed four visits to the creche a day. This will include her interval for rest. It has also made a provision under which an employer can permit a woman to work from home, if the nature of work assigned permits (ibid).

The Government of India has also notified The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2016 Act on 28th March, 2017. The Amendment Act received the assent of President of India on 27th March, 2017 (*Live Law news Network*, 2017). India's new Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill, 2016, is a welcoming note for every BPO woman employee and can be considered as a wide reaching social and

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[23] The promulgation of Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 envisaged an integrated need based social insurance scheme that would protect the interest of workers in contingencies such as sickness, maternity, temporary or permanent physical disablement, death due to employment injury resulting in loss of wages or earning capacity. The Act also guarantees reasonably good medical care to workers and their immediate dependants (Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India).

moral transformation. The new law entitling a six-month or one-year break (subject to two children) will result in more constancy, more output and more commitment from women in the sector. The amendments have allowed a woman to provide full maternal care to her infant during the most important, formative six months of the child and will encourage more women to re-join the workforce.

The Bill definitely is going to reduce the drop out percentage of women owing to child birth or child care and aids the employer in retaining talent and promoting diversity within the organisation. By making the provision of creche facility mandatory within a prescribed distance, the bill has offered woman with much needed work-life balance at a time when she is most likely to opt out of the profession. This would surely help in raising women's representation in the workforce.

In this endeavour, Organisations like, Nasscom and Mercer are providing meaningful and effective efforts to this regard. The Nasscom Corporate Awards to companies for excellence in Gender Inclusivity is a key component of the Nasscom Gender Inclusivity initiative, to celebrate best practices in gender inclusivity in the work place and showcase the winning companies. This is the first award in India that honours companies that have implemented policies and practices for gender Inclusivity and enabled women to contribute to the success of the enterprise at all levels in the organisation (*Business Wire,* 2010). This would serve to highlight that embracing inclusivity can boost creativity, innovation and the bottom line. This would help employers build workplace culture that are inclusive for women (Nasscom, 2010). The Awards serve in supporting the industry-wide mission of enabling women leaders and creating a culture in which women employees are supported and encouraged to seek and achieve their highest potential (ibid).

The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN global Compact[24] can be considered as pronounced initiative to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The Women's Empowerment Principles includes (UN Women, 2010):

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[24]The United Nations Global Compact is a United Nations initiative to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation (UN News Centre, 2015)

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a) **Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality:** The Women's Empowerment Principles aim at establishing company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers' performance reviews. The principles affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and human rights etc.

b) **Treat all women and men fairly at work-respect and support human rights and non discrimination:** The principles aim at paying equal remuneration, including benefits, for work of equal value and strive to pay a living wage to all women and men. The principles put emphasis on ensuring workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination. It also aims at offering flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status etc.

c) **Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers:** The principles aim at taking into account differential impacts on women and men, providing safe working conditions and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health. It also aims at establishing a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse and prevents sexual harassment etc.

d) **Promote education, training and professional development for women:** The principles aim at investing in workplace policies and programmes that open avenues for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas, and encourage women to enter non traditional job fields. It also aims at ensuring equal access to all company-supported education and training programmes, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training etc.

e) **Implement enterprise development, Supply chain and marketing practices that empowered women:** The principles are in favour of expanding business relationships with women-owned enterprises, including small businesses, and women entrepreneurs. It wants the business partners and peers to respect the company's equality and inclusion. It also aims at securing respect the dignity of women in all marketing and other company materials etc.

f) Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy: The principles advocate in leading by example – showcasing company commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. The principles promote and recognize women's leadership in, and contributions to, their communities and ensure sufficient representation of women in any community consultation etc.

g) Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality: The Women's Empowerment Principles aims at making public the company policies and implementation plan for promoting gender equality. It is in favour of measuring and reporting on progress, both internally and externally, using data disaggregated by sex.

The Women's Empowerment Principles contribute on advancing gender diversity in the BPO industry's management and executive ranks and empower women by maximising their potential, development and ambition and also overcoming challenges. HCL Technologies, a leading global IT services company, received the 2014 Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Leadership Award–7 Principles. This Award salutes HCL for their exceptional championship of gender equality and support of the WEPs, in particular Principle One, which urges companies to establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality[25].

The seven WEPs on which HCL was evaluated on included: Establishing high-level corporate leadership for gender equality, treating all women and men fairly at work–respect and support human rights and non-discrimination, ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers, promoting education, training and professional development for women, implementing enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women, promoting equality through community initiatives and advocacy and measuring and publicly reporting on progress to achieve gender equality.

The larger organisations, like, Infosys technologies, WNS, Convergys, ADP, Capita, Sopra Steria, TCS, Wipro etc have also launched initiatives that encourage gender diversity. These organisations have included and implements specific policy against gender discrimination. The policies are owned by the group Human Resource

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[25] HCL Technology Website, 2014 (https://www.hcltech.com/press-releases/hcl-technologies-recognized-champion women%E2%80%99s-empowerment-principles)

(HR), who is responsible for its effective implementation and regular review. Gender discrimination is considered to be a very sensitive and delicate matter and any such action is investigated as possible disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the company's disciplinary procedures. On the occasion of launching of the joint report conducted by Nasscom and Mercer on gender inclusivity in India titled "Gender Inclusivity in India: Building an Empowered Organisation", Ms. Sangeeta Gupta VP, Nasscom said, "The Indian IT-BPO industry has set high standard in gender inclusivity. Women are a key and vital part of our workforce, and their participation in the workforce is seen as a critical enabling factor for continued growth of the industry" (*Business Standard*, 2009). At an interview with Smita Vasudevan; Amit Kumar, Head of Human Resources, Convergys India says, "We do not discriminate against gender, age, religious affiliation or educational institution, starting from hiring and all the way to the environment we maintain for our people. Anyone who has a graduation degree and with good communication skills, customer-centricity, analytical and decision-making skills, and who pass our recruiting requirements have an opportunity to work for Convergys" (*Dataquest*, 2014). T. K. Kurien, CEO-Wipro Ltd says, "We have always been in the forefront of promoting equality. It is imperative that organisations prove to be equal opportunity employers both in spirit and practice. At Wipro, we make sure there is no bias whatsoever. And this helps us do business better" (Wipro Sustainability Report, 2012-13).

The existence of gender inclusivity both in spirit and practice is also revealed during the survey in Pune BPOs (discussed in detail in Chapter Fifth). Similar kind of practices were experienced both by BPO and non-BPO interviewed employees. At workplace fair treatment is provided to women without any bias towards male employees. Women get an equal opportunity to show their calibre in the promotions and performance evaluation processes. During the survey, instead of gender oriented approach, respondents emphasized on the existence of performance based proposition to get promoted, for salary increments, annual increments, incentives, reward and recognition, retention bonus and other benefits from employers. But importantly, concerning promotion to the next level, most of the respondents agree to the fact that, there are few factors like, performance, fixed numbers of years (minimum 3-6 years in most of the cases), management outlook, behaviour, relation of the employee to the immediate supervisor or team leader or manager (to some extent) play vital role.

Still, the reality of BPO's endeavour in nurturing women leadership and women-friendly corporate culture cannot be denied. The several forums and platforms initiated by the sector for the growth and grooming of women employees to the next level of leadership demonstrated the fact.

4.4. Secured Transportation and Security Measures to Women Employees

The Indian IT-BPO sector is one of the largest employers where over 800,000 women employed across levels (*The Economic Times*, 2013) and many of them work in the early hours of a day or in the period after midnight, therefore their security and safety while commuting have become critical areas of concern. The BPO sector has always been surrounded by controversies around not being able to offer adequate safety measures for women employees (*TimesJobs.com*, 2014). However, during recent times, transportation is an area where most of the companies in the sector are focusing and has upgraded the same by putting effective efforts on the safety issues of employees. The country's IT & BPO sector, in which women account for 35% and 50% of the total workforce respectively, said they have periodically reviewed safety measures for women employees in the past five years to counter the unsafe environment outside office space (*TNN*, 2012).

Soon after the horrific rape and murder of Pratibha Murthy[26], IT lobby body Nasscom, framed a 'BPO Code of Conduct' listing the steps that organisations need to take to ensure the safety of staff while they commute to office, the selection of security and transport personnel as well as ensuring security within office premises (The Wall Street Journal, 2013). The list includes measures such as ensuring that drivers don't enter the residential building of any employee. The code of conduct also tells employees to be alert to any changes in cab routes, to call the company transport helpline in case there's no security escort for a woman employee, or if the driver appears to be driving under the influence. The code also states that women employees must not sit in front of the vehicle (ibid).

A spokeswoman for Bangalore-based Infosys Ltd., India's second-largest IT-BPO services company by revenue, said that—apart from following the Nasscom guidelines—it also conducts regular travel safety training sessions and self-defence

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[26]Pratibha Murthy was a BPO employee, in Bangalore. In 2005, she was raped and murdered by the taxi driver, while she was headed home after a late shift.

programs for women employees (Thoppil and Ahmed, 2013). Tata Consultancy Services, India's biggest IT services company by revenue, also follows the Nasscom code strictly (ibid).

Convergys India is one of the leading BPOs, which is well known for providing better and secured transport system to its employees. They provide safety, comfort and convenience to their employees with the free employee transport service known as 'My Transport' from home to work and vice-versa (*Dataquest*, 2014). 'My Transport' app is built on the idea to make Convergys employees transport more intuitive, organized and serviceable. They use state-of-the-art cabs fitted with GPS[27], which helps to track the whereabouts of any cab. In addition, there are security guards in the cabs, who escort their female employees. All cab drivers and guards carry a photo ID. 'My Transport' earned them a national award and international recognition-the 2012 Golden Peacock Award[28] for Innovative Service, and being in the 2013 Info Week 500's list of top innovative ideas (ibid). The survey with Convergys employees reveals their high satisfaction with the security system.

WNS has taken several security measures to ensure safety of women employees using company provided vehicle for late evening and mid night shifts. GPS tracking system for cabs is installed in Gurgaon region. During the unsociable hours the company ensures that every first pick up and last drop for lady employee is escorted by a guard. "We check the background of all security guards who accompany women in the company taxis and maintain a database that includes fingerprints and photographs of all drivers. We also deploy patrolling vehicles at night, which remain regularly in touch with our compliance officer to tackle any emergency" says Keshav R. Murugesh, Group CEO, WNS (*Information Week*, 2013). "We are extra cautious

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[27]GPS or Global Positioning System is a network of orbiting satellites that send precise details of their position in space back to earth. The signals are obtained by GPS receivers, such as navigation devices and are used to calculate the exact position, speed and time at the vehicles location (Sharma et.al, 2017: 116). Here GPS means the system through which, transport department will have direct control over all the cabs on road and could monitor the cabs such as the area, cross, main road, speed, over taking speed, number of times break applied by the driver, driver name, cab number, route number etc, one can also geo code the employees in the system based on the employee ID and when the cab reach a particular area you can know which employee is being picked up.

[28]The Institute of Directors (India) was established on 13 July 1990 as an apex association of directors to improve their professional competence. Instituted by the Institute of Directors, in 1991, Golden Peacock Environment Management Award is the coveted and prestigious recognition that an organisation could strive to win in the area of environment management. The award provides not only worldwide recognition and prestige, but a competitive advantage in driving business (http://www. itbhuglobal.org/chronicle/archives/2016/07/mr_bimal_sarkar.php).

when it comes to ensuring the safety and security of women employees" Mr Murugesh affirmed (The Wall Street Journal, 2013). With 40-45 percent of its employees being women, WNS has gone a step ahead by modifying its organisational policies to align women to earlier shifts. As a part of that initiative, WNS women employees at Nasik are allocated day shifts only.

HCL Technologies has installed GPS tracking systems for cabs in the Delhi/NCR region. Specific numbers are circulated by the company which employees can contact in case of an emergency. Apart from that, the transport desk calls up the last drop female employee at the estimated time of reaching home for confirmation, which is also adopted by WNS as a security initiative. HCL has created, maintained and updated a database of blacklisted vendors/drivers. The company also conducts regular counselling and stress management sessions with cab drivers to sensitize them on the issue of safety and security of women employees and train them on quick reporting of an emergency situation.

Mumbai based BPO company Aegis has tweaked its human resource polices for women such that, now women employees across all levels can opt for a day shift instead of night shift. According to SM Gupta, global chief people officer at Aegis, about 90% of the company's women workforce has opted for day shifts. The company has a workforce of around 24,000 employees of which, 20% constitute women (Phadnis and Dhamija, 2012). "For women employees travelling at night, strict and thorough background checks are done on the driver and security guards who accompany them home" said Gupta (ibid).

In 3G, a BPO operated by Hutchison-Whampoa, the drivers are given constant training based on the feedback that is received from the employees regularly. Ms Deanne Rodrigues, branding and marketing communications department, 3G, said to The Economic Times, on 19th December, 2005 that they generally try and avoid women either picked up first or dropped last and try to chart out such a route but if at all it happens then a security guard travels with the driver.

Vipul Doshi, CEO, InterGlobe Technologies highlighted that they are extremely particular and caution with respect to women safety. Their transport department ensures proactive and automated communication of cab numbers to the employees through SMS before the pick-up. The cabs are always accompanied by

armed security during late hours and women employees are not allowed to leave office premises unaccompanied and without prior intimation after 8pm (*Times jobs.com*, 2014). "We also conduct security sessions for women and self safety training on a regular basis to empower our women employees with practical tips for contingency" he added (ibid).

BPO organisations also maintain strict security arrangements within the office premises to ensure safety of female employees. For example, WNS only allows authorized vehicles with valid stickers inside the premises after inspection by the security. The company has also put anti-harassment practices and processes in place. Company treats sexual harassment as gross misconduct under the service rules and other applicable laws and action will be initiated appropriately for such misconduct. The Group CEO appoints the members to the Investigated Committee and informs all employees through the company's intranet and visual communication channels. HCL Technologies, on the other hand, conduct self-defence training classes for female staff. They have designed e-learning modules on safety to raise awareness among women employees. Similarly, Infosys is conducting sessions for women employees to be aware of their surroundings and is holding self-defence classes that teach employees basic defence techniques. Sopra Steria Ltd implements a strict anti-harassment policy, supported by a committee to which grievances can be raised.

All the offices in Pacific Global Inc are under CCTV camera surveillance to ensure safety of women. It is also notable that like most of the international BPOs, Pacific Global Inc's HR team as well as the management are very sensitive towards any issues raised by a woman employee and immediately address their concern to their satisfaction. InterGlobe Technologies conduct security sessions for women and safety training on a regular basis with practical tips for contingency. An "Internal Complaints Committee" has been formed at all locations of Capita India Pvt Ltd to deal with grievances caused due to the incidents of sexual harassment and associated matters at the workplace.

Looking at the security measures implemented by BPOs, both inside and outside the office premises, it is clear that the sector is committed to uphold the safety of female employees across India. In the wake of a few unfortunate incidences against women, female workforce of Indian IT-BPO industry has been getting more support

from Nasscom and the employers. According to Vikram Talwar, Chairman, Nasscom BPO Forum, "It is important to reiterate that it is the fundamental right of every woman to work and it is the responsibility of the entire ecosystem to ensure that there is a conducive environment created for the same. It is time for all the stakeholders- industry, organisation, Governments and law enforcement agencies to work towards it" (Chaturvedi, 2013).

On the basis of the above discussion, it can be summarised that the safety of women employees is the top priority for Indian BPO sector. Constant endeavour on the part of the organisation to provide a safe and secure environment to its employees is revealed. 24/7 security measures are available within office premises. Strict and secured transport facility is an advantage of a BPO. The transport system includes- pick up and drop down from and at door step and security escort in the Cab (strictly during the unsociable hours), implementation of SMS for communicating the cab and driver details to the employee before boarding the cab, use of technology like GPS installed in the cab, background check of security and transport staff, educate and train the drivers on the behavioural skills, stress management etc.

Adequate support on the part of the employer to female employees through motherhood is eye-catching. Employees returning to work post a maternity break can choose shift timings that are comfortable for them. To encourage female workers to continue with their job after having a baby, BPOs are offering crèches in their office premises so that mothers can concentrate in their job knowing their babies are playing next door.The sector recognizes the benefits of flexibility in working arrangements. BPOs offer flexibility in work timing in order to enable women to increase their efficiency and to achieve greater work-life balance. Avoidance of women recruitment in night shift (wherever possible) is one of the important efforts taken by the industry. Part Time Policy is adopted by many organisations to introduce flexible working pattern.

Few BPO have broadened job prospects for women by enabling them to work from home, depending on project and the requirement of the work with the availability of adequate infrastructure and bandwidth issues. This policy is an opportunity for employees to increase more flexibility and greater control over life

and schedule. This option made women more willing to work for BPOs and thus results in reduction in attrition.

It is mandatory for all international BPOs to implement and follow the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013[29] and Vishaka Guidelines[30] and the rules made there under. Similarly, the industry provides equal opportunities for growth and development to all its employees. Relevant training and constant upgrading of employee skills is provided in line with job responsibilities. BPOs conduct forums to help to grow career and reach leadership levels.

The sector provides Health Care Centres for regular health check up. There is also the provision of psychological counselling to deal with stress or other related problems. The facilities of 24 Hours help line for women in distress and Doctor on call in emergency situations are also in place. Separate relaxation zone or rest room or sick room and separate washroom for women employees are provided by all international BPOs so as to secure privacy.

4.5. Conclusion

On the basis of the above discussion and the initiatives taken by the industry for its women workforce in India, it can be said that the IT-BPO sector has recognised the contribution of women in the workforce as an influential and empowering factor for the continued development of the industry and has remained fairly gender neutral from the onset, providing equal scope for both man and woman. It has been noticed that, acknowledging the immense contribution, potential and increasing significance of this emerging workforce, IT-BPO sector has prepared itself to act as a catalyst in the enlargement of female workers. The industry has taken a lead in adopting best practices in all the possible areas to nurture the growth and strengthen employment of women.

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[29]The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. It was passed by the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian Parliament) on 3 September 2012. It was passed by the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of the Indian Parliament) on 26 February 2013. The Bill got the assent of the President on 23 April 2013. The Act came into force from 9 December 2013 (Adv Jayakar, 2014).

[30]The undersigned is directed to say that in the case of Vishaka and Others Vs. State of Rajasthan and Others (JT 1997(7) SC 384), the Hon'ble Supreme Court has laid down guidelines and norms to be observed to prevent sexual harassment of working women (http://dpe.nic.in/sites/default/files/ Glch02f15.pdf).

To conclude, it can be said that, apart from finding their employment as a source of income, the BPO women workers consider their job as an opportunity that creates right set of circumstances to make their life better. Along with the large scale of employment, the sector has given more confidence and freedom to Indian women. As the employment in a BPO does not require a higher level of formal education, women of all ages who may not have been working earlier but are educated and have good communication skills can look forward to working in this industry. BPO sector has given them income, exposure and a platform to prove their skill and talent without formal educational qualification and age limit.

CHAPTER 5

BPO Women Employees in Pune: A Case Study

5.1. Introduction

Pune is a city located in the state of Maharashtra in western India. It is the second largest city in the state after the state capital, Mumbai. Pune is a thriving metropolis of modern India. The city is also a flourishing centre for business and academic. The city is a home to many colleges and universities and is a prime location for manufacturing and IT sectors. Pune has emerged as a new start-up hub in recent years[1].

An attempt has been made in this chapter to identify how employment in BPO industry is impacting women and their families in Pune. It also try to understand and analysis the work environment, different aspects of BPO career, the challenges and opportunities that women experience, gender equality at workplace, the safety, security and family support they gain as a BPO employee and to get the suggestions to improve work environment and to increase women participation in this sector; a survey is conducted in the BPOs in Pune among various state holders by using questionnaire and interview.

The method adopted is sample survey with technique of stratified random sampling[2]. The Field Study Area consists of 12 international BPOs located in Pune, which are first divided into 3 strata as Voice Process[3], Non-Voice[4] and Semi-Voice[5] in order to represent the 3 major work profiles of the industry and 4 BPOs from each work profile were selected using simple random sampling method. Sample size is based on the purpose of the enquiry which consisted of 15 respondents from each BPO and 60 from each work profile. Thus, a total of 180 respondents were surveyed

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[1] https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/maharashtra/pune.htm

[2] A stratified random sample is a random sample in which members of the population are first divided into strata, than are randomly selected to be a part of the sample.

[3] Voice process in business process outsourcing is a subsection of BPO in which employees work in call centers where they would talk with customers. Voice BPO will be in charge of answering calls and speaking directly to customers.

[4] Non-Voice process in business process outsourcing is a subsection of BPO in which employees sitting behind a desk and fulfilling duties the customer may not see. Some non-voice employees interact with customers via email & chat support but not by phone.

[5] Semi Voice process in business process outsourcing is a subsection of BPO in which employees speak with the clients and also write mails in order to resolve a query.

from Pune. Exploratory survey and Pilot survey were conducted in majority of study area prior to field survey, in order to feel or get used to the work environment and to garner additional information such as representation of women, job profile, shift timing and also to get additional/relevant input for the interview schedule.

A survey was conducted over 12 international BPOs located in Pune, Maharashtra. This selection was based on 3 major work profiles, 4 BPOs from each work profile. The sample size was 15 from each work profile from each BPO and collected data from a total of 180 respondents (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. List of BPO Surveyed

Sl. No	Name of work profile	Number of BPOs	Total Respondents
1	Voice Profile	4*	60
2	Non Voice Profile	4*	60
3	Semi Voice Profile	4*	60
4	**Total**	**12**	**180**

Note: * names of BPOs i) Voice Profile (Convergys India Services Pvt Ltd, Aegis BPO, Mphasis and IBM Daksh); ii) Non Voice Profile (Sopra Steria Limited, WNS Global Services Pvt Ltd, Capita India Pvt Ltd, Infosys BPO Ltd); iii) Semi Voice (TCS BPO, EXl, Wipro BPO, Cognizant BPO).

The respondents participated in the survey are from the three major work profile, namely-Voice-Process, Non-Voice and Semi-Voice. The findings reveal that, likewise their shift timing (discussed on Figure: 5.12), the work profile also plays a major role in determining their perception towards employer.

The Non-Voice and the Semi-Voice sector reported the work being enjoyable and a comparatively better and smoother relation with the management, whereas the Voice sector reported the job to be routine one and highly stressful. The distinctive characteristics of the job profile for example, call handling for overseas customer, repetitive nature of work, long commuting time, mostly night shift based work, daily and monthly targets, made their work very demanding and highly regulated.

It is important here to notice that, each of the BPOs selected under study in Pune is also located in other cities (two minimum) of India. It is also understood during the survey that a BPO organisation follows a single work policy in all its locations throughout the country. The policies through which the workers are governed by, the nature of opportunities they get, scope for growth, challenges, facilities and work environment of the BPO workers in other cities are similar to Pune. Therefore, it is argued that the BPOs in Pune has a representative nature of

Indian BPO industry and it broadly reveals the general nature of Indian BPO industry. This aspect is further clear in Table.5.2.

Table 5.2. Details of BPOs under Study

Sl No.	Name Of Companies	Established	Location	Total Staff Strength	Salary (Rs)	Hiring Procedure
1	IBM Daksh	2004	Gurgaon (5),Bangalore(3), Chandigarh, Chennai, Kolkata (2), Mumbai (2), Pune (2),Vizag	10000+	14,600 (Voice)	Walk-in Interview - 2 rounds and offer on the spot
2	Infosys BPO Ltd	2002	Bangalore (2), Chennai, Gurgaon, Jaipur (2), Pune	17,534	15000+*	Clearing written test, Voice Screening and Group Discussion rounds
3	Mphasis	2000	Bangalore, Mangalore, Chennai, Puducherry (Pondicherry), Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Noida, Indore, Hyderabad, Vadodara, Kolkata, Raipur	33000	14000+	Three rounds of interviews (Consultant screening as well)
4	Convergys India Services Pvt Ltd	1985	Bangalore, Gurgaon (4), Hyderabad, Pune, Thane.	70000	12,500-15000 for Entry Level	Clearing Voice Screening, Two rounds of interviews.
5	TCS BPO	1968	Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Baroda, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon, Gandhinagar, Goa, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Mumbai, Pune, Thiruvanathapuram	20000+	14000+	NA
6	Wipro BPO	2001	New Delhi, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore, Greater Noida	25000	13000+	Profiling and three rounds of interviews
7	WNS Global Services Pvt Ltd	1996	Bangalore, Chennai, Gurgaon (2), Mumbai (2), Nashik (2), Pune (3)	13000+	15000+	Screening, tests, interview, background check and medical test
8	EXL	1999	Noida (6), Gurgaon (3), Pune (2)	11700	12000+	NA
9	Cognizant	1994	Bangalore, Chennai, Coimbatore, Gurgaon, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune	24300	12000+	Tests and interviews (HR and technical)
10	Aegis BPO	1998	Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Gurgaon, Hazira, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Noida and Pune	39000	12000+	NA
11	Capita India Pvt Ltd*	1984	Bangalore, Pune and Vikhroli.	7000	13000+	Screening, tests, interview, background check
12	Sopra Steria Ltd**	1968	Noida, Chennai, Bangalore and pune.		14000+	Clearing written test, interview, background check

Source: Team Careers, 2013.

http://www.careers360.com/news/4694-Top-20-BPOs-Domestic-BPOs-India-Rural-BPOs

Note*- Capita India Pvt Ltd, Source: http://www.capita.com/

Note**- Sopra Steria Ltd, Source: https://www.soprasteria.com/en/home

The questionnaire for survey consists of both open ended as well as close ended questions. It includes 22 questions on BPO as a career option, level of women representation, growth, scope, family and social support, attitude of organisation/employer towards women employees, smooth work-life balance, the challenges facing and suggestions on behalf of improve women participation in the industry.

For complete result of case study, 40 BPO employees were interviewed. 32 women employees and 8 male employees are selected as population under study, from 4 strata as Entry level, Manager Level, Director Level, Top Level (Nasscom-Mercer, 2008) (See Table 5.2.). This is done to get a proper representation of the various hierarchical positions of an organisation and their views on the subject under study. From the above 4 categories, employees are approached for interview using lottery method[6]. The interviews are conducted with a set of open-ended questions.

Table 5.3. Career Levels in BPO Organisation

Sl. No	Career Level	Definition
1	Entry level	Graduates with no supervisory role. This career stream ranges from entry level through to technical or subject matter experts in the IT space
2	Manager Level	Supervisory level ranging from team leader level to general manager. May provide mentoring and coaching to less-experienced staff
3	Director Level	Heads of programmes, divisions and functions
4	Top Level	Refers to executive team, senior Vice Presidents and Vice Presidents

Source: Mercer-Nasscom Gender Inclusivity: Building Empowered Organisations Study, 2008

Pune is selected as a case to study the BPO women workforce. Pune city is one of the centers of economic liberalization of India. Moreover, it is one of the most preferred software and business-process outsourcing destinations in the country. Its proximity to commercial capital Mumbai, presence of large student population, availability of skilled resources at low labour cost and developed urban infrastructure facilities have made it one of the most popular destinations for BPO industry in India. Around 50+ major international BPOs are functioning in the city with considerable number of women workforce.

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[6] Lottery method is a random sampling method in which individual units are picked up from the whole group not deliberately.

The female workforce in Pune BPOs belongs to different parts of the country. They represent the larger 'Indianness' irrespective of different culture, religion, language, tradition, caste etc. They can be taken as the representatives of Indian female working employees in BPO sector as they have the similar work profile to their counter parts in Delhi (NCR), Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Lucknow, and Kolkata, which are the other major centres of BPO industry in India. Therefore, the chapter focuses on the basic parameters at Pune and other major centres of BPO industry in India, to answer the questions raised in the study.

5.2. Analysis of Data

For reaching a conclusion on women employees in BPO industry in Pune, the analysis of response to questions of interview and schedules is given below in two parts, part I deals with analysis of schedule and part II deals with interview.

5.2.1. Part I Analysis of Schedule

For completion of case study, along with interview, schedule is also used. The Schedule* consists of 21 Close Ended questions and 1 Open Ended question. Survey conducted among 180 women from 12 international BPOs, under study, who is selected randomly using lottery method. The analysis and graphical representation of questionnaire along with findings and conclusion are given below.

*See Appendix II

Figure 5.1. Willingness to Grow in BPO Industry
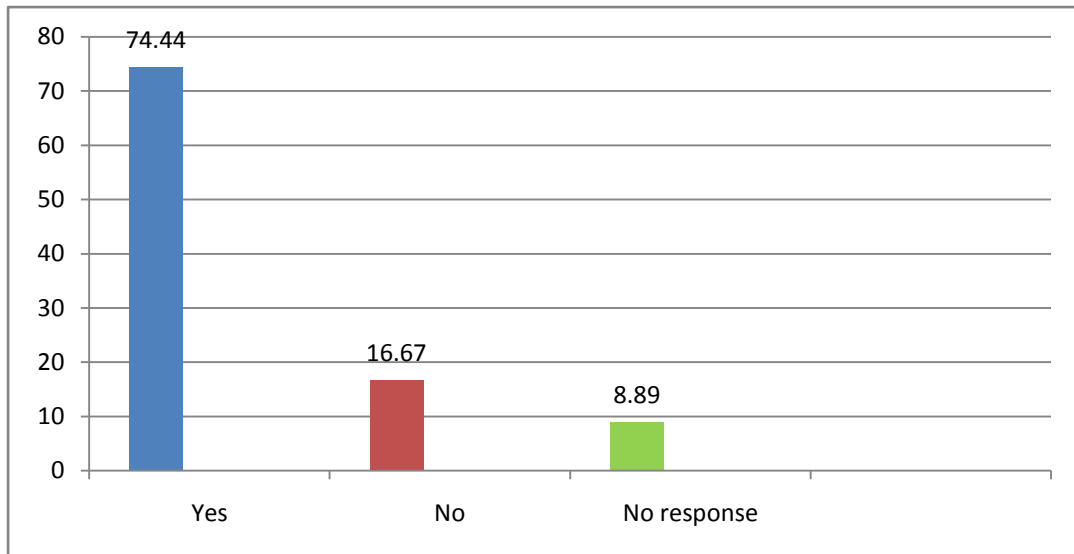
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

In response to the question whether female employees want to grow and get a responsible and challenging position in a BPO, a majority of surveyed women, 74.44%, answered the question in affirmative indicating that they are interested in pursuing career in the industry. 16.67% women answered in negative, meaning they take it as a short-term career. 8.89% respondents have preferred to leave the question unanswered; which is clear from in figure 5.1.

Findings reveal, the respondents unwilling to grow in BPOs are relatively young, the majority being less than 25 years and unmarried. They are either graduates or have completed 10+2 (Higher Secondary) and most of them have work experience of less than 1 year in the organisation. Looking for a better career option and utilising their spare time in making money are the reasons for giving BPO career a second thought, as expressed by them in general comments.

At the same time, the response of a considerable percentage of employees having 3-5 years of work experience deserves attention. In spite of being sufficiently skilled, they do not incline to grow within the organisation and thus choose to remain in their current role of an associate. The reason being as they have revealed, their job is solely to fulfil financial needs and they are pleased with what they get. They do not look for promotion and content with the fact of being less accountable at work. This discretionary acceptance of low-end career also due to family binding and personnel

commitments where promotion is an unwelcome part with less amount of adaptability, as reported.

Figure 5.2. Reasons of Joining BPO Industry

All the surveyed women have chosen multiple answers when it comes to the reasons of joining a BPO. A majority of surveyed women, 65% have exhibited that good benefits, attractive lifestyle and handsome salaries are the advantages and main attraction of the sector. According to 22.22% respondents, good work environment and time flexibility are the primary causes of joining the industry. As per 12.78% employees, the basic formal education as criteria for recruitment paves the way for many to join a BPO.

Figure 5.3. Women Get Enough Social and Family Support
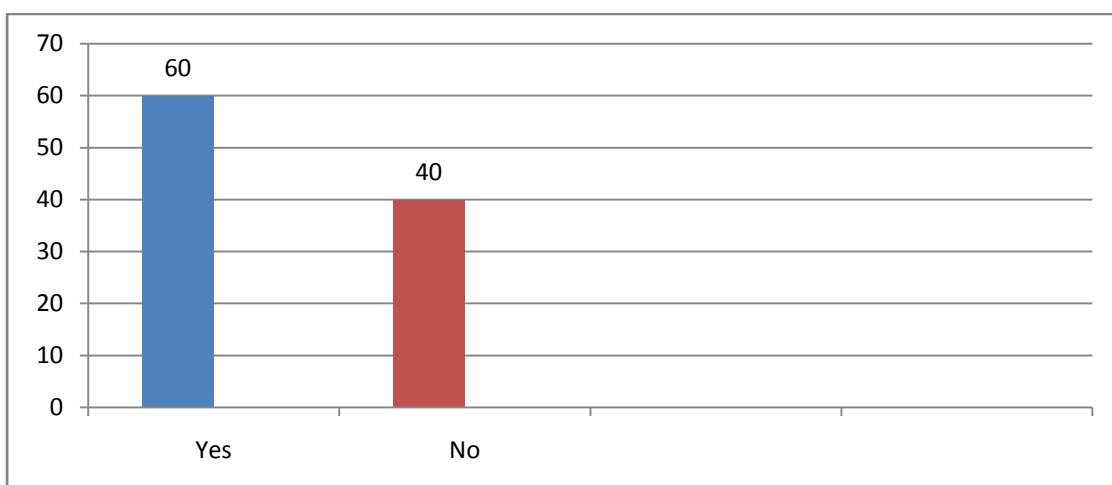
When the respondents were asked whether they get enough social and family support for highly pressurised work environment and odd working hours, a different picture emerged from the replies obtained. It gives a hope that 60% reported their families being cooperative and have been receiving adequate social-family support for their unique BPO jobs but at the same time, it is a cause of concern while 40% respondents replied their family being not supportive enough and they have less social life or interaction with the people due to their job profile such as, demanding work environment, requiring long hours of work, permanent night shifts etc.

Though in particular, no specific reason was mentioned for non-supportive attitude on the part of the family but, in general comments they exhibited their belief while saying, the attitude and behaviour of family members aimed at providing any type of support towards them not only contributes in better functioning of the family but also help to preserve energy for work. Women have been moving into the workforce not only for career satisfaction but also for their families need financial support. So they expect their families to support them to hand back some of woman's traditional responsibilities which unfortunately many of them are not getting as clear from the responses given in Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.4. Women Participation is More Effective than Men**
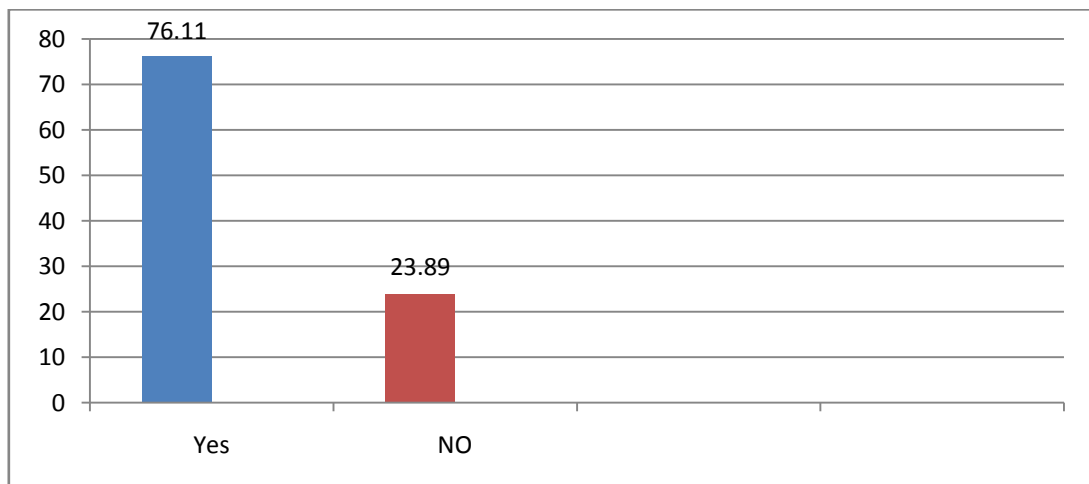
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

76.11% employees feel women involvement is more reliable, worthwhile and productive than men at workplace as shown on figure 5.4. According to most of them, acquired skills such as strong communication, listening skill, excellent ability to adapt to difficult situations, capable problem solver, detail oriented, proficient at excel,

technical competency, etc have made women more self-assured, functional, and fruitful while dealing with their customers and clients, compared to men; although 23.89% did not agree with the point of women being more effective than men at workplace.

**Figure 5.5. Challenges that Women are Facing at Workplace**
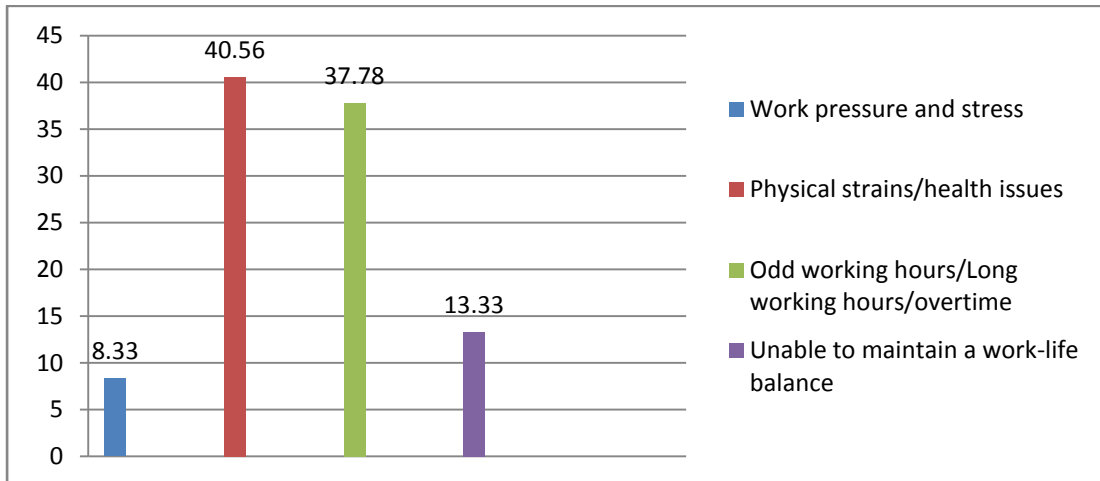
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

8.33% employees reported that work pressure and stress is an obstacle that prevents them from giving their best at work. According to 40.56% of respondents female workers in BPO suffered from high level of physical strains and health issues as compared to women workers of other night shift occupations such as nursing and police services. As per 13.33%, incapability to maintain work-life balance is the biggest concern for them. Another 37.78% consider odd and long working hours is not trouble-free and convenient for women. They see night shift and overtime as a drawback of the industry.

The analysis on Figure 5.5 shows that for majority of respondents, physical strains/health issues and odd/long working hour/overtime are the two major challenges at BPO work environment.

Figure 5.6. Issues are Properly Addressed by the Organisation
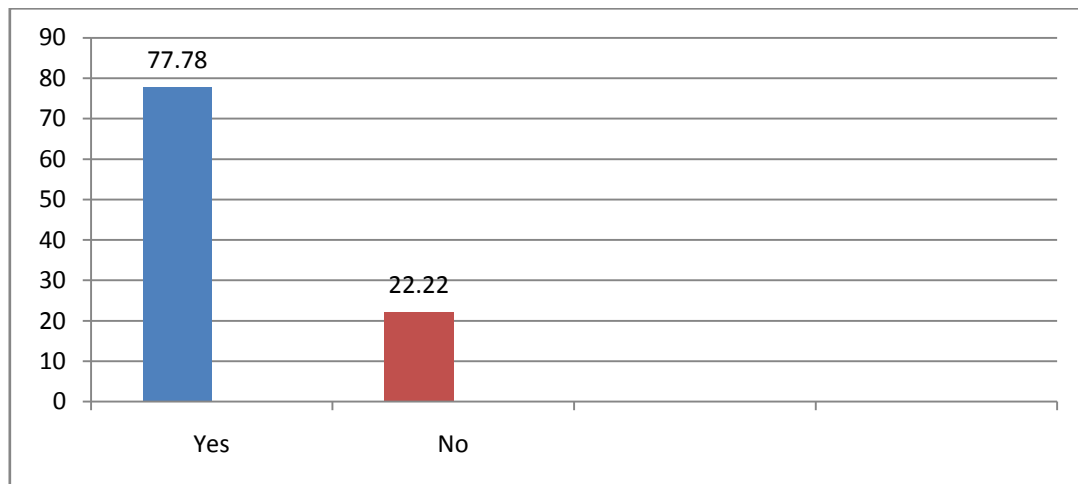
When asked whether the issues concerning female workers are properly addressed by the organisation or at the management level, a mixed reaction prevails. Majority of respondents, 77.78% have positively replied to the same, meaning that all concerns are taken care of convincingly and with satisfactory importance; while 22.22% reported lack of fair and adequate reciprocation on the part of organisation when an issue is raised by a woman.

Though the number is comparatively less, but not having ample amount constructive employer-employee relation cannot be overlooked. It is observed that a more cooperative attitude of organisation and care and sympathy towards women for rightful reason may definitely help in obliterating the issues.

The findings of the survey is further endorsed in the interview as all employees interviewed, in one voice, opined that there are strict policies in place to address the complaints raised by a female employee. Issues concerning women are treated on genuine priority, addressed in timely manner with immediate effect. According to one of the Head of HR Department of a renowned BPO, "It is mandatory for all international BPOs to implement and follow the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013[7] and

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[7]The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. It was passed by the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian Parliament) on 3 September 2012. It was passed by the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of the Indian Parliament) on 26 February 2013. The Bill got the assent of the President on 23 April 2013. The Act came into force from 9 December 2013.

Vishaka Guidelines[8] and the rules made thereunder". "AN INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE has been formed at all locations to deal with grievances caused due to incidents of Sexual Harassment and associated matters at the workplace" he added. One of the respondents, who is a Chairman of Internal Complaints Committee in her organisation, expressed that her institution is committed to creating and maintaining a secure, congenial and nurturing workplace which is free of all forms of harassment. She stated that during her 14 years of BPO career, she has faced 1 case of sexual harassment, where justice was provided to the female employee. At the same time she pointed out the lengthiness of the procedure mentioned in the policy as disadvantage and according to her that may prevent an aggrieved person from reporting the incident. She also shows her concern saying that during the procedure, it becomes unpleasant on the part of the aggrieved person to explain the incident again and again.

One of the employees, who has been working in the industry since last 7 years, opined that, "Being in one of the most reputed BPO, my organisation has never negotiated or ever overlooked the issue that arise or are more likely to arise from woman employee prospective". Thus the empowerment of women can be exhibited when a respondent shared her experience with an example that occurred at her organisation where a male employee, occupying one of the senior most positions was asked to leave his service as a consequence of a sexual harassment complaint against him by a female team leader.

Appreciating the transport department of her organisation one of the respondents expressed that it is mandatory for all female employees, who availed transport facility to give a missed call to a specific contact number ensuring her safe arrival at residence. "If I missed to do so, immediately I get a call from the transport team on duty to ensure my status, which I believe incredible on the part of my organisation" she added.

Many women employees talked on some specific policies implemented exclusively for women employees. Those are-paid maternity leave that increases from 3 months to 6 months (on the basis of the tenurity in the organisation), child adoption

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[8] Guidelines and norms laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Vishaka and Others Vs. State of Rajasthan and Others (JT 1997 (7) SC 384).

leave, additional Leave Without Pay (LWP) after childbirth, miscarriage leave, fixed shift time and part time policy. One of the interviewed Operation Manager noted about "Menopause Policy" which though yet to come into force. "Woman Only Recruitment Policy" is about to start in BPOs as per HR Head of a BPO organisation. Describing the sector as an important source of employment for young Indian professionals one of the respondents believes that BPO companies have the potential to become the leading example of women-friendly employers.

Figure 5.7. Proper Representation of Women at Management Level
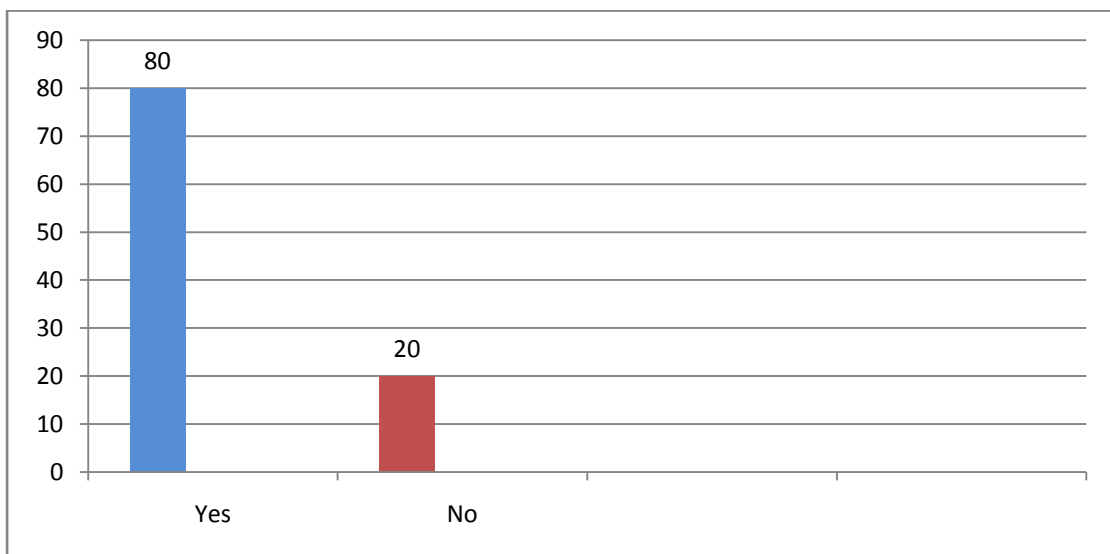
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

In response to the question on women's engagement at management or top level, 80% respondents said 'yes' as they feel share of female workers at decision making is appropriate. However, 20% employees are not satisfied with the same. In this regard a large chunk of respondents feel, woman opts out of job due to interference of work commitment with her family responsibilities. Even in case of those a career focused women, maternal instinct compels her to quit the workforce or to explore flexible work option to fulfil maternal duties and thus ends up with the desire of long term advance career. Due to dual burden of work and family, they cannot be flexible at work and thus disqualify themselves to be a part of higher managerial stuff, which needs high amount of elasticity and professional commitment.

A few employees are disappointed with the existence of gender discrimination in regards to promotion to higher rank. They consider it as one of the reasons of less female participation, as extracted from general comments. Various other factors are

revealed while discussing the reasons of less participation of women at higher level position. Few of them are of the view that women do not prefer to get promoted as they work only to satisfy their financial needs, they do not look at making career or for a promotion. They are mostly happy with what they are getting. One of the respondents considers the money making factor and less responsible work profile at entry level as the reasons. Most of them observed that, higher position in an organisation has great job demands and needs less flexibility. They say, women, because of their personnel responsibilities, failed to give 100% professional commitment or dedication at workplace which is the basic requirement for higher level position. An employee has quoted that though women are getting in top "they get distracted more often post-marriage". After marriage or child birth women has to make a choice and for most of them personnel commitment becomes the priority. Another respondent shares her recent experience as she says, "My colleague (currently working as a Operation Manager), has denied her promotion in order to take care of her 2 years old daughter, though she was the most eligible employee for the Senior Manager post". In the words of another respondent, "as a result of additional responsibilities women do not nurture the ambition to grow" which, he observed, "gradually has been changing".

A different factor is revealed in the words of an Operation Manager, when she says that there is less exposure to what happens at higher level. "No proper guidance or grooming has been provided" she complained. With 11 years of work experience another respondent has shown her dissatisfaction by saying that like most industries "internal politics or favouritism" plays a large part in the factor of promotion. She observed 'in general' there is no specific criterion but 'in reality' for growth within the organisation the fact "I scratch your back and you scratch mine" seems to work.

On the contrary, many employees during interview have denied the fact of comparatively less participation of women at higher post. They expressed that they have seen equal representation of women at all level in their respective organisation. A few respondents feel that, though the number might be comparatively small but definitely is growing as numerous women have proven to move to higher level with great success. "The days are not far where women may dominate the BPO sector", one of the respondents added.

**Figure 5.8. Equal Growth Opportunity for Women**
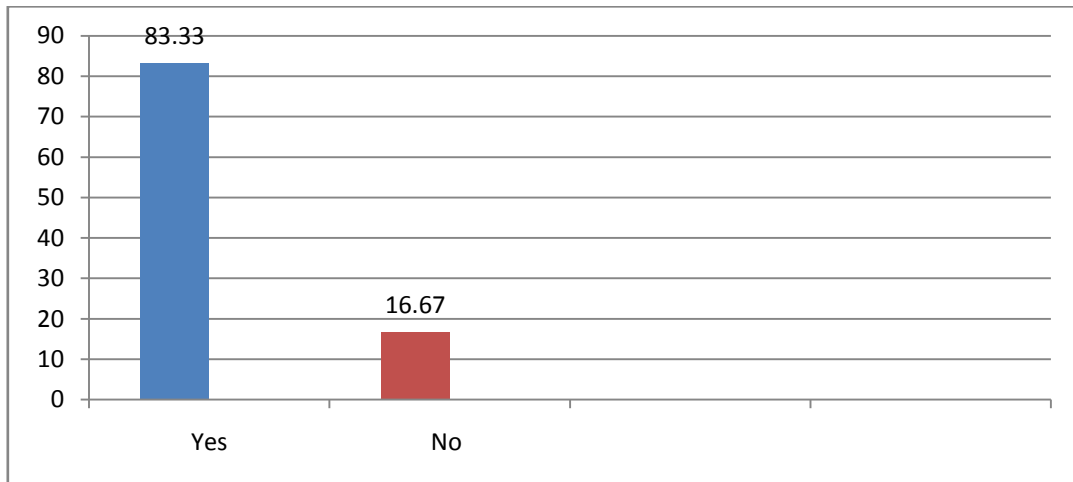
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

By analysing the growth opportunity for women, it is clear in Figure 5.8 that, they get satisfactory scope to prove themselves and to obtain authoritative role in BPOs. A significant section of the respondents 83.33% have replied in affirmative, experiencing no gender biasness when it comes to get an opportunity to grow in the industry. They have observed, organisation providing immense occasion to shape every individual and to secure greater heights irrespective of gender. It is significant to notice that most of the respondents among 83.33% belong to entry level, which indicates the nourishment of equality at this level.

However 16.67% employees have expressed dissatisfaction and consider the promotion prospects and factors as biased.

Figure 5.9. BPO is a Good Career Option for Indian Women

Source: Estimate based on the field work data

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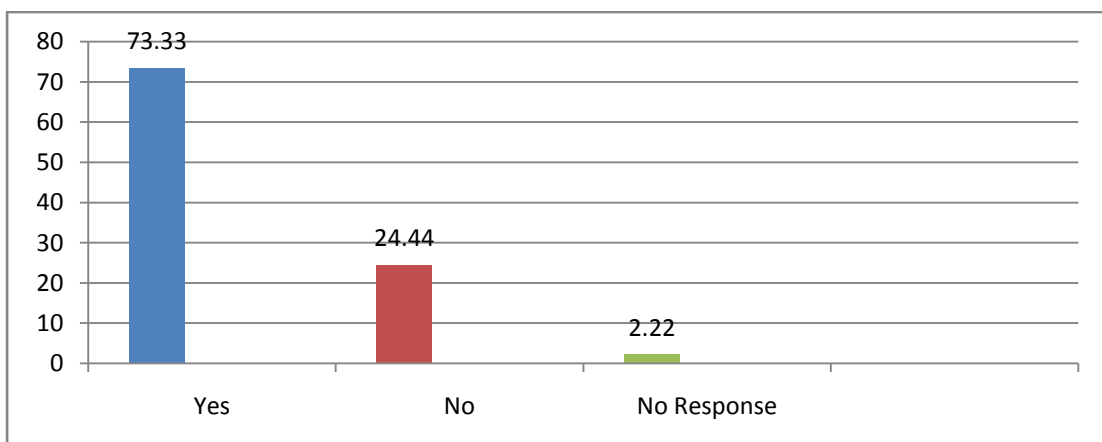
Figure 5.9 shows the answer of employees as to whether they consider BPO job as a good career option. A high percent of female, 73.33% view it as a better and suitable career, as they have seen women being treated not only with respect and dignity, but also are considered as equal to men. The organisation appreciates and understands the critical role women play even outside their professional life. They say, BPOs help women in learning new skills and provides a platform where they learn while they earn and hence are now not confined to the traditional Indian women work profile such as teaching, nursing etc.

Majority of the employees interviewed consider BPO as a respectable and preferred career option for women. They say the job gives security, comfort, self esteem, growth, good career, scope for personality development, exposure to the world and above all an earning. Expressing the similar view, a Director (Operations) and a Team Leader of a leading organisation viewed that the time has now changed and today it is far beyond call centre or BPO. The entire concept has been upgraded to Knowledge Process Outsourcing[9] (KPO) or knowledge base industry. Another Team Leader says the sector as preferred and respectable if 'women maintain their self esteem and dignity'. Giving a positive answer to the question, a 54 years old respondent says 'Respectable depends on the individual not the industry. It is a job like any other except for the working hours'. Many of them consider it as preferred career option because of higher payout, basic educational qualification, good communication skills, work culture, shift timings and working hours, cab facility.

On the other hand 24.44% respondents have not found BPO job as a preferable career for women because of work culture. Few respondents, 2.22% opted not to reply to the question.

According to a few of the interviewed employees, BPO is not a preferred job for many of the outsiders and even for many existing workers, because of the night shift and the perception that people have about the work environment and culture, which they argued needs to be changed. This is clearly voiced by one of the respondents, who says that this is the high time to change the negative views of

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[9] Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) describes the outsourcing of core information-related business activities which are competitively important or form an integral part of a company's value chain. KPO requires advanced analytical and technical skills as well as a high degree of specialist expertise.

people and society about BPO working women, which she says "completely opposite to the reality". She suggested that the publication of articles on BPO culture and values can help in changing the way society thinks about the sector.

Figure 5.10. Reasons for Women Leave BPO Jobs
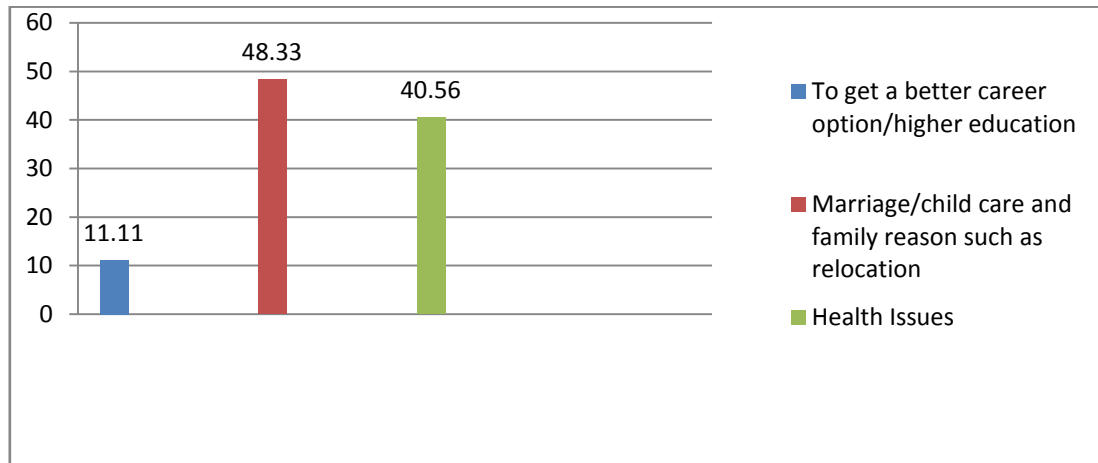
The survey reveals that, while discussing the various reasons of women resigning workforce, notably 100% respondents have chosen multiple options. 48.33% respondents agreed to the point that personnel and family reason obliges women for quitting their job; for these respondents marriage and child care are the prime reasons of discontinuing professional career when it comes to women employees. On the opinion of 40.56%, women are forced to leave work due to health issues. On the other hand 11.11% women discontinue job to get a better career option. According to them, the ambition to get higher education compels them to leave the workforce; all which are depicted in Figure 5.10.

The majority of them feel, the burden of household management is a serious hindrance and restrict married women from continuing their professional life. Interruption in women's career due to marriage and child bearing is also prominent on the survey.

**Figure 5.11. Balance between Professional and Personal Life**
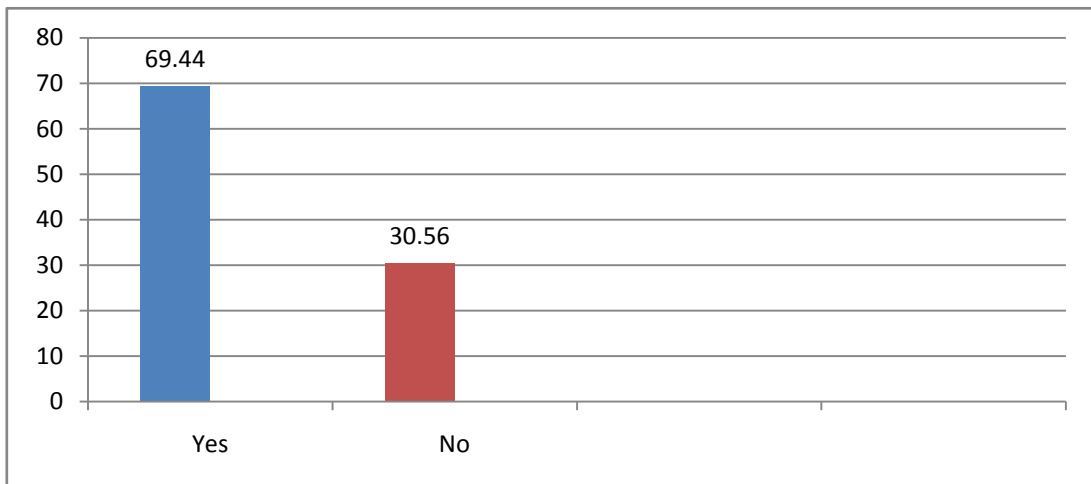
A significant number 69.44% answered that they did not face any family or marital disorder due to their work and their family commitments have not suffered in order to cope up with professional requirements. Importantly, most of them pointed out that, it is largely depend on the individual and the support she gets from her family. On contrary, 30.56% replied that they are lacking smooth balance between home and work due to work pressure and deadlines. They say that mother's responsibilities towards their children are not properly carried out or addressed.

Majority of the employees interviewed answered in affirmative stating that it is possible, though not easy for women employees to maintain a smooth balance between personnel and professional life. They mentioned that the ability to maintain the balance depends on person to person and to a large extent depends on how one plans, organises and get into a habit of everyday routine. In the words of one of the respondents, 'Women working in any field are capable of maintaining a smooth work-life balance. Job in BPO is not different'. Thus the words of a 44 years old team leader proves the balanced, strong and empowered side of women as she quoted, 'If you know your limitation and can give 'NO' as an answer, you can. Be firm in what you believe'. All of them put emphasis on the influence and importance of family support in this regard. According to many of them, a supportive management and flexible job profile also plays a greater role on the same.

On the other hand, a respondent with 3 years BPO experience, sometimes finds it difficult to balance between work and life at many occasions. She says,

because of 8-9 hours shift and sometimes more than that it becomes difficult to get enough time for family. As a result of stress and work pressure, women failed to be sound minded at family. Expressing the similar view, another respondent quoted, 'I find it difficult to give time to my kids. My kids come to home from school at 4:15 pm and I leave for work at 4:00 pm'.

Figure 5.12. Shift Timing
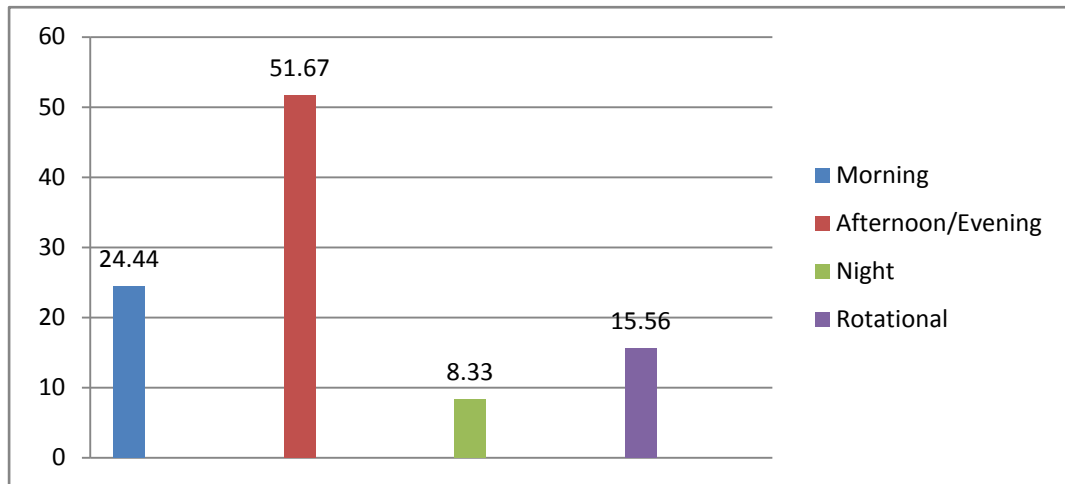
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

When asked about the shift timings or working hours, 51.67% of the women employees in Pune are found to lie in afternoon shift, whereas another 24.44% and 15.56% are reported to be in the morning shift and rotational shift respectively. However, 8.33% are reported to work in a night shift. Generally seen, employees working in morning or afternoon shift carry a better and positive attitude towards management and organisation in compare to those working in rotational and especially in night shift. It has been observed during the survey that their shift timing has a great impact on maintaining a smooth balance between work and home, getting family support, spending quality time with family, social interaction, health issues and challenges they face at work place.

Figure 5.13. Factors for Promotion
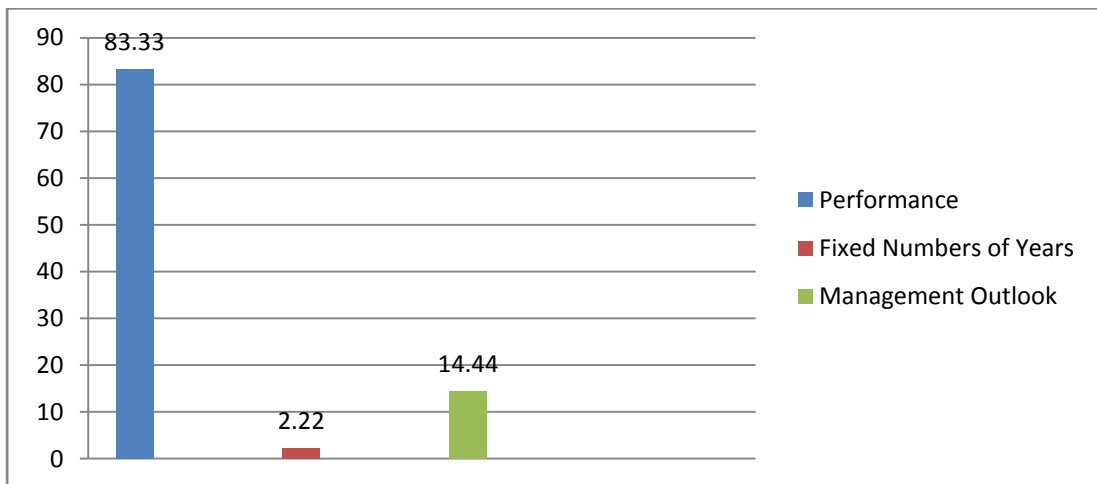
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

When the respondents were asked how long they do take to move to the next level, 83.33% opined that their performance at work is the sole reason for career prospects and promotion. 14.44% said that in order to get promoted the employee should be in the good book of the management. Only 2.22% respondents feel fixed numbers of years have a strong hold on their promotion.

Individual respondents have opined that favouritism in a subtle way with the management, in regards to promotion, cannot be denied. It has been perceived in course of comments made by respondents that gender discrimination plays a noticeable role regarding promotion at higher level, generally favouring men over women.

Figure 5.14. Attitude of Employer towards Women Employees
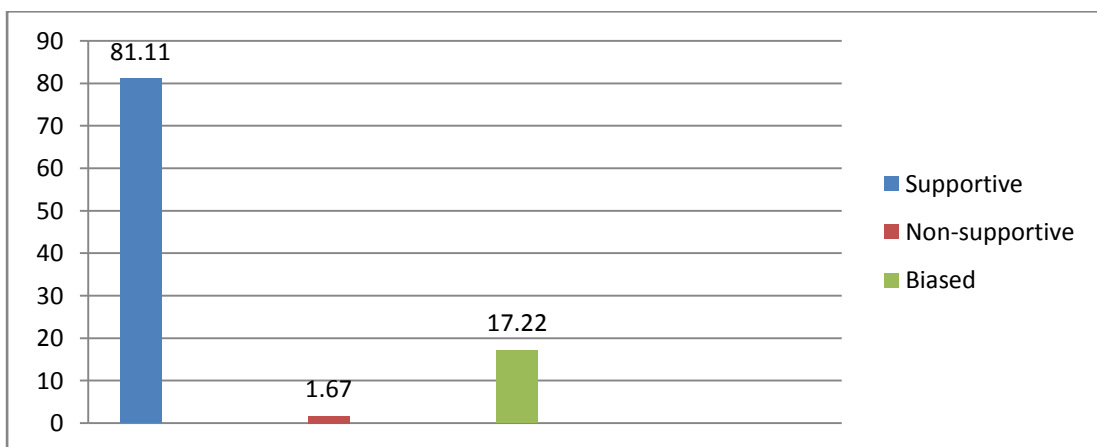
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

About 81.11% women employees have experienced respectable and supportive attitude from their organisation towards female colleagues; thought non-supportive and biased approaches have been reported by 1.67% and 17.22% respondent respectively. Thus, Figure: 5.14 show a healthy trend between employer–women employee relation; which is significant and definitely a welcome message to women to the industry.

Figure 5.15. Discrimination on the Basis of Gender at Work Place
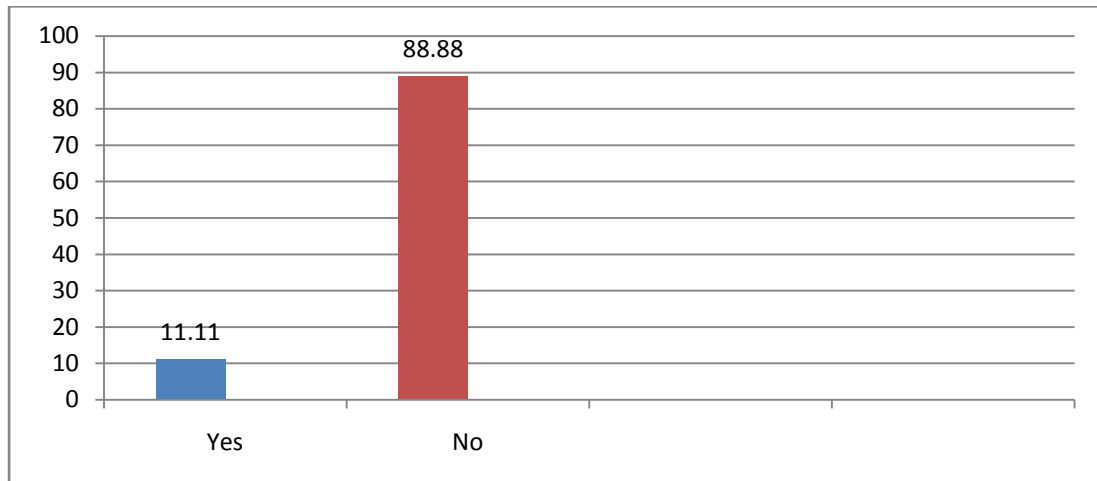

Source: Estimate based on the field work data

While many of the respondents are of the view that there is no discrimination on the basis of gender and find the working environment very friendly, there are a few who find biasness on gender basis at higher level. A large number, near about 88.88% of surveyed employees have replied that, they have never experienced being discriminated on the basis of gender. The rest 11.11% have answered the question in affirmative indicating the existence of gender discrimination at work place and notably, most of the employees belong to this 11.11% occupies a higher position at their respective organisation.

While the percentage is significantly low, it may be observed in general comments that, the industry requires high professional commitment and less flexibility particularly at operational level; so there is always a comparison between male and female gender considering their priorities and the amount of time they can give towards their work for considering them for promotion. Unfortunately, it is found that woman at higher or operational rank needs to proof harder than a man in twice

the amount, which the respondents consider as the marked effect of male dominated Indian culture.

One of the respondents says, "BPO sector is also to some extent a male dominated industry. Some decisions are taken on the basis of gender considering the time and effort women would give their family and dependants". Another respondent also shares her experience and says that there is always a comparison between male and female gender on the basis of personnel or family liabilities while promoting for a higher post. One of the respondents opined that though women are equally strong and capable enough as men but at operational level woman has to "proof harder than man and pays twice the amount". She feels this discrimination is influenced to some extent by Indian culture and male dominated mentality.

Another respondent, an Operation Manager, admits the existence of discrimination when he quoted, "During job interviews a newly married woman is asked about her future family planning or about wedding plans to a single woman candidate, which we do not ask to any male candidates". According to him though these information are required in order to understand the future planning and level of stability of the candidate from the business prospective, but at the same time, exhibit the biasness towards women. One of the respondents believes that though there no gender discrimination, women employees have got some other role or priorities, which stops them from growing at the same rate as men.

Overall, it is found that, the existence of gender biasness cannot be denied in BPO sector. Though there is a less amount of discrimination at entry and supervisory level, gender and personnel responsibilities are also playing an influential role in getting promoted for higher post.

Figure 5.16. Leisure and Breaks Offered at Work Place
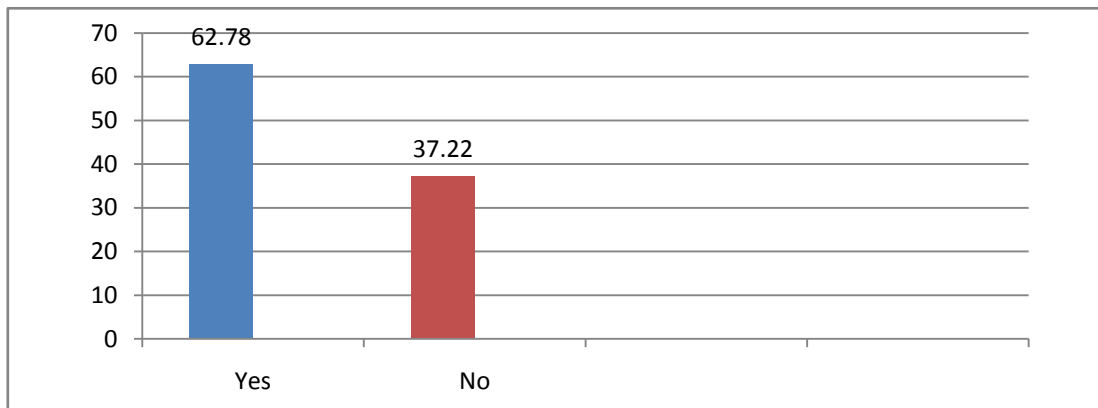
It is a cause of concern when almost 37.22% of the respondents reported that they are not satisfied with the breaks provided at office during working hours. However, a majority, 62.78%, have reported to get sufficient breaks at work that generally includes two tea-breaks, each one for 15 minutes, and lunch/dinner break for half an hour. During the interaction respondents also mentioned the availability of work-leisure facilities like gym, music, television, video games, library/reading room, indoor games etc.

As reported, most of the disappointed employees belong to Voice Process. It is also found that, in many BPO companies, the rigidity of non-extending break time is less for Non-Voice workers in compare to calling process.

Figure 5.17. Perception Level of Comfort, Safety and Security
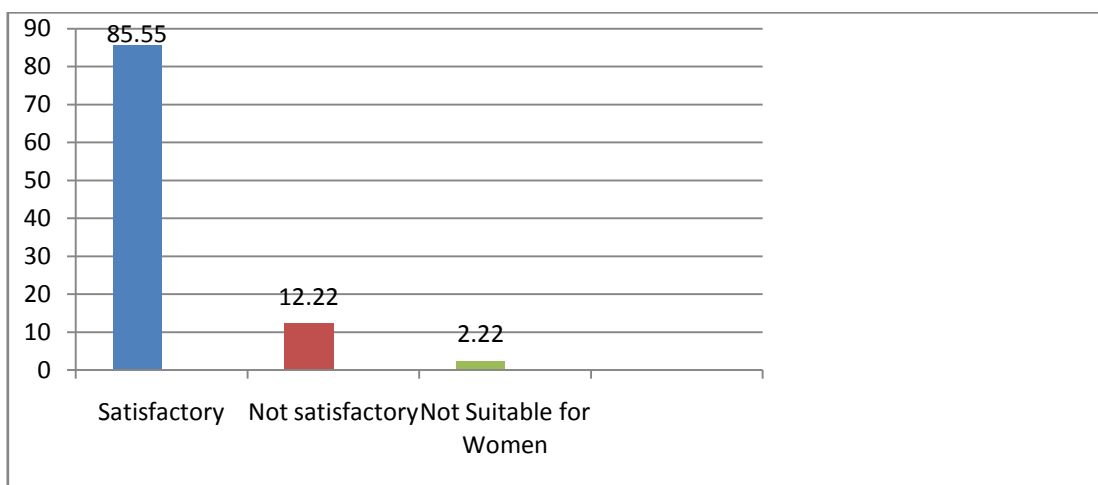
A general question on perception level of comfort, safety and security at work place was posed to the respondents. A huge and significant number, 85.55% marked the same as 'satisfactory', whereas 12.22% of the surveyed women did not feel the atmosphere satisfactory and comfortable enough for them to work. A few respondents, just 2.22% characterized the BPO sector or culture as being not suitable for women.

The availability of 24/7 security at office premises is recorded by 100% employees.

Figure 5.18. Special Attention in Providing Pick-Up and Drop-Down Facility
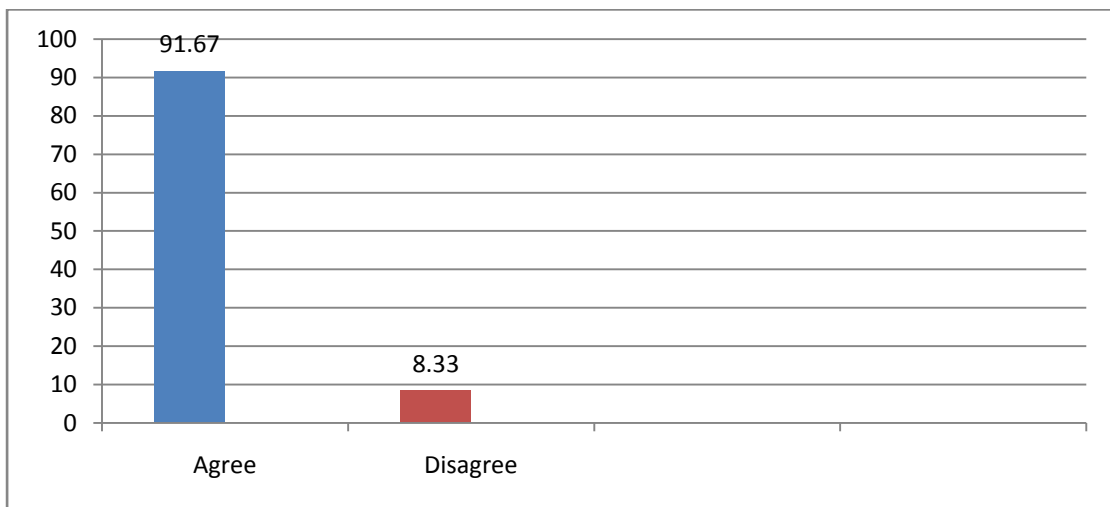
Source: Estimate based on the field work data

Considering the issue of providing special attention in pick up and drop down arrangement, 91.67% employees responded as 'Yes' which is showing in Figure 5.18. The rest, 8.33%, believe in not getting adequate security while travelling.

The utilisation of wage is one of the important information which helps to know whether it is aiding in the livelihood or not. Apart from spending their hard earned cash on family, household items, children, education and other necessities, it is also important on the part of women to utilise the income for their own needs, spend with what they value, to make room for what they prioritize. Therefore, a general question on usage of wage on health fitness or healthy diet and nutrition or towards travelling or hobbies or entertainment was asked. A clear picture is seen, where 100% of surveyed women are spending money to create a lifestyle, that enhancing their day to day living or a source of their happiness.

Thus the response as shown above not only has proved women's wage to be enormous help for the family but also captures the ability to spend their wage on things that matter to them, other than the necessities. Thus the responses reveal the image of empowered Indian women.

Figure 5.19. Health Issues of Women Employees of BPO Sector
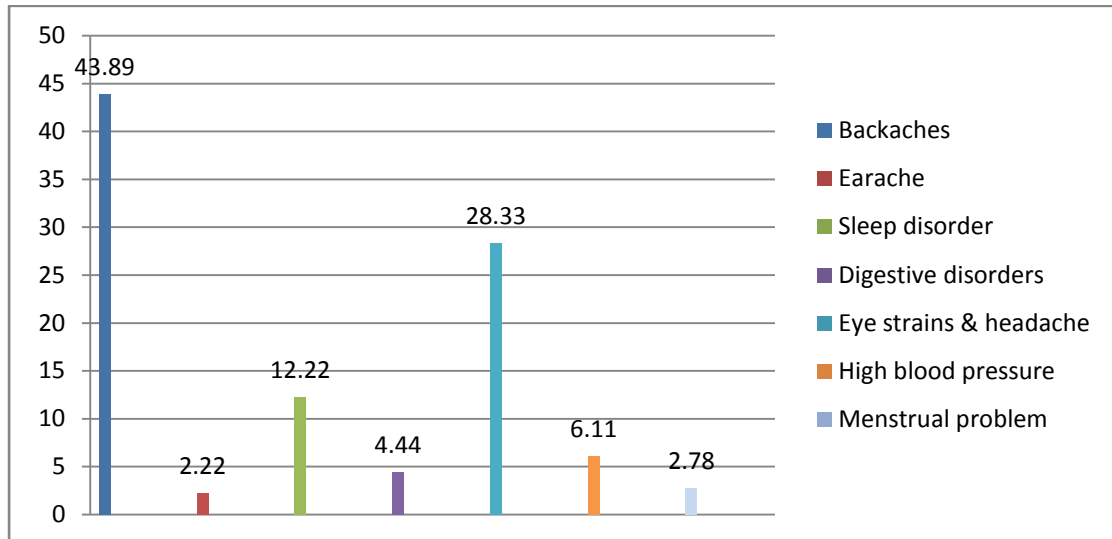
The odd working hours against the biological clock makes women employees suffer from a number of health hazards specially those who work in night shift. It is important here to notice that, the respondents highlighted many health issues and that reflects the adverse impact of the BPO employment on women's health. The analysis reveals, the two major health problems faced by BPO women worker are backaches and eye strains and headache as reported by 43.89% and 28.33% respondents respectively. Another 12.22% reported of sleeping disorder; as women working in night shift do not get proper sleep due to the demand of performing social and family obligations. They say the naps during day time are not sufficient to make up night's sleep. Digestive disorder is another health issue faced by 4.44% respondents. In the survey, 2.78% respondents suffered from menstrual problem and 2.22% with earache. As per 6.11% employees BPO employment leads to high blood pressure.

5.2.2 Suggestions for improvement of women's participation in BPO workforce

This was an open question asked in the survey. One of the main suggestions by the BPO women employees is a flexible or day shift in order to keep a balance between personnel and professional life. It is suggested that, married women should

be given a choice for their working hours and weekly offs. The need of management cooperation and support for a better work environment was also revealed. The respondents believe that, the supportive management will make the work-place more comfortable to work at. The demand for a fair and equal treatment in decision making and career enhancement opportunities without considering gender was found in the comments. The respondents asked the industry to provide a platform in such a way that they can groom and showcase their potentials, deliveries, skills and also can assist in framing their profile from career prospective.

Many women stand for the extension of paid maternity leave. They demand for 'work from home' (wherever possible) option, part time or flexible working hours for pregnant employees and new mothers. The suggestion for the organisation to arrange a creche or day care centre at every office premises was prominent, as this will help the new mothers to manage both work and child care. Some of them are in support of increasing more efficient and more secured transport system for women. Few of them are in favour of enforcement of more professionalism at workplace. Few of them want the society and the families to change their negative perspective towards BPO women employees.

5.3. Part II Analysis of Interview Data*

Besides gathering data through questionnaire, interviews (close ended and open ended) were also held among 40 BPO employees (32 women employees and 8 male employees) in order to substantiate the data gathered. The population for interview was divided into 4 strata as Entry level, Manager Level, Director Level, Top Level, in order to represent the various hierarchical positions of an organisation and their views on the subject under study. From the above four categories, employees are approached for interview using lottery method. Thus, with the unconditional assistance of various associates, data was collected comfortably from the respondents working in the selected BPOs. The following are the analysis of the answers.

*The interviews are basically conducted to get more information and more clarity on the nature of women participation in BPO organisation. Here, only those interview questions are discussed which are not included in the questionnaire. See Appendix III.

5.3.1: The Employment in BPO Sector has changed the Role of Indian Women in their Families and Society

100% employees answer this question in affirmative stating that, they feel the employment in BPO has given women a better and more responsible status in their families and society. They say, along with the large scale of employment, the sector has given more confidence and freedom to Indian women. As the employment in a BPO does not require a higher level of formal education, women of all ages who may not have been working earlier but are educated and have good communication skills can look forward to working in this industry. BPO sector has given them income, exposure and a platform to prove their skill and talent without formal educational qualification and age limit. They are now financially independent and able to provide additional income to the family and confident enough to participate in the decision making process of the family and outside. They no longer need to look towards their partners or parents for monetary needs.

Women who were housewives and are mothers can now look forward to a decent payout and to supplementing the family income in a substantial way. In the words of a 29 years old respondent, "Prior 7 years I had started my career as a part time executive; moved to full time; moved to WFM and now working as a Business Assistant. In each sphere I have learnt a lot of things that help me to be more confident and determined at workplace, more kind, tolerant and composed at personnel life, overall made me a matured and better person". An employee, from West Bengal, who worked as a teacher prior joining BPO says that her salary is an additional income to the family, which help her to raise the standard of living in an expensive city like Pune and also to get more respect from her husband and society.

Women have an identity of their own and can work and earn as good as a man. The words of a 35 years old Quality Control (QC) analyst[10], who has been working in a BPO since 9 years having the confidence and spirit as "Women have their individuality and walk in step with men, who were once thought to be the bread earners". A Team Leader (TL), with 15 years of work experience in this industry said, "The way ladies were seen only to do the house chores have changed". An emotional

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[10] Quality Control (QC) is a procedure or set of procedures intended to ensure that a business process outsourcing adheres to a defined set of quality criteria or meets the requirements of the client or customer.

37 years old respondent shows her gratefulness to her organisation by saying that, because of her job security and good income, she is able to take care of her two children and their education without the support of her in-laws after the tragic death of her husband. 'Women have become better as a trouble shooter' she added.

Another respondent considers BPO as a 'stepping stone' and 'easy to get' profession for women; who has started her career in a UK based call centre as a customer service representative and currently working as a Deputy General Manager-Operations (DGMO) in the same organisation after 14 years. A Human Resource[11] (HR) Head of a leading BPO quoted that this sector has given many middle class women the pleasure to say- 'I am working' and this independence and confidence impacting many Indian families in a positive way, he believes.

5.3.2. Negative Impacts of BPO Culture on Indian Women

Talking about the negative impacts, many of the interviewed employees opined that its individual's choice if they choose the negative path. In the words of an interviewed employee, 'Every coin has 2 sides. There are pros and cons in every field. It's left up to us as individual to take positive effects and incorporate it in our lives'. On the other hand, many of them are concern about the negative impacts of BPO culture on Indian society. One of the respondents exhibits his concern as, 'The compromising factor is slowly diminishing which is leading to many break ups in the relationship. The adjusting factor is gone'. Another 2 respondents expressed the similar view when they say that many women, because of the monetary freedom, discovered in their job start trusting themselves to be equivalent and frequently, even better than men, which many times leads to marital disorder or divorce among young couples.

One of the respondents criticised the cultural transformation as she says, "more and more BPO couples are opting for live-in relationships and many working daughters are living separately from their parents" which she added "still not acceptable in our society". An employee quoted the western lifestyle that women get from the workplace as "not bad but not the best". One of the respondents is unhappy

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[11] Human resources (HR) is the company department charged with finding, screening, recruiting and training job applicants, as well as administering employee-benefit programs.

with the fact that extra marital affair has become very common in this industry which she considers as "harmful for future generation and Indian culture".

100% interviewed employees pointed out that, with a higher disposal income, the freshly-out young graduates tend to misuse their independence and financial freedom and easily resort to lavishing lifestyle, smoking, boozing, drug-addiction and thus in the words of an employee, "The young generation is falling out of the line" and as according to another respondents, "They have forgotten their roots".

5.3.3. Difference between Women Employees in BPOs in Pune and other Cities in India

According to all employees interviewed, BPO culture and work environment is almost similar in all cities throughout the country. Reason being, the BPO branches situated in different locations of India and by and large follow the same culture and work policy. The culture is more westernized in metropolitan cities in compare to Pune and everyone finds Pune as the safest city for women to work even at night in compare to other places. As per them, employee's home profile or behaviour changes according to specific city's culture and Pune's culture make them more traditional.

A respondent, who is basically from Mumbai and had started her career at the Mumbai location of her current organisation said, 'Being a smaller city, Pune provides less job option (BPO) to the employees and that makes them loyal towards their employer'. In compare to other cities, women employees are 'More humble and they possess the willingness to accept' in Pune, she added. Another employee observed that, 'Employees in Pune are far more family oriented and maintain a better work-life balance'.

An interviewed employee from Mumbai, who frequently travel to Pune as part of his job profile stated that, in Pune, BPOs provide a strict, safer and organized transport facility to women employees. The unavailability of governmental transportation makes the transport policy of Pune BPOs more concern and efficient towards its employees, he added.

5.3.4. Suggestions to Improve Women Participation in Workforce and Making BPO Sector a Better Career Option/Workplace for Women

Every surveyed employee urges the society and non-BPO employees to change their false perspective towards BPO women. They say that the misleading views are not only unfavourable and disrespectful for the existing employees but also stopping many Indian women from getting employment in this industry. A positive approach towards women employees will pave the way for many more to pursue a bright career in the sector.

Instead of gender, they demand the employer to judge women on the basis of skill, talent, potential, capabilities, experience, accomplishment and performance. According to them this attitude on the part of the employer will improve the percentage of women at higher level. They also demand the absence of any kind of unfair preferential treatment at workplace which may destroy the potential of employees.

The employees want the maternity leave to increase from 3 months to 6 months for every woman irrespective of their tenurity in the organisation. They also demand more Leave without Pay for child care. In their opinion, modification of such policies will stop many new mothers from discontinuing their job. Working mothers in Pune are further handicapped by lack of quality day care facilities. The availability of a creche or day care centre at every office premises will enable mothers to balance both work and child care in an effective manner. Implementation of part time policy, option to choose shift time, work from home facility (wherever possible) are some measures suggested by them to attract/retain more female workers to BPO sector.

In order to make it a better career option, they suggested the existing female employees not to misuse the privilege and liberty that the industry has given to them. They say appropriate use of the opportunity and freedom will encourage many Indian daughters and wives to be part of it and may help the society to get an accurate idea of the ideologies and principles of the sector.

While conducting the interview, a highly enthusiastic and positive approach towards BPO women employment has been observed from each and every interviewed personnel. Though a few disadvantages of BPO culture have been pointed

out by few of the interviewed personnel, they all concluded their opinion on an affirmative and satisfying note.

It is observed, apart from health issues created due to work profile (calling process in particular) and night shift, most of the other adverse impacts of BPOs are not exclusively peculiar to the industry. Challenges of women workers such as, unable to maintain work-life, liabilities of family and child care, work stress etc. are more or less common in other traditional women centric professions namely, teaching or nursing. At the same time, mishandle of independence and higher disposal income specifically by the youngsters cannot be denied. On the other hand, a huge number of women employees are dealing with their BPO employment and higher income in proper way, for right purpose and with dignity. Resorting to lavishing lifestyle, smoking, boozing, drug-addiction are not obligatory or unpreventable part of the sector and completely depends on person to person.

It is also viewed that the employees working at entry level are more cheerful and optimistic in compare to employees working at middle and higher levels. Huge responsibility with less flexible professional life is one of the main factors that make women on top level less relaxed than workers at entry level. The impact of male dominated Indian mentality cannot be denied in this regard.

Finally, it can be said that BPO female employment is also attached with many strengths and a few shortcomings like any other professions. Benefits and pitfalls are inevitable parts of any workplace. So, overall praiseworthy aspects of BPO women employment have been observed throughout the survey and interview.

5.4. Major Findings and Conclusion

The findings of the survey and interview schedule on women in BPOs in Pune reveal that, the BPO woman workforce is relatively young. The majority of employees, 56%, belong to the age group of 20-30 years, whereas 31% workers stand in the age group of 30-40 years. Only 9% are in the age group of 40-50 years followed by 3% more than 50 years of age. More than half of the women employees, i.e. 61% are basically from Pune; while 38% belong to other places of the country. Majority of female workers i.e. 54% under study are reported as graduates. While 23% of the

respondents have completed their 10+2 (Higher secondary) and 22% women hold a post-graduate degree.

Unmarried/single women constitute the maximum, i.e. 51% of the BPO female workforce in the surveyed area and 47% of the respondents were married. A few were also recorded to be either widowed or divorced. The result indicates that about 33% of the female workers have the work experience of less than 2 years, while 30% employees possess experience of 3-5 years. 31% reported have been working in BPOs for 6-10 years, while 4% recorded to be in this industry for 10-14 years.

Apart from the legal and mandatory benefits such as provident-fund and gratuity, BPO female professionals are entitled to the following benefits as revealed during survey: Group Medi-claim Insurance Scheme, Personal Accident Insurance Scheme, Subsidized Food and Transportation, Recreation, Cafeteria, ATM and Concierge facilities, Cellular Phone/Laptop (on the basis of business need), Personal Health Care (Regular medical check-ups), Loans (in case of a medical emergency, at the time of their wedding, during initial settlement at the work location), Educational Benefits, performance based incentive scheme, Regular Get together and other cultural programs, Wedding Day Gift, Employee Referral Scheme etc.

Though, as suggested by the National Women Commission, the BPO sector ought to install a Global Positioning System (GPS) for tracking the position of women employee transport vehicle (Dube et. al, 2012), but as found during the survey, GPS is installed by a few BPOs in Pune. It is important here to notice that, the policy of Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) along with Vishaka Guidelines is implemented and followed by all BPO organisations under study.

100% BPOs under study provide equal type and number of leave to both male and female employees. In addition, all female employees have privileged to utilize Maternity Leave and Miscarriage Leave (number differs from company to company). Though Adoption Leave (recently introduced in few BPOs) is granted to all employees irrespective of gender, notably, female workers are allowed to avail more leaves than male in every organisation.

The survey based on questionnaire was mainly carried out among the entry level female employees as a few questions were designed exclusively for them. Many

of them were approached through their respective managers or team leaders. During the survey, when expressed about the purpose of the survey, respondents were very much eager and willing to talk about their experience, viewpoints on the subject. But this is a cause of concern that before answering survey's questions, a few questions were posed by few of them, i.e. 'Is it mandatory to write my name?' or 'I am not comfortable to provide my name' or 'Are you going to disclose my responses to my manager or team leader?' It was assured that nothing would be disclosed, as there is moral obligation in the form of ethics. Ethics is to protect the identity of the respondent, if it harms her interest. Her responses would not be entertained if the respondent wishes. The purpose of the study is to bridge the gap between the organisation and the employees and provide suggestion to the policy makers. But notably the same situation was not experienced during the time of interview as the interview was mostly conducted among employees at operational level and above[12]. It is observed, there is some lacuna between operation level and entry level which promotes suspicion and lack of trust in the work environment, which were revealed and accordingly analysed above.

The survey and interviews clearly reveals that, apart from finding their employment as a source of income, the BPO workers consider their job as an opportunity that creates right set of circumstances to make their life better. They are now confident, assured, independent, smart, career oriented and have improved their self concept, the way they see themselves and believe they are seen by the others. They are not only sharing all household responsibilities and participating at family decision making process but also getting exposure to different types of work assigned and acquiring skills to deal with them competently. Along with the continuation of family and child care or additional personnel responsibilities, they are acquiring an opportunity to interact with international clients or getting exposure to another country.

To conclude, BPO is an industry where a potential and determined woman from any family background without higher formal educational qualification and solely on the basis of her ability, hard work and performance can accomplish the goal of a successful career, financial stability, responsibility, power, respect and self-

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[12] Though the interviewed employees did not have any objection in revealing their names in the study, as per the ethical policy of the institution, their names are not revealed.

satisfaction. It is also the right place for those who want to earn money without the desire of career development for some reason. With adequate family support, genuine cooperation from organisation and management, appropriate use of the scope and liberty they get from their job, women can be more empowered, successful and can contribute their best in making BPO industry as one of the most preferable, exemplary and worthy career options for all in the contemporary world.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

We live in a world which has been progressively globalised. Each and every part of our life, from the things we use in day to day life, the language we speak, the way we think, the clothes, shoes, accessories we wear, the food and water we consume, the service or job we do, is influenced by globalisation. Effects of Globalisation on Indian industry started when the Government made changes in economic policy, by which it allowed foreign investment in the country in the early 1990s. Global forces became active in various sectors such as agriculture, shipping, steel industry, pharmaceutical industry, information technology, exports, textile industry, fashion industry, tourism, petroleum, manufacturing industries, retail, and BPO industry etc.

As we have discussed, capital mobility and reduction/removal of trade barriers across countries integrated global economy. Globalisation, particularly in terms of the mobility of capital and the spread of communication technologies, has had intense impact on employment in countries that are closely united with the world economy. In India, its effects were largely prominent in the service sector. The tremendous rise in service sector strengthened and facilitated the phenomenal growth in the BPO industry. The mutually beneficial trade between the developed and developing countries gave rise to the evolution of the software and the BPO industry that capitalized on the wage differential and the benefit of low cost production to successfully utilize the advantages of technology and communication. As per Nasscom Report 2012, the market for global Business Process Outsourcing is predicted to triple in size by 2020. Such an explosive growth has had and will continue to have huge economic benefits for India.

In India, BPO sector, with the abundance of a large numbers of skilled resources, who are fluent in English, and also along with the availability of broadband brought on by the large investments made in the Telecommunications and Software sector during the

Information Technology Bubble or Internet Bubble[1] (1995–2001) were griped by companies to communicate and plug into the economies of the developed countries. The industry's remarkable growth rates and its direct outcome can be seen on its revenue contribution to India's GDP and multiple employment generation it supplies the population. Globalisation brought in huge amounts of foreign investments into the BPO industry. As discussed in the chapter 3, this is boosting and facilitating the economic development of the country quite significantly and also has reduced the disproportion in capital and earnings.

It is a fact that, the rise of India as a leading and preferred outsourcing destination has generated immense job opportunities for the country's population. Today, India's BPO industry is not only the highest employment sector in urban India, but also is a blooming scope of growth for young generation. In the last decade, the change in the quality of life perspective, particularly for people employed in the IT-BPO industry, is distinguished. Today, with higher disposable income, the average urban Indian is shifting from a middle class savings mentality to a consumerism based economy.

Apart from directly creating jobs as workers, managers, software programmers and related personnel, the Indian IT-BPO industry is also creating large number of indirect employment in the country. The better purchase capability of the people and arrival of foreign goods and services in the Indian market also has seen indirect employment created in great numbers in other sectors. The FDI in sectors of infrastructure, telecom, manufacturing etc. has also grown in India, as these are all required ecosystem element essential to support its fast-growing IT-BPO sector. Foreign companies for like, Vodafone, Telenor etc., with the increasing populace of mobile operators, have envisaged a huge growth story for telecom sector in India and they successfully established themselves in the Indian market with merger and acquisitions. These sectors have produced abundance of employment for the Indian market and in many aspects, this employment generation can be attributed in part to the local IT-BPO

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[1] Internet Bubble or Information Technology Bubble is also known as dot-com bubble. It was a renowned speculative bubble covering approximately 1995–2001. During this period stock markets in developed countries had witnessed their equity value rise at great rate from the growth in the internet zone and other related sectors.

sector as the majority of IT-BPO employees themselves are the most ardent purchasers of mobile services.

As a primary outsourcing destination, India is experiencing strong economic growth through BPOs, and the women in the country are benefiting from improved employment prospects in the sector. Women can now improve their income and become more financially independent while continuing to perform their traditional roles. As far as economic, social and cultural empowerment of women in India's patriarchal society is concerned, emergence of BPO sector is nothing less than a revolution. The fast-progressing BPO industry has provided employment to thousands of urban women with limited educational qualifications, who otherwise might have remained unemployed and now are seen to be resource to their families. BPO is not only introducing expanded employment opportunities for women but also increasing the demands made on them. The influence of outsourcing on women is clearly visible in emerging markets in India, where the sector has given rise to new wages and entrepreneurship opportunities for well-educated/skilled women.

As the chapters explains, one out of three employees joining the $143-billion Indian IT-BPO industry is a woman, according to a report by Nasscom (*The Hindu*, 2016). The Indian IT-BPO industry, has always strived to recruit a larger number of women in its workforce and the sector, more than other industries in India, has been launching initiatives designed to encourage the interests of women in their workplace. The focus on women by the IT-BPO industry can be considered as an acknowledgment of women's growing role in India's economy.

IT-BPO industry has taken a lead in adopting best practices in the areas of HR to attract women employees and emerge as a preferred career destination for these professionals. Companies, especially the large players, have undertaken the following to encourage gender diversity within their realms (Nasscom, Newsline, 2008):

The industry has fostered a 'culture of inclusion' as a business imperative and recognized gender inclusivity as a key factor in organisational agility, innovation and success. The sector remained open to accepting the different capabilities that women

bring into the workplace and created a nurturing environment for them to take leadership roles. Similarly it has, set up special cells, and introduced policies and processes that spur women participation, especially at the higher levels of decision-making. IT-BPO industry made the security and dignity of female employees a priority. IT-BPO companies, which have non-conventional working hours, have been frontrunners in introducing stringent policies to ensure the security of women workers (Nasscom, Newsline, 2008).

As part of this research, an effort is made to understand the challenges and prospects of women workforce in the BPO sector in India through a field based survey/study conducted at 12 Pune based BPOs. The total sample size was 180and relevant data have been collected through stratified random sampling, questionnaire and interview schedule. One of the major objectives of the field study was to know the prospects of BPO sector towards the beneficiaries and its major challenges. Apart from challenges discussed in Chapter 4 namely, dual accountability, child care, professional travel requirement, relocation and health issues, the following challenges are also faced particularly by women employees in BPOs and they are unique in nature. The major challenges of women employees of BPO industry in India is revealed through the survey is given below:

Though, the direction towards diversity and inclusion look promising in this sector, but in comparison to the western countries, Indian BPO industry still need to do a lot more to become entirely a gender neutral industry. Survey reveals that while gender inclusivity has been established at entry levels, but at higher level or regarding the promotion to the higher level gender plays a significant role. This results in a far lower share of women representation at top managerial level. This is due to women's liabilities towards personal priorities, which to some extent convey a message of their lesser commitment and lesser loyalty towards professional life relatively to that of a man professional.

It has been found that the existence of 'favouritism or partiality' in BPO culture is a cause of concern for many women employees. The practice of giving preferential treatment to one employee (not always on the basis of gender) at the expense of another, on different occasion is quite visible at workplace. The partiality on the part of the higher

management on several occasions is not only a cause of discreditable and offensive for many employees but also creates work environment unpleasant, distressing and objectionable, as revealed during the survey.

Work pressure and stress has become an established fact of BPO culture. The target oriented work profile is highly demanding and can be stressful. To deal with the continuous psychological pressure 'to meet the target on daily basis' in the voice process in particular is not an easy task. The need to give the best throughout the day without any error is a challenge as an employee's performance is not only limited to her monthly/yearly performance and incentive/bonus, but also directly influences her team and immediate team leader or manager. Therefore the need to perform 'always good' is very stressful and failed to do so impacts negatively on employee.

The socio-cultural factors sometimes work against the women employed with a BPO in India. Even if a woman working in a night shift finds the shift timing convenient and is comfortable with her work culture and work profile, assured with the security provided by the organisation and is satisfied with the excellent remuneration for the night duty job, still due to the poor image of BPOs especially the safety aspects and the odd hours, a woman may have trouble in getting approval to stay out late or may face disputes with the family members. But, notably the poor image of BPOs has been changing with time and the society has started understanding and accepting the importance and dignity of BPO employment.

Though good communication skill is one of the major criteria to get recruited in a BPO, but fluent communication skill and self-expression are the key challenges that many female workers (non-voice employees in particular) in the industry still face in India, as observed during the survey. Above that, there is a general lack of confidence among women particularly at junior levels and fresher to raise voice against an issue they are facing at work place. They find it difficult to express their standpoint in the corporate sector. All these acts many times hamper their growth opportunities.

Another challenge which was revealed by the respondents is the leave policy and its impact on performance. The employees are eligible for sufficient number of leaves in

a year and there is merely an issue with Planned Leaves (planned and informed in prior to the management), but the challenge appears while the employee needs to take an emergency leave. Though most of the time for a genuine emergency reason a leave gets approved but it definitely harms the employee's performance record, which is a cause of concern and dissatisfaction on the part of the employee who works hard to achieve the performance target set by the management. Apart from this they do not get any leave on national holidays and it is also a challenge to get leaves approved during festivals due to business requirement.

As far as the prospects are concerned, the study reveals that, like any other industry, BPO women employees are also subjected to various peaks and valleys and meet challenges in their professional lives. But the most important point needs to be mentioned here is the focus, keenness and significant effort the sector is providing in order to address these challenges is commendable. Recognizing the growing influence and power of women, the industry has introduced a range policies centered around the specific requirements of women employees. Another important point noticed during the survey is that, the organisation, to a great extent, tries to remain flexible and supportive when it comes to meeting the needs of female workers. Over the past few years the sector has been launching initiatives designed to encourage women workforce and to promote their interests.

One of the research questions addressed in the study is the impact of the sector on Indian women. Women are an integral part and enabling factor of the BPO industry. The industry brings with it increased women empowerment by providing employment and rendering the scope of a bright and promising future. Apart from significant issues like maintaining work-life balance particularly for married women, health problem and psychological stress especially for employees engaged in call centres or in calling processes, it is found that employment in BPOs along with high salaries and attractive facilities that an ordinary graduate could never imagine in India. In recent times, due to secured, better and gender-friendly work environment, financial security, decent emoluments, free and safe home pick and drop facility, BPOs are one of the most sought workplaces for both graduates and undergraduates women. Notably, no other sector

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allows entry of employees with minimum education at such attractive salaries, facilities and security.

As the chapters make it very clear, BPOs provide mass employment and better career growth, global exposure and dignity to those women with little education. Here, instead of having to accept casual employment, the women get a regular job with other facilities. Some of the women who work in this sector earn more than the men in their families. They now have a voice at the major concern of the house and help run the family. Most importantly, BPOs provide women with an opportunity to move out from their corner and explore the real world. BPOs surely bring about a transition in the patriarchal system of the Indian society.

To analyse the nature of women participation in BPO sector in India was another research question. Changing perceptions of female roles and abilities is accompanied by BPOs. In India, parents/husbands traditionally don't allow their daughters/wives to work by night, but reality of present hours is, "The women working on night shift in BPO constitute over 40 per cent of the total workforce in the sector. The stringent security rule adopted by the sector has encouraged families to send their daughters to do night shifts with BPOs" (Begum, 2013: 1). This is a primary sign of change and impact of the industry in thinking process of the society, which is helping in liberalization of women. Along with the opportunity to improve their financial autonomy, the middle-class urban women find the sector a platform for greater mobility and greater acceptance in the male-dominated Indian society.

Though, already a significant amount of work is being done by the sector from implementing gender inclusivity and diversity policy, being intolerant to sexual harassment, providing security inside and outside the office premises etc, but the industry must further keep on refining its policies and processes to retain and increase more women participation, improve their representation at senior management role, and to ensure their active involvement in decision making process.

It is also the responsibility on the part of the industry's leaders to ensure that the positives overthrow the negatives and take the accountability to provide an atmosphere

where it is possible for the employees to maintain a healthy balance between life and work. At the end of the day, every job has its own gains and losses, obstacles should not stop any woman from taking up a profession, appreciating her work or earning a living, she can try and find ways to get the better of it.

It is noteworthy that the industry has already implemented many women oriented recommendations. This demonstrates sector's readiness to make it a better industry and exhibits the efforts they are putting to promote women empowerment. Few recommendations for making BPOs more women-friendly and better workplace are given below:

a) Part time policy should be adopted by every organisation in order to introduce flexible working pattern. It can help the organisation cope with changing market conditions and help employees balance their obligations at home and at work. This also supports an organisation to retain its talent.

b) There is a need to make it mandatory for each BPO organisation to have in-house creche or day care centre within office premises. This facility practically is a road to women empowerment. A professionally-managed daycare facility not only encourages a woman to continue with her job after having a baby but also increases her concentrate at work knowing that her child is in safe hands at next door.

c) More awareness on how to deal with sexual harassment needs to be created at work place. This can be done by organizing periodic workshops, awareness initiatives, surveys etc.

d) Organisation should give specific attention in providing self defense training programmes to women employees from time to time. Through these safety forums, tips like use of safety pins and pepper sprays, importance of staying awake during travel time, significance of having a mentally rehearsed plan of action can be briefed to the employees.

e) In order to provide fool proof security arrangements to its women workforce, BPOs are under obligation to install a fully-functional Global Positioning System (GPS) in their cabs for tracking the position of the vehicles. Despite making it mandatory for all cabs, the installation of GPS has yet not become a reality. So, now strict disciplinary action needs to be taken by the Government against those who violates the rule.

f) Providing monetary incentives to the cab drivers with a view to recognize their performance is necessary on monthly basis. This reward will definitely motivate them to perform their duties better and effectively and will help the organisation to achieve desired result.

g) The enthusiasm on the part of the senior management to recognize an excellent performance immediately and reward for the same there and then is needed. This recognition gives tremendous encouragement to the employee and also conveys a strong inspirational message to his/her colleagues.

h) To organize 'Family Day' within the office premise once in a year is important. The celebration of Family Day gives employee's family access to the workplace and introduces them to the BPO culture and work environment. This is particularly beneficial for women workers as access to their work station and the interaction of family members to their colleagues, senior authorities will definitely help to improve the negative image of BPO work environment. This will also help the family to understand the dignity, responsibility, importance, priority and security measures of the employees at workplace. This may help the female worker to get required support from the family and society. Organisation like WNS, Convergys and a few companies celebrate Family Day every year within office premises and it is necessary for every company to include this annual function in their organisation's policy.

On the basis of the above discussion and the initiatives taken by the industry for its women workforce in India, it can be said that the IT-BPO sector has recognised the contribution of women in the workforce as an influential and empowering factor for the continued development of the industry and has remained fairly gender neutral from the

onset, providing equal scope for both man and woman. It has been noticed that, acknowledging the immense contribution, potential and increasing significance of this emerging workforce, IT-BPO sector has prepared itself to act as a catalyst in the enlargement of female workers. The industry has taken a lead in adopting best practices in all the possible areas to nurture the growth and strengthen employment of women.

If we talk about BPO and its positive and negative aspects, we must admit that, the place where Indian youth and urban women are standing at present, the drawbacks are negligible in comparison to the beneficial impacts. If we respect our norms and values, admire our culture and tradition and keep a distance between the personal and professional lives and maintain the same in an effective way this sector will serve better and help us in the long run and will redefine our country in the best possible way.

While discuss on BPO, its positive and negative aspects, it must be admitted that, given the place where Indian youth and urban women are standing at present, the drawbacks are negligible in comparison to the beneficial impacts. To conclude, BPO is an industry where a potential and determined woman from any family background without higher formal educational qualification can accomplish the goal of a successful career, financial stability, responsibility, power, respect and self-satisfaction, solely on the basis of her ability and hard work. It is also the right place for those who want to earn money without the desire of career development for some special reasons. What is evident from the facts of Indian BPO industry is that, with adequate family support, genuine cooperation from organisation and management, appropriate use of the scope and liberty they get from their job, women can be more empowered, successful and can contribute their best in making BPO industry as one of the most preferable, exemplary and worthy career options for all in the contemporary world.

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Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology
Government of India

Fact Sheet of IT & BPM Industry

India's Strength in this sector / reasons to invest	• IT- BPM sector has become one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy, contributing immensely to the country's GDP (9.3%) and public welfare. • India has captured a sizeable portion of the global technology sourcing business. The Indian IT industry's (including hardware) share in the global market stands at 7% and growth has been largely due to exports. • 60% firms use India for testing services before taking software products global • Expected growth – (10.7% over FY2016); • Cost Leadership – savings of > USD 200bn for clients in the past 5 years • India has a rapidly growing urban Infrastructure fostering several IT centres in the country; 50 cities for service delivery
Basic Facts of the Sector(Statistics)	• Expected IT-BPM revenues – USD 143 bn in FY 2016 (estimated); • Exports – USD 108 bn in FY 2016 (estimated) (IT services - USD 61 bn;BPM – 24.4 bn; Engineering and R&D services (ER&D) and software products - USD 22.4 bn;) • More than 15,000 firms; of which 1000+ are large firms. • Largest private sector employer – 3.7 mn jobs • Sector accounts for largest share in total services exports (38%) • ~600 offshore development centres (ODCs) of 78 countries
Growth Drivers	• Emerging geographies and verticals; non-linear growth due to platforms, products and automation • Revival in demand for IT services from US and Europe • Increasing adoption of technology and telecom by consumers and focused Government initiatives – leading to increased ICT adoption • High value client additions (> USD 1m) – highest in last 5 years (>13.5% growth)

	• Emerging verticals (retail; healthcare; utilities) driving growth (>14%) • SMAC (social, mobility, analytics, cloud) market to be USD 225bn by 2020. • USD 1.6bn spent annually on training workforce ; Growing R&D spend; • National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) is being laid down in phases to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the country
FDI Policy	• FDI up to 100% under the automatic route is allowed in data processing, software development and computer consultancy services; software supply services; business and management consultancy services, market research services, technical testing and analysis services.

Sector Policy	• National Policy on Information Technology 2012 aims to increase revenues of IT and BPM industry to US$ 300 billion by 2020. The policy also seeks to achieve the twin goals of brining the full power of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within the reach of the whole of India and harnessing the capability and human resources of the country to enable India to emerge as the Global Hub and Destination for IT and BPM Services by 2020.
	 • Other Initiatives
	     o Establishment of Software Technology Parks of India (STPIs)
	     o Special Economy Zones (SEZs) Policy
	     o National Task Force on IT and Software Development
	     o National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)
	     o National Cyber Security Policy 2013

Financial Support (Incentives)	• Exports Incentives: Exports incentives under foreign trade policy. • Areas based Incentives: Incentives for units in SEZ as specified in respective acts. • State Incentives: Benefits are also available under state industrial/IT policies.
Investment Opportunities	• Setting up of IT Services ; BPM; software products companies ; shared service centres • BPM – Fastest growing sectors - knowledge services ; data analytics; legal services; Business Process as a Service (BPaaS) / cloud based services

	• IT Services – Fastest growing sectors – Solutions and Services around SMAC; IS outsourcing; IT consulting; software testing • ER&D – Fastest growing sectors – telecom & semiconductors
Foreign Investors in India	**Accenture (Ireland)** — **Cognizant (USA)** **HP (USA)** — Capgemini (France) **IBM (USA)** — Atos (France) **Microsoft (USA)** — CDNS (USA) **Intel (USA)** — Dell International (USA) **Agilent Technologies (USA)** — Mentor Graphics (USA) **Oracle Corporation (USA)** — Qualcomm (USA) **Steria (France)** — Ricon (Japan) **SAP (Germany)** — TIBCO (USA) **Applied Materials (USA)** — Philips (Netherlands)
Important Agencies (Ministry / Sectoral chamber with website)	• Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India (http://meity.gov.in/) • National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) (www.nasscom.in) • Indian Software Product Industry Round Table (iSPIRT) (www.ispirt.in) • Other Service Providers Association of India (OSPAI) (www.ospai.in) • Data Security Council of India (www.dsci.in)

APPENDIX II

Questionnaire for Survey

(Respondents may kindly note that confidentiality will be maintained and in no way the identity/personal information of the respondents will be revealed.)

Name: Age:

Current Designation: Home Town:

Cast/Community: Educational level:

Parents/Husband's Occupation: Married/Unmarried:

Tenurity at BPO Industry:

1. Would you like to grow in a BPO?

    a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]   c. No response [   ]

2. Why do women prefer to join BPO's?

    a. Educational level doesn't matter so much

    b. Good work environment and Time flexibility

    c. Handsome Salary, Good Benefits and Attractive Lifestyle

3. Do you think women are getting enough socio and family support for highly pressurised work environment and odd working hours?

    a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

4. Is women participation in BPO industry more effective than men?

    a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

5. What are the challenges you face in a BPO culture?

    a. Work pressure and stress

    b. Physical strains/health issues

    c. Odd working hours/Long working hours/overtime

    d. Unable to maintain a work-life balance

6. Do you think issues concerning women employees are properly addressed by the organization or the management level?

    a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

7. Do you think women are getting proper representation at management level, higher level or decision making?

    a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

8. Do you think women get equal growth opportunity like men at workplace?

  a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

9. Do you think BPO is a good career option for women in India?

  a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]   c. No response [   ]

10. Why do women leave the industry (In general)?

  a. To get a better career option/higher education

  b. Marriage/child care and family reason such as relocation

  c. Health Issues

11. Are you able to maintain a smooth balance between work-life?

  a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

12. What kind of working hours/shift do you have?

  a. Morning [   ]   b. Afternoon/Evening [   ]

  c. Night   [   ]   d. Rotational [   ]

13. Mark the following factors you have experienced in order to get promotion?

  a. Performance

  b. Fixed numbers of years

  c. Management outlook

14. Attitude of organization/employer towards women employees is:

  a. Supportive

  b. Non-supportive

  c. Biased

15. Have you ever experienced any kind of discrimination on the basis of gender at work place?

  a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

16. Which area of a BPO sector do you work?

  a. Voice [   ]   b. Non-voice [   ]   c. Semi-voice [   ]

17. Are you satisfied with the leisure breaks offered at work place?

  a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

18. Perception level of comfort, safety and security at workplace is:

  a. Satisfactory

  b. Not satisfactory

  c. Not suitable for women

19. Most of the BPO companies pay special attention in providing secured pick up and drop down facility for women employees.

a. Agree [   ]   b. Disagree [   ]

20. Are you able to spend your income on health fitness, healthy diet and nutrition, for travelling or entertainment?

a. Yes [   ]   b. No [   ]

21. Mark the health problems woman employee faces due to BPO work culture.

a. Backaches

b. Earache

c. Sleep disorder

d. Digestive disorders

e. Eye strains & headache

f. High blood pressure

g. Menstrual problem

22. Please give your suggestion for improvement of women participation in BPO workforce and making BPO sector a better career option/workplace for women.

APPENDIX III

Interview Questions

1. Do you think the employment in BPO sector has changed the role of Indian women in their families and society?

2. Do you consider BPO sector as a respectable and preferred career option for women in India today?

3. Study says that, the participation of women employees in BPO sector is increasing day by day but, it has been found that the representation of women at higher level is comparatively lesser that the entry level. Please give your opinion.

4. Being a BPO employee, is it possible for a women to maintain a smooth work-life balance?

5. Do you think issues concerning women employees are properly addressed in the industry? Have you ever experienced any special measure/policy that your organization has adopted to the meet the challenges of women employees?

6. Is there any discrimination on the basis of gender at workplace?

7. Is there any negative impact of BPO culture on Indian women?

8. Can we view any difference between BPO culture/BPO women employees in Pune and in other cities, for example, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Gurgaon, NCR, Mumbai etc.

9. Please give your suggestion for improvement of women participation in BPO workforce and making the sector a better career option/workplace for women.

SUMMARY

This study looks into the dynamics in the relationship between globalisation and women workers with a focus on Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry in India. The study aims at analysing the nature of women employment in BPOs in India in general and in Pune – one of the largest centres of BPOs in India - in particular. The study focuses on the nature of women participation in connection with BPO sector as, irrespective of various challenges, the participation of women has been increasing in recent years. As per the studies of Women Safety 2013, Nasscom and Nasscom Diversity and Inclusion Summit 2017, the share of women in BPO workforce has recorded an increase of 14% during 2004–2017 period. Currently women constitute 34% of total BPO workforce in the country, and, it is estimated that, one out of three employees joining the $143-billion Indian IT-BPO industry is a woman.

This study also addresses certain fundamental questions related to globalisation, women workers and BPOs in India like; what is the impact of globalisation on BPO sector? What is the nature of women participation in BPO Industry in India? What are the challenges and opportunities before female employees in the sector? And does the participation of Indian women in BPOs impact a positive way? These questions are important as globalisation and the growth of BPO sector in India, over the past few years, has resulted in considerable changes in the lives of the youth and women workforce in India. Today, women participation and contribution has become critical in this sector. This study examines the growth of BPO industry in India and its impact on women workers in the sector.

Though the study takes India as a whole for the examination of the key research questions, a special emphasis is given to BPO industry in Pune as Pune has a representative character of Indian BPO industry in terms of companies as well as workforce. Pune is emerging as the favoured outsourcing hub with a number of Business Process Outsourcing centres catering to the US and European markets. In Pune, BPO is very prominent with 50+ top international companies have their presence. Importantly, most of the leading BPOs in Pune has its branches in other parts of the country and thus interconnected both at national and international level. The policies through which the workers are governed by, the nature of opportunities they get, scope for growth, challenges, facilities and BPO work culture in other cities are similar to Pune and therefore BPOs located in Pune broadly reveals the general nature of Indian BPO industry. So, it

is understood that, a study on women BPO workers in India with special focus on women employees in Pune based BPOs will be helpful to understand the work practice, work culture and work atmosphere of Indian professional women in BPOs.

The study approaches the subject against the backdrop of globalisation which facilitates the expansion of BPOs all over the world, especially to the developing countries like India. The growth of Business Process Outsourcing services can be considered as one of the major outcomes of globalisation. BPO industry has adopted an international business environment with a global standard and thus has reduced the national and geographical differences. The process of globalisation has been an indispensable part of the present-day economic growth achieved by developing countries. For example, in developing countries like India, globalisation has played a crucial role in export-led growth, directing to the expansion of the employment sources in the country. In the last few years, the country has witnessed tremendous increase in the employment of skilled professionals by both local and foreign Multinational Companies and they provide services to customers from US, UK and other European countries. The availability of educated and English-speaking human resources in a lower cost and the advanced and developed global communication technologies such as voice-over IP (VOIP), email and internet, have enabled global firms to lower their cost base by setting up outsourced knowledge-worker operations in India.

It is observed that expansion of BPO sector by globalisation has changed the role of Indian women in the global workforce. BPO employment has made women in the country more career-oriented and self-confident. They are experiencing more financial independence, greater freedom and also high standard of living. They have also acquired respectable status in the family and society. There are numerous writings about Indian BPO sector and women employees. However, there are negligible literature that are dealing with the impact of BPO employment on Indian women, on their economic status, social status, family responsibilities, overall empowerment etc. This has also made limitations in developing a proper understanding on the nature of women participation in this crucial sector.

Attempt has been made in this study to bridge such significant knowledge gaps. The study develops through both quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques. A structured questionnaire has been used to collect relevant data and data analysis and interpretation was done

through utilizing statistical methods/tools like percentage, tables and figures. The qualitative method in the study consisted of open ended questionnaire containing case study and its analysis, personal interviews, field observation and its interpretations.

The major source materials of the study are various reports published by agencies such as The Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY), ILO, World Bank, IMF, and Nasscom; Research Institutions like V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, IGIDR, CSD, Women Commission and the concerned Departments (Labour, Family Welfare, Industry etc.) of Government of India. Research papers and articles published in various Journals, Newspapers, News Magazines, Websites and Books about BPO industry has also been used as secondary sources for the study.

A general study on women employees in BPOs in India and a detail study on Pune based BPOs has been carried out in this research. A list of 20 international BPOs operating in the Pune city was compiled. It was decided to take 12 of them for the collection of samples. They are further divided into 3 strata - Voice Process, Non-Voice and Semi-Voice in order to represent the 3 major work profiles of the industry and 4 BPOs from each work profile were selected using random sampling technique. Since it was not possible to build one-to-one rapport with all the employees, a sample size of 250 women employees was chosen for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to gather data from the Entry Level, Team Manager and Manager level employees.

A questionnaire having both close ended and an open ended questions was intricately designed to tap the demographic variables including Name, Age, Current Designation, Home Town, Cast/Community, Education, Parents/Husband's Occupation, Marital Status and Tenure of the women respondents. It also gathered information about career option, level of women representation, growth, scope, family and social support, attitude of organisation/employer towards women employees, smooth work-life balance, safety and security and the challenges facing by women employees. Suggestions for improving women participation in the industry has also been collected from the respondents through the questionnaire.

Besides gathering data through questionnaire, interviews were also conducted among 40 BPO employees (32 women employees and 8 male employees) in order to substantiate the data

gathered. The population for interview was also divided into 4 strata - Entry level, Manager Level, Director Level, Top Level - in order to represent the various hierarchical positions of an organisation and their views on the subject under study.

The thesis has been divided into 6 chapters. The **first chapter** Introduction contains the basic blueprint of the thesis. It explains the core concepts and the correlation between issues and variables used in the study. There are sections on globalisation, employment, women employees and BPO sector in this introductory chapter. It also includes a section on literature review, rationale, research questions, objectives, methodology and organisation of the study. Basically it tries to build a structure for the research to be taken forward in a greater detail.

The **Chapter 2** titled "Globalisation, Employment and Women Employees" explains the conceptual and theoretical framework in which the study has been organized. It focuses on interconnection between globalisation and employment with special emphasis on women workers. The first part of the chapter consisted of a brief overview of the concept globalisation - origin, history, dimensions and driving forces behind it. The second part of this chapter tries to analyze the impacts of globalisation on employment in general. Globalisation has been associated with profound changes in the labour market such as changes in the level and structure of labour demand, in skill shortages and relative wages, and in employment elasticity, among others. All of these have far reaching implications on worker's and therefore on the success of the process of adjustment to globalisation itself.

It is a fact that sweeping changes have taken place in the global economy in recent decades and these changes have reshaped the structure of employment on a global scale. National economies are now more integrated into the global system than at any other point in the recent past. Globalisation is clearly contributing to increased integration of labour markets and closing the wage gap between workers in advanced and developing economies, especially through the spread of technology. It also plays a part in increasing domestic income inequality. Mobility and lowering barriers, as a consequence of globalisation process, have opened up scope for people looking for jobs. Globalisation, through the abolition of economic barriers and the opening up of borders, has facilitated people to move from one's country of origin to other countries in search of work. Regional agreements which govern travel and conditions of employment have brought into prospect at both national and global levels.

4

The final part of this chapter comprises of an analytical discussion on the effects of globalisation on women employees. At the international level, it has been noticed that women participation in the paid workforce has been increasing and their employment has expanded to all the productive sectors – services, agriculture and manufacturing; with a particularly strong arise in the service sector. Women have also proceeded towards occupations that have been typically ruled by men. It simply means that, beyond household-based production, the section of female workers has moved to various sectors of the economy. This direction of women employment is influenced by the process of globalisation and it is not only limited to high-income countries. Women's representation has been escalating as a share of total employment and to varying degrees, their employment has been developing faster than men's. Studies reveal that the gap between percentage of women employment and percentage of men employment has been narrowing.

Chapter 2 also discusses briefly the recent trends of women employment. Globalisation has the capability to contribute to greater gender equality. Globalisation has indeed worked as a catalyst in women's efforts to get fair rights, impartiality and opportunities and certainly has nurtured the ideas and norms of equality for women that provided a platform of awareness. Economic dimension of globalisation gives new scope and benefits to women in the labour market. Growth in cross-national exchanges and upgraded communication encourage improvements in women's status and equality.

The chapter argues that, in the past two decades, globalisation has had a huge impact on the lives of women and is paving a way for them to involve in different spheres of life like economic, political, sports, social and cultural. Globalisation is helping most of the countries to eliminate the discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child. Policies framed by different countries in helping women created larger awareness among women on their rights and also enhancing their skills at the competitive edge. Globalisation has coincided with a global increase in female labour force participation rates which has narrowed the gender gap. A number of factors associated with globalisation process have contributed to this increase, including the growth of production for export in the developing world. In the end, the chapter touches concisely the role of peer pressure, Convention, Treaties, media and NGOs towards

gender equality in employment around the world. The point of discussion in this chapter is the relation between globalisation, employment and women employees.

The chapter argues that, globalisation, particularly in terms of the mobility of capital and the spread of advanced communication technologies, has had a radical impact on employment relations in countries that are finely incorporated into the world economy. In India, its effects were mainly seen in the service sector. This rapid increase in the service sector during the last decade resulted in the phenomenal growth of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. Indian BPOs are known for delivering effective business solutions along with quality and cost advantage by using developed technology. The speedy growth of the outsourcing industry has resulted in greater employment opportunities to a new group of employees: mainly young college graduates especially women.

Chapter 3 "Business Process Outsourcing Industry in India" discusses exhaustively on BPO industry in the Indian context. BPO industry in India started with the call center business, with people taking on American names, speaking in American accents and trying to sell credit cards or insurance policies to Westerners. But now the sector is not only confined to call centre business; the industry has come a long way from being an employer of English-speaking undergrads to an end-to-end managed services provider. The industry has demonstrated an add value and created large impact in economic growth and employability.

The chapter begins with the concept of global Business Process Outsourcing, which also includes-components and BPO business models. Eventually, the chapter moves to the evolution/history of global BPO sector and BPO industry in India. This section broadly presents the emergence and evolution of the sector in the country, it discusses about the major BPO-ITES cities and major players of the sector. It also takes a look at the major services offered by Indian BPO companies. The final part discusses comprehensively the impact of BPO sector in Indian economy, growth of the sector in recent years and the future outlook of BPOs in India.

The chapter focused on analyzing the impact of IT-BPO industry on Indian economy. The three-decade-old Indian IT-BPO industry has had great impact on the Indian economy and society, more than any other related sector, and within a much shorter time frame. Not only has

the industry helped India to emerge as a global force, it has also given a major fillip to the country's growth, helping it to narrow down the several 'divides' that separate its society.

Due to the growth in the domain of information technology and business process outsourcing, life in India has changed. It has transformed an entire generation. Some useful reviews on the growth of the IT-BPO sector in recent years are also analysed in the chapter 3. In the last few decades, BPO has changed the way the world does business. BPO is the fastest growing segment of the Information Technology Enabled Services industry of India. The BPO industry has achieved more than the IT industry achieved in over 20 years, in a short span of time. India has been recognized for almost two decades as a source of expertise and capability in information technology outsourcing. India has won its spurs as the world's outsourcing destination of choice. Currently the country has a commanding share (approximately 56%) of the global outsourcing market. India acquired a share of around 38 percent in the overall BPO market. It is now the world's favoured market for BPO companies. The sector has moved from being only voice-based call centres to data processing and management units, to the current phase; where it is mostly about knowledge gaining and transfer.

The final part of this chapter discusses the Government initiatives towards Indian BPO sector. Acknowledging the growing demand of India as the preferred BPO destinations globally, the Government of India has commenced various initiatives and policy concessions to strengthen the flourishing of the IT enabled outsourcing market. Nasscom has over the years, successfully established the brand 'Made in India' in the global outsourcing market. The Indian BPO industry has undergone a paradigm shift to 'Serve in and for India'. In collaboration with Nasscom, BPO firms are making a concerted effort to get the central and state governments involved in providing improved citizen services, industry friendly policy frameworks, growth subsidies and grants.

India, which has been an unexcelled force in the global BPO domain, has been facing firm competition from several emerging BPO service providers like Philippines, Brazil, Russia, Fiji, South Africa, Mauritius, New Zealand, China, Malaysia, Ireland, Poland, Ghana etc in the recent years. Although, India still retains the number 1 position in the BPO sourcing landscape, Indian BPO industry has to address several challenges in order to retain this pole position in near

future. Hence, the end of the chapter is analyzing some important challenges the industry is facing today.

Thus, it is understood from this chapter that with the sustained growth and perceived stability of the IT-BPOs, one cannot deny the fact that Indian IT-BPO sector has now become an evolution and playing a major role in fueling country's recent economic growth. IT-BPO industries have transformed Indian economy and have served as catalysts for development. The emergence of India as a leading and favourite outsourcing destination has paves the way for tremendous job opportunities for the young populace. Today, its IT-BPO sector is a flourishing bed for young India and one of the highest employment streams in urban India. Significant impact on the lifestyle of the common Indian is seen with the growth of jobs in the outsourcing sector.

Chapter 4 titled "Women Employees in BPO Industry in India" attempts to examine BPO sector in India with special emphasis on women workers. One of the research questions addressed in the study is the impact of the sector on Indian women. In the contemporary world, women have no longer been lagging behind in terms of career development and career goal. It is observed that BPO is one of the sectors, which has witnessed high growth of women participation in recent years. Women give significant contributions to the sector in several ways. This chapter focuses on BPO sector with special emphasis on women workers. The chapter begins with a general discussion on women participation in the industry. Then, the chapter examines gender diversity with reference to the number of women participation in a few leading BPOs. The second part of the chapter tries to analyse the challenges before women employees from both professional and personnel point of view; which includes employee's health problems owing to BPO work culture. The last part consists of an analytical discussion on the initiatives by BPO organisations to address the challenges women face caused by BPO work nature, to accelerate the diversity and inclusion across the industry at large and for recognizing, implementing and supporting woman oriented work policies. The chapter also puts focus on how the industry is handling the important issues of women's safety and security.

Here, the chapter analyses the number of women participation in a few leading IT-BPOs and finds that women make up a considerable proportion of the workforce in the sector at the entry and junior levels. At the same time, though women participation is found quite satisfactory

at the entry level, there is still lack of female involvement across all jobs functions; which indicates fewer women engagement in senior levels than men within many organisations. To get more clarity on this and to examine how are the companies faring in terms of treatment towards female employees in senior position of authority; the number of members of Board of Directors and Executive Officers of few Indian leading IT-BPO companies are collected and analyzed in this chapter.

The chapter moves to the challenges that prevent a dedicated and competent employee to grow within the organisation to a responsible and challenging position. This part examines how dual accountability, child care, requirement of professional travelling, relocation and health issues lead to inadequate women representation at senior and top levels.

Chapter 4 also discusses one of the key challenges of the BPO sector; to improve the number of female members joining the sector, retain them and enable them to become leaders in the industry. In order to do that, it is of vital importance to observe and catch out the obstructions and address them through a structured policy. The efforts undertaken by organisations to get rid of the challenges of women at their workplace are highly impacting and make it possible and easier to build an inclusive workplace. Hence, the final part of the chapter examines the endeavour initiated by the BPOs in nurturing women leadership and women-friendly corporate culture. The several forums and platforms initiated by the sector for the growth and grooming of women employees to the next level of leadership demonstrated the women centric policy in various organisations.

The chapter, at the end, discusses the special attention on the part of the organisations in providing secured transportation and security measures to women employees. The Indian IT-BPO sector is one of the largest employers where over 800,000 women employed across levels and many of them work in the early hours of a day or in the period after midnight. Therefore their security and safety, while commuting, have become critical areas of concern. The BPO sector has always been surrounded by controversies around not being able to offer adequate safety measures for women employees. However, during recent times, transportation is an area where most of the companies in the sector are focusing and has upgraded the same by putting effective efforts on the safety issues of employees.

On the basis of the above discussion and the initiatives taken by the industry for its women workforce in India, the chapter argues that the IT-BPO sector has clearly recognised the contribution of women in the workforce as an influential and empowering factor for the continued development of the industry and has remained fairly gender neutral from the onset, providing equal scope for both men and women. It has been noticed that, acknowledging the immense contribution, potential and increasing significance of this emerging workforce, IT-BPO sector has prepared itself to act as a catalyst in the enlargement of female workers. The industry has taken a lead in adopting best practices in all the possible areas to nurture the growth and strengthen employment of women.

The chapter argues that, apart from finding their employment as a source of income, the BPO women workers consider their job as an opportunity that creates right set of circumstances to make their life better. Along with the large scale of employment, the sector has given more confidence and freedom to Indian women. As the employment in a BPO does not require a higher level of formal education, women of all ages who may not have been working earlier but are educated and have good communication skills can look forward to working in this industry. BPO sector has given them income, exposure and a platform to prove their skill and talent without formal educational qualification and age limit.

The nature of women participation in BPO sector in India is another major issue in this research. The **Chapter 5** of the thesis titled "BPO Women Employees in Pune: A Case Study" extensively deal with this aspect. The nature of women employment in BPOs is examined with the help of a questionnaire and interviews. This part explored the BPO culture and its overall impact on female workers, taking Pune based BPO as model.

This chapter has made an attempt to identify how employment in BPO industry is impacting women and their families in Pune and also to understand and analysis the work environment, constructive and harmful aspects of BPO career, the challenges and opportunities that women experience, gender equality at workplace, the safety, security and family support they gain as a BPO employee. Suggestions are also taken from the participants on how to improve work environment and to increase women participation in this sector.

For reaching a conclusion on women employees in BPO industry in Pune, response to questions of interview and schedules is analyzed in two parts, part I analysis of schedule and part II analysis of interview. On the basis of the survey the chapter argues that, apart from finding their employment as a source of income, the BPO workers consider their job as an opportunity that creates right set of circumstances to make their life better. They are now confident, assured, independent, smart, career oriented and have improved their self-concept, the way they see themselves and believe they are seen by the others. They are not only sharing all household responsibilities and participating at family decision making process but also getting exposure to different types of work assigned and acquiring skills to deal with them competently. Along with the continuation of family and child care or additional personnel responsibilities, they are acquiring an opportunity to interact with international clients or getting exposure to another country. The findings of the survey are presented through graphical figures in this chapter.

The chapter argues that BPO is an industry where a potential and determined woman from any family background without higher formal educational qualification and solely on the basis of her ability, hard work and performance can accomplish the goal of a successful career, financial stability, responsibility, power, respect and self-satisfaction. It is also the right place for those who want to earn money without the desire of career development for some reason.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion of the thesis. This chapter precisely answering the research questions on the basis of the discussions/analyses made in the chapters, sums up the thesis and making some recommendations. The chapter discusses a few challenges (apart from challenges discussed in Chapter 4) faced particularly by women employees in BPOs, which are unique in nature. The chapter also examines the prospects of women workforce in BPOs. Chapter 6 concludes with a few recommendations for making BPO sector more women-friendly and a better workplace.

The list of source materials (both primary and secondary) used in the study is given in the references. Three relevant documents namely, Fact Sheet of IT & BPM Industry, interview questions and questionnaire used for field study/survey etc. are also given as Appendices.