

Chapter -5
FINDINGS
AND
CONCLUSION

This chapter delves into the results and conclusions of the statistical analyses in depth. This chapter is structured according to the order in which the hypotheses were presented. The researcher's conclusions, based on his or her observations and findings, are also summarised in this chapter. This chapter also includes a summary of the researchers' conclusions based on their findings and the results of statistical testing.

5.1 Summary of Statistical Results of the Study

This study explores workplace informal learning and its impact on the skill enhancement of BPO employees. The researcher was able to gather knowledge and opinions from employees about workplace informal learning and its efficacy through a literature review, survey, questionnaire, and interview. After analysing the information/data obtained using appropriate statistical methods, interpretations are made.

It was discovered that workers are conscious of informal learning and have a positive attitude toward it. According to the statistics, all levels of workers have a positive attitude toward workplace informal learning, and lower and middle level employees learn more effectively through informal learning methods. After conducting a chi-square correlation and regression analysis, it is found that current informal workplace learning practices have a substantial positive effect on BPO employees' identified technical and soft skills. Table 5.1 shows the statistical findings of the study.

Table 5.1: Statistical Findings of the Study

STATISTICS	FINDINGS
1.Descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Employees are aware that informal learning takes place at the workplace. <input type="checkbox"/> BPO employees have a positive attitude towards workplace informal learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Employees know the ways through which they learn informally.
2. Chi Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> According to the significance value, there is a significant relationship between informal learning and categorical (employee level) learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Lower-level employees are more influenced by the informal learning taking place at the workplace.
3. Correlation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Correlation Test results show that there are high positive correlations between informal learning (Independent variables) and both technical skills and soft skills. (Dependent variables).

	<input type="checkbox"/> There is no direct correlation between informal learning and personal and organizational barriers.
4. Regression	<input type="checkbox"/> Through the results of the regression test, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted that there is a significant relationship between informal learning ways and the technical and soft skills of BPO employees. <input type="checkbox"/> Informal learning at the workplace positively enhances the technical skills and soft skills of employees. <input type="checkbox"/> Informal learning approaches an individual from all sides and confirms that informal learning is a 360°. <input type="checkbox"/> Employees at various levels preferred various methods of acquiring skills in the workplace. H0: There is no significant impact of informal learning on the technical skills of BPO employees Rejected H1: There is a significant impact of informal learning on the technical skills of BPO employees. Fail to Reject H0: There is no significant impact of informal learning on the soft skills of BPO employees. Rejected H2: There is a significant impact of informal learning on the soft skills of BPO employees. Fail to Reject

Table 5.1, shows the summary of statistical test findings. It depicts the results of different statistical tools applied to achieve the objectives of the study. From descriptive statistics, we get to know the general information of employees working in BPO at the lower, middle, and upper middle levels. The descriptive mean value gives an idea about the employee's attitudes towards workplace informal learning. From the Chi Square test, it is found that there is a difference in the learning patterns of employees working at three different levels. Correlation and regression show that there is a significant positive relation between informal learning methods and the skills enhancement of employees.

5.2 Discussions of the Study

The researcher evaluated the influence of informal learning under different headings and subheads to meet the objectives and address the research questions.

RQ.1. What are the required skills and workplace informal learning ways followed in the BPO sector?

5.2.1 Workplace Informal Learning

Most informal learning methods used in the BPO sector include E-library, allocating time for reading documents and manuals, acknowledging employees' errors or offering space for trial and error, allowing employees to share conversation with other colleagues during tea breaks, short meetings/huddles, buddy-up approach, and offsite meetings. For study, all nine of the above nine ways of informal learning are considered independent variables.

5.2.2 Business Process Outsourcing

The study also revealed important skills that BPO workers need to do their jobs. . The primary skills required to execute their work technically include knowledge of the subject area/domain, analytical skills to analyze data, customer management skills, professional communication skills, and documentation of all files and reports. Employees must have soft skills in addition to technical skills, such as presentation skills, rapid answers to everyday problems, interpersonal skills, managing work, desk, and self at work, and last but not least, ethical skills.

5.2.3 Attitude of BPO Employees Towards Informal Learning

RQ.2. What is BPO workers' attitude toward informal learning in the workplace, and how does it impact the skill enhancement of employees?

Statements are formed and analyzed to determine the attitude of employees working at lower, middle, and upper middle levels towards informal learning practices. The result derived from the descriptive statistics and mean value \bar{x} of all positive statements is greater than ≥ 3.5 and a negative statement is less than ≤ 3.5 . This means that employees are aware of workplace informal learning, which is separate from their formal learning programs. From the results of the test, it is found that employees have a positive attitude towards informal learning practices. Employees believe that their jobs provide them with opportunities to improve their skills while performing their jobs. Employees also agree that casual learning activities help them learn the skills that are needed to do their job efficiently. The result further demonstrates that employees also don't experience any negative effects of informal learning on their learning and on the performance of their respective jobs.

5.2.4 Impact of Informal Learning on Identified Skills of BPO employees

5.2.4.i) Technical Skills

Employees' professional skills are significantly impacted by informal learning. Workplace informal coaching helps employees develop their professional abilities. With a mean value of above 3.5, the descriptive mean value of the statement shows that informal learning methods improve employees' technical capabilities. Professional skills such as subject knowledge, analytical skill, customer handling skill, and communication skill are all improved by informal learning methods.

The results of the correlation test reveal a significant relationship between informal learning methods and technical skills; the significant value is less than 0.05, showing that informal learning and technical skills are linked.

The coefficient value of the correlation between informal learning and technical skills is above .070, which shows a high positive correlation between informal learning and technical skills of employees. A regression test was conducted to determine the impact of informal learning on the technical skills aspect. The findings indicate that informal learning factors have a significant impact on the technical skills of employees. There is positive and significant impact of informal learning on analytical skill, informal learning on documentation skill; informal learning on communication skill, informal learning on customer handling skill and informal learning on domain skill. Among all technical skills, informal learning methods have a highest impact on communication skill with a coefficient value of 0.95.

5.2.4. ii) Soft Skills

It is identified through analysis that informal learning is having a significant impact on the soft skills of employees. Employees' soft skills get enhanced through informal learning. The descriptive figures of the statement show that informal learning methods improve their soft skills also, with a mean value of over 3.5. Findings from the study show that soft skills such as presentation skill, problem-solving skill, self-management skill, interpersonal skill, and ethical skill are enhanced through informal learning factors.

The correlation test results show a positive relationship between informal learning methods and soft skills, with a significant value of less than 0.05 and indicating that there is a significant relationship between informal learning and soft skills. The coefficient value of correlation between informal learning and soft skill is above .070 which shows a high positive correlation.

A regression test was conducted to determine the effect of informal learning on the soft skills dimension. The result shows that informal learning factors have a major effect on workers' soft skills. Informal learning on presentation skills, informal learning on problem-solving skills, informal learning on self-management skills, informal learning on interpersonal skills, and informal learning on ethical skills all have a positive and significant relationship. Informal learning majorly impacts problem-solving skill and the coefficient value is .76.

Informal learning was studied as an independent factor with nine variables divided into two broad categories: self-learning and learning from others. The results are as follows:

5.2.4. iii) Self-Learning & Technical skills

Through the results of the regression test, it is interpreted that **e-library** has a significant impact on domain skill, analytical skill, customer handling skill and communication skill; **trial & error** has a favourable impact on analytical ability and domain skill; **reading manuals/documents** has a significant impact on domain skill, documentation skill, and analytical skill; and **observation** has a significant impact on communication skill and customer handling skill. 0.10 is the lowest coefficient of all the steps. Only the **E-library** has a negative impact on one of the technical skills and the analytical capacity of employees.

5.2.4.iv) Self-Learning & Soft Skills

The results of the regression coefficient matrix show that: **trial & error** have a significant impact on self-management skill and presentation skill; **reading manuals/documents** has a major impact on problem solving skill and ethical skill; and **observation** has a significant impact on ethical skill and self-management skill. The lowest coefficient value among all self-learning and soft skills is 0.10. All the self-learning ways have a positive impact on the soft skills of employees, except for **e-library**. The E-Library has a negative impact on the ethical skills of workers.

5.2.4.vi) Learning from others & Technical skills

Mentoring and coaching have an impact on all identified technical skills; communication skills, customer handling skills, analytical skills, domain skills, and documentation skills; **buddy up and reading manuals** have a significant impact on analytical skills, domain skills, and documentation skills; **huddles** have an impact on customer handling skills, analytical skills, and documentation skills; **conversation with colleagues** help into enhance communication skill, domain skill and documentation skill; **offsite meetings** improves the communication skill and customer handling skill. The lowest coefficient value among all technical skills and learning from others is 0.07.

5.2.4. vii) Learning from other factors and Soft Skills

From the significance value (.005) and coefficient matrix, it is clear that **mentoring and coaching** have a major impact on soft skills such as self-management skill, interpersonal skill, and ethical skills. **Buddy up** helps employees develop all of the identified technical skills, including problem solving skills, self-management skills, inter-personal skills, ethical skills, and presentation skills; **huddles** improve employees' problem solving skills; and **conversation with colleagues** develops employees' self-management skills, interpersonal skills, and presentation skill. The lowest coefficient value among all soft skills and learning from others is 0.07.

5.3 Findings of Other Observations

Aside from the research objectives, the researcher addressed the following other observations about workplace informal learning:

1. Significant barriers that employees face while learning informally.
2. Role of Other participants play a role in assisting employees with their informal learning, or informal learning 360-degree learning.
3. There are differences in learning preferences among employees working at different levels.

5.3.1 Barriers and Informal Learning

Through a correlation test conducted, there was no noticeable relationship between personal barriers and informal learning or organizational barriers and informal learning. The result of the correlation test's significance p value is above ≥ 0.05 , which means employees' personal constraints don't have any major impact while learning informally and organizational conditions also don't pose any hindrance to employees learning informally. Obsequiousness and non-recognition, on the other hand, are factors that prevent workers from learning informally.

5.3.2 Levels of employees and Informal Learning

Using chi-square cross tabulation, the research determines that workers employed at three different ranks have a favorable outlook toward informal learning methods prevalent at work. In contrast to employees employed at the middle and upper middle levels, it has been discovered that employees working at the lower level acquire skills more by informal means.

The study also explored also that which particular way of informal learning is putting significantly impact on which particular level employee's skills enhancement through multiple regression analysis. It is discovered that all informal ways of learning do not have a significant relation with each level employees, each level employees preferred different ways to learn as follows:

Lower Level: E-library, Buddy Up, Mentoring & Coaching and observation

Middle Level: Mentoring & Coaching, Buddy up and Offsite meeting

Upper Middle Level: Mentoring & coaching to juniors, Huddles and Conversation with colleagues.

5.3.3 360° and Informal Learning

The study sought to determine whether informal learning is a 360-degree learning experience or whether informal learning is significantly related to self- and other-workplace participation. It has been discovered through correlation that employees' informal learning is significantly related to their self-efforts, support from seniors, participation of coworkers, training to juniors, dealing with third parties, and handling of customers; thus, informal learning is a 360-learning approach that comes to an individual from various avenues at the workplace. The coefficient value of all factors is above 0.80, which means that there is a high positive correlation between informal learning of employees and participants.

5.4 Findings of the Qualitative Study

The study is based on both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data was collected to support the results of quantitative data. The results of qualitative data were summarized based on participant responses, and it was revealed that workers employed at the lower, middle, and upper middle levels are aware of informal learning opportunities. Through their experience, they confirmed that their technical and soft skills get magnified through the way they participate in informal learning practices. The respondent's interviews are arranged according to the objectives and research questions of the study as follows:

(i)

"Every individual is not at ease in the organization; informal learning assists in making them friendly and at ease with colleagues, work, and the organization. Informal learning is good to know and understand each other, but work should be done with ethics. If too many informal practices were followed, the organization would be unable to achieve its mission and vision. So, I believe there should be a combination of formal and informal learning in the workplace".

(ii)

"According to me, informal learning is better than formal. In informal learning, we can share the right thing in the right manner. If someone makes a mistake, though informally, it's easy to correct. We can build a good team with informal learning practices".

(iii)

"Yes, I support informal learning. Some shortcuts to do work can only be learned through informal meetings or short meetings".

(iv)

"In my opinion, the organizations should introduce more ways to learn informally".

(v)

"One of the things which, I appreciate about informal learning is that it is more open and interactive, which encourages new ideas and the initiation of employees".

(vi)

"As a quality analyst, I do performance analysis on many people and correct them too. The only way I found that an informal approach is the right approach to correct and enhance the skills of employees in a better way".

(vii)

"I have experienced that most of the creative ideas come out when we share our food in a casual way of talking".

(viii)

"There is not much to do in BPO jobs. It is a monotonous kind of job, especially at the executive & associate level. Informal methods and off-line activities aid in maintaining their interest in the job".

(ix)

"I believe that a 10-minute tea & coffee break gives more understanding than a whole presentation given by an expert. Because that 10-minute break gives an employee a chance to talk freely with seniors, experts, and other employees, which can give them more clarity on their doubts. A complete presentation contains what an employee already knows: what is required in natural actual is discussion and practical implications of outcomes".

(x)

"I believe that one-on-one meetings, short meetings, and tea break discussions would help in gaining knowledge and giving bonding time to learn more rather than formal training."

(xi)

"Although an organization provides one-time, costly, and time-consuming formal training. Due to this, organizations nowadays follow an informal learning approach and allocate some marks to this form of learning. As a team leader, I experience that it enhances employees' skills such as problem-solving, communication, task-specific skills, and personality development skills. "

(xii)

"Yes, I support informal learning as a team leader and follow informal learning ways to make employees learn skills. I found a few things that can only be learned through informal ways of learning, like office manners, understanding of organizational culture, tricks to doing work smartly, etc. The way which I observed as the best way among all the informal ways is through offsite meetings, which help to motivate employees to earn more".

(xiii)

"An offsite meeting helps to build good relations among employees, which will help employees to put their work-related problems in front of seniors more easily. In this way, workplace problems faced by employees can be solved immediately".

(xiv)

"Projects are useful to increase the existing skill levels of employees, such as analysis, communication, reporting, etc".

(xv)

"Sharing food and ideas gives immense knowledge about the process".

(xvi)

"Informal ways give timely recognition of work in front of mentors and management, which gives motivation to employees to work better".

(xvii)

"Day to day learning practices can be informal too. Having a chat about a process or interesting article with your team members can be a regular learning opportunity".

(xviii)

"Involving in various community activities build a broader perspective and develop extra skills and knowledge of employees".

(xix)

"Purposeful short meetings or conversations help to solve day to day problems on time".

(xx)

"Informally, I can ask or discuss the same question with multiple people and check how many people are on the same page, because we do not mention every piece of information in a document, some things resolution depend on logic or current situation".

(xxi)

"Meeting with a customer and learning new ideas. Daily new things to learn practically. Tries new ideas learned from experience".

(xxii)

"I have no idea about informal learning, but the ways in which I have to learn at the workplace give me an amount of knowledge to perform the task, and these ways are not pre-scheduled or pressurised by seniors to learn".

(xxiii)

"I am a new joiner and am presently in the learning phase through my seniors, not have much idea about all this. The organization is good and supportive in all work".

(xxiv)

"From formal learning, I get to learn about the process and software. But from day-to-day learning activities, which are part of my daily routine job, help me to develop myself professionally as well as individually".

(xxv)

"I learn most when I give training to my juniors at their desk, without following any agenda or schedule. I also feel that juniors and others also benefit when I do work out loud".

The interview’s narratives are summarized on the basis of their common views about informal learning:

Table 5.2: Summary of Interview Narratives

Levels	Views of Employees	Awareness of Informal Learning Practices
Lower Level	Informal learning plays a vital role in developing a person individually and professionally.	Yes, employees working at different levels are aware of the ways of learning that are informal in nature.
Middle Level	Informal learning helps employees perform tasks successfully. Informal is the right way to correct subordinates’ mistakes and enhance their skills.	
U Middle Level	Free discussion with colleagues fosters creativity and makes jobs more creative and interesting.	

Table 5.2, shows the summary of all the interview responses of employees working at lower, middle, and upper middle levels. In the interview, employees were also asked to rate the informal learning on a scale of 1 to 10 and calculate the average. It is found that the lower-level rate the informal learning from a learning point of view, 9 out of 10; the middle level gave 8 out of 10; and the upper middle level also gave 8 out of 10.

5.5 Conclusion of the Study

The study's findings support the constructivism theory (theoretical framework) proposed by Jean Piaget, known as one of constructivism's first theorists, and indicate that humans create knowledge through the interaction of their experiences and ideas. His view of constructivism is the inspiration for radical constructivism due to his idea that the individual is at the centre of the knowledge creation and acquisition process. Lev Vygotsky's theory, on the other hand, has a core emphasis on the social facets of information acquisition. He claims that the only way to learn is to communicate with others. Through the act of working with others, learners create an atmosphere of shared meanings with their peers (Bekki Brau, 2020).

The study's findings confirmed that people build their understanding through self-study and interactions with others. Their learning, awareness, and abilities grow as a result of their participation and conversation with others.

Based on observations and an analysis of the literature, workplace preparation is critical for the sustainability of workers and organizations (De Gerus A.P 1998). According to the available literature analysis and research findings, informal learning is an emerging method for workplace learning. If various researchers on workplace learning were asked to name the most typical feature of workplace learning, most of them would probably say informality. The pioneers (Billetta , 2002; Ellstrom, 2001) of workplace learning research mentioned that the workplace environment and employees' willingness to learn would lead employees to learn at the workplace.

According to the report, the essence of an individual's occupational learning involvement is determined by both the degree to which the workplace offers resources for such participation and the extent to which individuals want to take advantage of these opportunities. It depends both on the extent to which the workplace provides opportunities for such participation and the extent to which individuals choose to avail themselves of these opportunities (Felstead, A., et. al., 2010).

Researchers observed that there is an increase in demand for a skilled workforce as technology changes rapidly and retirement is also compulsory, making informal learning a very important tool for workers (De Grip A.)

The study revealed that informal learning occurs at work by default and that this is aided by how the organization has structured it (Olsen, D. S., & Tiainen, T. 2018). Employees are aware of the networking opportunities at work that can help them improve their performance, and they recognize that their position allows them to learn on the job. Informal learning approaches are frequently considered to be a component of BPO employees' day-to-day responsibilities. Employees learn through sharing their expertise and concerns with others during their daily activities. At tea breaks, huddles, offsite meetings, and while collaborating with a friend, employees freely exchange facts and problems with co-workers.

Through the survey, researchers came to know that employees required both technical skills and soft skills to carry out their jobs. The most important technical skills required by all three levels of BPO employees are domain skill, analytical skill, documentation skill, customer handling skill and communication skill. The study summarized that informal learning practices followed by BPO employees have a positive impact on technical skills enhancement and the BPO sector facilitates the employees' learning informally, which is more flexible than informal learning.

The informal ways of learning through which employees' technical skills are mostly enhanced are mostly E-Library, Trial& Error, Observations, Buddy Up and Conversation with Colleagues. The study concludes that analytical skill, communication skill and customer handling skills are the main technical skills that get enhanced more from informal learning methods.

Presentation skill, problem-solving skill, inter-personal skill, self-management skill, and ethical skill are all important soft skills needed to be pursued by all three levels of BPO workers. There is a positive impact of informal learning on the soft skills of BPO employees, and these are majorly enhanced by huddles, buddy Up, mentoring & coaching, conversation with colleagues, and offsite meetings. The study concludes that major soft skills which are impacted more by informal learning ways are interpersonal skill, problem solving skill and self-management skill.

Altogether, all informal ways of learning, which exist at the workplace, help employees more than formal learning to enhance their efficiency and capability by developing both technical and soft skills (Grip., 2015).

The study examines the major personal and organizational impediments faced by BPO employees while learning informally. From statistical results and interviews, it is discovered that employees do not experience major barriers to learning informally, but employees sometimes get demotivated to learn further and grow due to issues like fawning and non-recognition of informal learning.

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The study also observed that all three level employees are able to enhance their technical & soft skills through informal learning methods. **In comparison to the middle and upper middle, lower-level employees acquire more learning in informal ways.** Lower level employees learn primarily through the e-library, buddy up, observation, and mentoring and coaching; middle level employees learn primarily through mentoring and coaching, buddy up, and offsite meetings; and upper middle level employees participate in mentoring and coaching, huddles, and conversations with colleagues.

The researcher concludes the whole study in one line:
"Informal learning is for the people, to the people, and by the people."