

Mental Health and Well-Being at a Workplace

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Abstract

The employees of the industrialised economy spent more than half of their days within their workplace which leads to a higher influence of the workplace-related aspects on the mental well-being of the workers. The disability and the affected mental health of the employees result in higher absenteeism, early retirement, greater turnover as well as alleviated productivity. Further, the eruption of the pandemic has contributed to the adversity of mental health issues amongst employees due to the increasing layoffs, job insecurity and the enforcement of social isolation. This research is intended to probe the changes in the mental well-being of workers before and after the Covid-19. The primary qualitative methodology has been adopted in this research for carrying out the interviews with the 10 managers working in the MNCs of the UK that is selected through convenience-based sampling. The results have demonstrated that the various factors involving the external conditions of the workplace, interpersonal conflicts, work-related stress and pressure along with the negative work culture as well as the unsupportive organisations implied to be too adverse for the wellbeing of the workers. In addition to that, the companies have experienced major obstacles in addressing the mental health issues as Covid-19 increased the number of affected employees with mental health illnesses.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Chapter One: Introduction	6
1.1. Background.....	6
1.2. Problem Statement	7
1.3. Aims and Objectives	7
1.4. Research Questions	8
1.5. Rationale of Research	8
1.6. Structure of Research	9
Chapter Two: Literature Review	11
2.1. Introduction.....	11
2.2. Mental Health and Wellbeing	11
2.3. Significance of Adequate Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Organisation.....	12
2.4. Factors Affecting the Wellbeing and Mental Health of the Employees	13
2.4.1. Physical Working Conditions.....	13
2.4.2. Unsupportive Organisational Culture	13
2.4.3. Adverse Interpersonal Relationships	14
2.4.4. Lack of Organisational Support.....	14
2.4.5. Inadequate Work-Life Stability	14
2.4.7. Job Insecurity	15
2.6. Repercussion of Adverse Wellbeing and Mental Health of Employees at Workplace	15
2.7. Influence of Pandemic on Employees' Wellbeing and Mental Health	16
2.8. Approaches of Organisations for Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Workers	17
2.9. Obstacles Encountered by the Companies in Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of the Workforces	18

2.10. Theoretical Underpinning	19
2.10.1. Affective Events Theory	19
2.10.2. Self-Determination Theory	20
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	22
3.1. Introduction.....	22
3.2. Research Philosophy.....	22
3.3. Research Approach.....	23
3.4. Research Design.....	23
3.5 Data Collection Method.....	24
3.6. Sampling Technique	24
3.7. Sample Size.....	25
3.8. Data Analysis Technique	25
3.9. Ethical Considerations	25
3.10. Research Limitations	26
Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion	27
4.1. Introduction.....	27
4.2. Thematic Analysis	27
4.2.1. Theme 1: Ascertainin g the Factors Distressing the Wellbeing and Mental Health of Personnel at their Workplaces.....	28
4.2.2. Theme 2: Evaluating the Behaviours and the Attitudes of Workers at the Workplace While Suffering From Mental Health Illness.....	31
4.2.3. Theme 3: Investigating the Influence of Pandemic on Mental Health of the Workforce	33
4.2.4. Theme 4: Gauging the Approaches of Organisations for Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Workers.....	34

4.2.5. Theme 5: Determining the Obstacles Encountered by the Businesses in Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of the Workforce Subsequent to the Pandemic	36
4.3. Discussion	37
Chapter Five: Conclusion	39
5.1 Introduction.....	39
5.2 Summary of Key Findings	39
5.3 Conclusion	40
5.4 Recommendations	41
5.5 Future Implications.....	42
References	43

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background

In light of the study conducted by Cangiano, and Parker (2015), it has been accentuated that the employees of industrialised countries spend almost 90% of their day indoors. As full-time employees pose to spend 33% of working hours at their workplaces, which results in a higher influence on the respective workplace. In line with that, the study of Lizano (2015), elucidated that the physical environment of the workplace such as the lighting and other working conditions impacts the mental health physical as well as physical health of the workers. The adverse influence on the well-being and mental health of the employees, consequences in the alleviation of productivity, escalation of absenteeism as well as the error rates along with their capacity to work. Further, Williams, and Smith (2016), emulated that mental sicknesses are the primary cause of disability in certain high-income economies; almost 40% of their disability is predicated on detrimental mental health. The same study has highlighted that the report of the World Health Organisation revealed that the 13.7% of disability pertains to be the result of depression amongst individuals. The adverse mental health issues are then attributed to alcohol disorders, bipolar disorders and schizophrenia with the rate of 6.2%, 2% and 2% respectively.

Moreover, the study of Holman, Johnson, and Connor (2018) iterated that the disability and the affected mental health of the employees result in higher absenteeism, early retirement, greater turnover as well as alleviated productivity. The affected mental health of the employees is not only adverse for the individual but the organisation in terms of their competitiveness, as well as the higher economic cost. It has been recapitulated by the study of Roberts et al. (2019), that the economic cost of the affected employees' wellbeing and mental health to the employers of the UK tend to be reported as £26 billion every year, which encompass almost £1035 for every worker in the workforce. In addition to that, Foster, Cuzzillo, and Furness (2018) have reflected that the economic cost of adverse mental health for businesses accounted for £8.4 billion each year in terms of sickness absence, £15.1 billion every year owing to the alleviated productivity along with £2.4 billion for replacing the employees per year.

In line with that, the eruption of the pandemic has contributed to the adversity of mental health issues amongst employees due to the sense of isolation as well as loneliness owing to the enforcement of mobility restrictions (Shipman, Burrell, and Pherson, 2021). The study of

Carnevale, and Hatak (2020), indicated that the mobility restrictions and quarantine regulations have resulted in the emotional instability of the individuals which provoked their risky conduct as well as behaviours. The occurrence of Covid-19 poses its influence on accessing healthcare facilities and urgent consultations which affected their quality of living. It has been discussed by the study by Giorgi et al. (2020), that the economic recession amidst the pandemic highly contributed to the unemployment of the employees which led to stress, depression, anxiety as well as psychotic disorders. The insecurity in terms of employment loss and isolation along with the lack of management's support has deteriorated the well-being of the employees by increasing the stress as well as posing an adverse impact on their motivation.

1.2.Problem Statement

The mental health issues of the employees have been increasing over the period as the external environment of the organisations is being neglected. The increasing stress, job insecurity, the working conditions such as the lighting of the workplace, ineffective leadership, incompliance of the acquired skills with the required skillsets of the job along with the interpersonal relationship has been evidenced to be the crucial factors affecting the well-being and mental health of employees. The neglected factors have influenced the employees to develop a sense of disesteem in them owing to the lack of support from the end of management (Manganelli et al. 2018). However, Covid-19 has been revealed to affect the mental well-being of the employees and resulted in a higher detrimental impact on their mental stability, productivity as well as personal relationships. Despite the interventions imposed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on ensuring the well-being of the employees in their workplace by fostering the provision of opportunities for their empowerment along with alleviating the barriers to their employment, the adverse mental health among them is increasing (Stuber et al. 2021). These respective increasing cases have indicated that the major factors distressing the mental health of employees are remained unaddressed and explored.

1.3. Aims and Objectives

This corresponding research has proceeded to intend to gauge the mental health as well as the well-being of the employees at their workplace before and after Covid-19. Further, this research has delved into the subsequent objectives of the research:

- To ascertain the factors distressing the wellbeing and mental health of the personnel at their workplace.
- To investigate the behaviours and the attitudes of workers at the workplace while suffering from mental health illness.
- To examine the approaches of organisations for supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of workers.
- To determine the obstacles encountered by the businesses in addressing the mental health concerns of the workforce after the pandemic.
- To propose recommendations for fortifying the mental health of human resources and escalating the efficiency in the companies.

1.4. Research Questions

This research has been addressing the research objectives with the following research questions:

- What are the factors distressing the wellbeing and mental health of the personnel at their workplace?
- What are the behaviours and attitudes of workers at the workplace while suffering from mental health illness?
- What is the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of the workers?
- What are the organisational means accessible to fostering the well-being and mental health of the personnel?
- What are the obstacles encountered by the businesses in addressing the mental health concerns of the workforce after the pandemic?
- What are the recommendations for fortifying the mental health of human resources and escalating the efficiency of the companies?

1.5. Rationale of Research

The study of Carolan, Harris, and Cavanagh (2017), elucidated that the work environment and the working conditions of the workplace have a higher influence on the mental health as well as the well-being of the personnel, which then affect their physical health. Following that, the WHO has reported that untreated mental health disorders result in disability and morbidity across the globe (CDC, 2019). In line with that, the post-pandemic crisis has increased the cases of escalated

mental health disorders which consequences the lower productivity, higher absenteeism and turnover rate.

With regards to that, various research has been conducted on highlighting issues on the well-being and mental health of the employees in the workforce, however, the context of physical working conditions such as lighting remained neglected. In addition to that, the studies highlighting the influence of covid-19 are entirely based on mental health aspects of healthcare workers (Greenberg et al. 2021; Mukhtar, 2020; Vizheh et al. 2020). There has been no research, which is exploring well-being and mental health in the place of work by comparing the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic eras. Therefore, this research has been conducted for highlighting the well-being as well as mental health of employees in their workplace before and after Covid-19.

1.6. Structure of Research

This respective research has been comprised of five following crucial chapters reflecting the steps undertaken for the completion of this research.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter of the introduction encompasses the background, problem statement, aims, objectives and research questions along with the rationale of conducting this research for highlighting the extensive insights relating to the well-being and mental health of the employees in the workplace.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The chapter on literature review entails the review of the pre-existing relevant literature from the esteemed research journal, papers and books for illustrating the theoretical evidence concerning to mental health of employees in the workplace.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The chapter on methodology highlights the research designs and approaches adopted for proceeding with this research to validate the credibility of this research's findings.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

The chapter on findings delves into the interpretation of the collected data for devising substantial results, after that, the results are triangulated with the prior research findings to augment the validity and reliability of the research.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The final chapter of the conclusion summarises the outcomes of this respective research in conjunction with proposing the recommendations and future implications predicated on the results.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The chapter of the literature review sustains the substantial stance as it delves into the review of pre-existing literature relevant to the research area. The literature review offers extensive insights on the factors and several aspects relating to the research area, which contributes to the enhancement of peer reviewers' knowledge. This respective chapter of the literature review has been designed for reflecting the comprehensive interrelated patterns and aspects of the well-being and mental health of the personnel in their organisations. With regards to that, this section illustrates the conception of mental health and wellbeing, which is followed by the exploration of the significance of effective mental health of workforces in the workplace. After that, the role of job security and job satisfaction in enhancing the mental health of employees has been gauged along with the factors influencing their mental health. Furthermore, the repercussions of the detrimental mental health have been evaluated followed by the organisational approaches in its response. Moreover, the influence of Covid-19 on employees' well-being along with the challenges faced by the organisations while confronting the employees' mental health disorders has been incorporated. In addition to that, the theoretical framework has been included for augmenting the value of this respective section, which encompasses the implication of affective events theory and the self-determination theory.

2.2. Mental Health and Wellbeing

It has been elucidated by the study by McManus et al. (2016), that mental health tends to illustrate a state of well-being in which the individuals manage the stressors affecting their productivity and potential as well as their contribution to society. The mental health of the individuals involves their emotional, social as well as psychological well-being, which influences their stance towards undertaking the actions in their everyday activities. The study of Williams, Dingle, and Clift (2018), accentuated that mental health reflects the capability of individuals to handle stress and devise decisions in particular situations. The persistently low mental well-being of the individuals potentially results in the instigation of critical mental health problems.

In line with that, the report of WHO (2018), has emulated that mental health alludes to the essential as well as the integral components of health which reinforce the manner and approaches of the people towards handling their issues. The adequate health of the individuals involves their

social, mental as well as physical well-being, which defines their individual and collective capability to interact, think along with living their lives. The study of Jensen, and Bonde (2018), asserted the notion that mental health has been affected by the various factors which result in the determined mental health of the people along with their affected approach towards life. In addition to that, the enforcement of adequate measures for promoting the well-being of the people has been ensured by the World Health Organisation.

2.3. Significance of Adequate Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Organisation

The study of Robertson et al. (2015), iterated that the mental health of the workers tends to be crucial for the organisations to assess their overall health as the adverse mental health as well as the workplace stressors reflect their contribution to the physical illness involving cardiovascular conditions, diabetes and hypertension. Mental health refers to be substantial as it enables individuals to grow and develop their emotional stability along with social, mental as well as intellectual stability, which leads to economic and social development. Further, it has been recapitulated by the study of Memish et al. (2017), that mental health problems are evidenced to be prevailing in the workplace, which poses a potentially adverse influence on organisational productivity, workers' engagement, and work performance and the social welfare systems. The poor mental health followed by the mental disorders results in exhaustion and burnout among the employees leading to issues in their personal as well as professional lives.

With regards to the poor mental health of the employees in their workplace, the study of Wahlbeck (2015), claimed that mental health concerns are evidenced to be the cause of higher turnover rates. Almost 30% to 40% of sickness absence of employees are reported to be due to mental illness, particularly in the UK. Furthermore, the adequate mental health of the employees is posited to be significant for organisations as poor mental health adversely influences absenteeism, the productivity of employees along with the profitability of the firms. It has been endorsed by the study of Giorgi et al. (2015), that along with their adverse influence, the economic cost of the mental instability of employees implies to be escalated owing to the affected morale of the employees. Besides that, the affected well-being and mental health of the employees cost the organisation to experience the distorted daily functioning of the personnel along with their ineffective communication within the workforce.

In alignment with that, the study of Barry et al. (2019), elucidated that it is deemed a prerequisite for organisations to ensure employee wellbeing and mental health for enhancing their job performance as well as productivity. An employee with greater well-being tends to be more creative and pose higher engagement along with their physical as well as cognitive capabilities to yield extensive innovativeness in terms of their work. Furthermore, this respective notion has been backed by the study of Levecque et al. (2017), which indicates that poor mental health followed by depression disturbs the cognitive as well as physical abilities of the employees to perform a respective task by 20%; consequences in the alleviation of the cognitive performance with the rate of 35%.

2.4. Factors Affecting the Wellbeing and Mental Health of the Employees

The prevalence of disturbed well-being and mental health of employees has been reported and increased over the period, which is influenced by the following factors:

2.4.1. Physical Working Conditions

The study of Colarelli et al. (2016), reflected that the physical working conditions of the workplace highly influence the well-being of the employees as a conducive environment of organisation boosts the flexibility as well as the comfort of the employees. The higher comfort and flexibility of the employees contribute to their motivation and commitment to perform the task effectively. In line with that, the study of Boubekri et al. (2020), underlined that the lighting of the workplace poses a potential influence as brighter lighting stimulates the emotions of employees, which urge them to yield higher efficiency. In contrast to that, the dim lighting within the organisation causes stress on the eyes, which exposed the employees to drowsiness as well as alleviates a sense of motivation. Conclusively, it can be inferred that the physical working conditions collectively assure concentration, mobility as well as physical and sensory association with the specified work roles to boost employee engagement.

2.4.2. Unsupportive Organisational Culture

The organisational culture implies being substantial for motivating, encouraging as well as devising their behaviours and attitudes within the workplace. Bronkhorst et al. (2015), accentuated that, the organisational culture with its emphasis on open communication urges the employees to remain engaged with their workplace. In line with that, the company that lacks the appropriate focus on providing feedback, recognition and reward to the employees tends to experience a lower

satisfaction level of the personnel along with alleviated performance owing to its impact on their wellbeing. The organisational culture where employees do not feel valued and report prejudicial practices reflects an unhealthy work environment, which affects their organisational commitment and wellbeing (Huhtala, and Feldt, 2016).

2.4.3. Adverse Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships are posited to have a considerable role in influencing the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce as they can contribute to increasing and decreasing the job stressors based on the strength of the respective relationship. Positive interpersonal relationships with colleagues result in the alleviation of stress and enhance physical healing along with mental wellbeing (Zhang et al. 2014). However, Chu (2017), emulated that inadequate interpersonal relationships consequences in workplace conflict as well as violence, which entails social rejection as well as rudeness towards the employees within the workplace. The workplace conflicts then influence the well-being of employees due to the higher level of stress associated with the work complexity and adverse relationships.

2.4.4. Lack of Organisational Support

The organisational support from the end of management devises the motivation and commitment of the employees towards their duties as well as the organisation. The organisational support has been pertinent for alleviating the conflicts faced by the employees in terms of lack of balance in family roles as well as the organisational roles (Julià et al. 2013). The adequate level of organisational support empowers the employees to uphold the positive exchange between the family and work domains. Similar to that, the lack of support from management contributes to the development of dissatisfaction and stress, which then results in exhaustion and other mental health issues in the long run (Johnson et al. 2018).

2.4.5. Inadequate Work-Life Stability

Work-life stability implies to be a crucial aspect of maintaining a healthy work environment, which alleviates the stress as well as burnout levels amongst the employees. An adequate work-life balance helps employees to remain productive as well as creative to yield higher performance. A positive work-life balance upholds a considerable influence on maintaining the well-being and mental health of employees that maximise their efficiency (Lunau et al. 2014). In contradiction to that, the lack of work-life balance adversely affects the social as well as personal

lives of the employees along with their professional lives, which elevates their stress level and burnout. In addition to that, this prolonged stress contributes to the development of chronic stress which then consequences in mental health illnesses involving anxiety and depression (Mendis, and Weerakkody, 2017).

2.4.6. Performance Pressure and Work-related Stress

The unrealistic goals on the job performance of the employees along with the incompletion with the desired skills of the job with the acquired skillsets of employees results in work-related pressure. The extensive work-related pressure adversely influences the mental health and wellbeing of the personnel, which results in an elevated level of risks pertaining to burnout, anxiety, substance usage as well as depression (Ratnawat, and Jha, 2014).

2.4.7. Job Insecurity

Job insecurity lowers the self-esteem of the employees and poses a detrimental impact on their organisational commitment and job satisfaction, which then increases their intention to leave the organisation. The higher job insecurity severely affects the physical as well as the mental health of the employees, which decreases their quality of work and performance (Llosa et al. 2018).

2.6. Repercussion of Adverse Wellbeing and Mental Health of Employees at Workplace

The higher stress level, depression and anxiety due to the affecting factors cause challenges for the employees to experience adverse mental health. The affected mental health and poor maintenance of the employee well-being transition the behaviours as well as attitudes of the employees towards the organisation (Ellis, Casey, and Krauss, 2017). In line with that, the study of Geldart et al. (2018), accentuated that the attitudes of the employees with mental health disorders do not only affect the organisations but also their co-workers due to aggression. The employees challenged with mental health issues tend to pose their aggression in terms of higher anger issues and workplace violence. It has been endorsed by the study of Brief, and George (2020), that the attitudes as well as behaviours of the workforce transition with the increasing extent of mental health adversity and results in losing motivation. The lack of motivation reflects their less commitment and increasing burnout with poor timekeeping, which eventually contributes to the escalation of the employee turnover. The higher turnover rate of the employees costs the higher expense to the management in terms of the economic costs of replacing the existing employees.

With regards to that, the study of Rönblad et al. (2019), reiterated that the changes in the attitudes and behaviours of the employees intrude on the workplace relationships of the personnel with their coworkers. The tensions and conflicts among the employees tend to advance disciplinary problems within the workplace. In addition to that, the affected attitude is then indicative of the poor relationships with the clients, which is reflected through the unresponsiveness as well as impoliteness towards them. The employees facing mental health issues due to the specified factors then yield ineffective performance, which compromises the profitability of the organisation along with their reputation (Kowalski, and Loretto, 2017).

2.7. Influence of Pandemic on Employees' Wellbeing and Mental Health

It has been explicated by the research of Bufquin et al. (2021), that the sudden outbreak of Covid-19 and its adverse repercussions increases the stress as well as fear amongst the population and the global authorities. The mobility restrictions, social distancing, isolation, and the restriction of the businesses' operations in accordance with the standard operating procedure (SOPs) of Covid-19 have developed several stressors for individuals. Vanhaecht et al. (2021), accentuated that the shortage of the essentials amidst Covid-19 involving medical masks, sanitisers as well as the shortage of toilet papers escalated the behaviour related to anxiety and stress amongst the individuals. This respective notion indicates that Covid-19 not only exposed the population to risks pertaining to physical well-being but similarly to mental health issues, which consequences in a higher rate of suicide across the rate.

In line with that, the study of Talevi et al. (2020), iterated that the pandemic induced panic and the restricted business operations had led the employers to lay off their employees in order to control the economic cost of the pandemic. The increasing rate of lay-offs and the failure of the companies have developed stress pertaining to job insecurity as well as the financial crisis. These corresponding circumstances had contributed to the impairment of the mental health as well as the well-being of the employees. It has been endorsed by the study of Chen (2020), that employees tend to be stressed during Covid-19 due to their safety threats and relative risks, social exclusion, job insecurity as well as financial loss. These respective stressors affected the mental well-being of the employees, which then resulted in persistent stress contributing to depression and anxiety. The study of Yu, Park, and Hyun (2021), reiterated that the uncertainty in the surrounding regarding the relaxation into the restriction against Covid-19 along with the revival of business

operations led the employees to feel intense exhaustion, insomnia, depression, poor concentration and anxiety.

However, the study of Hamouche (2020), reflected that the recommencement of the business operations within the restrictions facilitated the companies to adopt teleworking for mitigating the concerns relating to job insecurity. The business operations and the resumption of employee activities through remote working had contributed to alleviating the financial crisis of the individuals along with improving their quality of living. Conversely, Liu, Xu, and Ma (2021), emulated that telecommuting effectively alleviated the risk of exposure to Covid-19 along with offering higher flexibility to the employees, however, the social isolation increased the complexity of the tasks and the organisational activities. Teleworking has started affecting the psychological well-being of the employees as well owing to their inability to adopt the remote working culture along with the social isolation.

2.8. Approaches of Organisations for Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Workers

With regards to the increasing mental health issues amongst the employees of the organisations, WHO has enforced the regulations to comply with the key four steps for ensuring the wellbeing of the employees. The first step delves into the determination of the mental health issues within the workforce, which requires extensive comprehension of the prevalence of specified issues. This respective step has urged organisations and governments to identify the critical factor pertaining to increasing workplace stress and alleviating productivity.

The second step involves the development of the relevant policies with the primary objective of ensuring the well-being of the employees along with the adherence to the organisational vision as well as mission. This respective step contributes to the process of development of strategies, which is implied to be the third step. The strategies for implementing the devised policies are then examined for ascertaining the timelines as well as the processes required for its effective practice within the organisations. In addition to that, the final step gauges the implementation as well as the evaluation of the policies in compliance with the interests of all stakeholders in order to guarantee the wellbeing of employees along with the organisations (World Health Organization and Funk, 2005).

In line with the local organisational approaches for supporting the well-being of employees, it can be stated that offering them flexibility, inclusivity as well as a platform for open communication within the workforce contributes to the development of feeling valued in them (Doku et al. 2020). It has been emphasised by the study of Davenport et al. (2016), that the organisation is adopting different practices for fostering the mental wellbeing of the employees along with integrating a positive work environment. The maintenance of a positive work environment by inclusivity and diversity within the workforce followed by the establishment of the communication channels in the organisation implies being effective in supporting the mental health as well as emotional wellbeing of employees.

With regards to that, the study of Matthews, Gerald, and Jessup (2021), elucidated that several organisations have been practising the employee assistance programme (EAP) for supporting mental wellbeing, which enables the employees to access mental health professionals through phone or in-person appointment. The companies are posing a higher inclination towards building mental health awareness within the workforce for easing the challenges faced by the employees along with maintaining confidentiality. In addition to this, the study of Buselli et al. (2021), highlighted that the organisations are actively devising training programmes for the employees pertaining to stress management along with enhancing the resilience to adopt the changes. These respective measures by the organisations are revealed effective for ensuring the inclusive culture and flexibility within the organisation along with developing the awareness pertaining to mental health issues as well as the wellbeing of the employees.

2.9. Obstacles Encountered by the Companies in Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of the Workforces

In the light of the research conducted by Greenberg et al. (2020), it has been iterated that mental health disorders are neglected and obscured due to the stigma and the patterns practised by society. The influencing factors include the public stigma toward the mental health disorder along with the self-stigma of employees associated with the mental illness. The study of Blake et al. (2020), reflected that employee tends to hide their mental health illness owing to the discriminatory as well as attitudes of society towards the particular illness, which exposed them to the feeling of being threatened. In contradiction to that, several employees uphold the self-stigma concerning their mental health issues, which stimulates them to exhibit negative behaviour towards themselves

along with internalised shame. In line with that, the study of Pollock et al. (2020), accentuated that, these feelings of threat and stigma result in the reluctance of employees to participate in the programmes pertaining to mental wellbeing. The employees demonstrate their lack of interest and participation in the training and programmes organised by the management, which results in the incapability of attaining the desired results.

With regards to the other challenges, the study of Ehrlich et al. (2019), emulated that the lack of managerial expertise to respond to the mental health issues of the employees has been a crucial challenge for organisations. The gap in the managerial expertise and competence in compliance with the requirements of the mental well-being of the employees leads the organisations to be exposed to higher economic costs. This respective gap urges the organisations to initially develop the insights and competence of management to identify the mental health issues and their counteractions at the primary stages (Dimoff, and Kelloway, 2019).

2.10. Theoretical Underpinning

2.10.1. Affective Events Theory

The Affective Events Theory had been presented by Weiss and Cropanzano in the year 1996 for determining the moods as well as the emotions that stimulate job satisfaction and job performance (Cropanzano, Dasborough, and Weiss, 2017). The affective events theory has been predicated on the notion that the six specified emotions of the employees are influenced by the events at the workplace. The six emotions involving joy, fear, surprise, anger, sadness and love of the employees are affected by the workplace events, which affect their job satisfaction as well as job performance. The respective theory highlights the interconnectedness of internal influences of the employees with their reactions in accordance with the events occurring in the specified work setting, which poses a negative and positive influence on the productivity as well as the performance of employees (Bakker, 2015). Further, the internal influences of the employees entail the emotions, cognitions and mental health of the employees, which strive for their engagement level as well as the organisation's commitment.

In line with that, the theory entails the emphasis on the explanation of the affective work behaviours encompassing the emotion and moods of the employees. Along with that, cognitive-based behaviours tend to be adequate forecasters of the job satisfaction and productivity of the employees (Ilies, Aw, and Pluut, 2015). The study of Ashkanasy, and Dorris (2017), endorsed the

notion that the work events within the workplace imply to be distinguishable in terms of negative inducing incidents as well as positive inducing stimuli named as hassles and uplifts respectively. These two respective emotional events in the workplace pose a substantial psychological impact on the mental health and job satisfaction of the employees which results in long-lasting internal reactions involving the influence on mental health, emotion and cognition.

With regards to that, Hunter, Clark, and Carlson (2019), highlighted that the demands of the job, emotional labour, lack of alignment between the employees' skillsets and the job requirements, work environment as well as interpersonal relationships influence the reactions and well-being of the employees. The poor emotional, physical and mental health has been evidenced to be a consequence of negative emotions emerging from the adverse impact at the workplace. Conclusively, it can be stated that the mental health of the employees has highly relied on the events within the workplace and their emotions in its response.

2.10.2. Self-Determination Theory

The self-determination theory (SDT) had been presented by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the year 1985 with the notion that employees tend to be motivated to grow when their three innate psychological needs are fulfilled. The focus of this respective theory has been high on the fulfilment of the needs involving autonomy, connection and competence, which stimulates self-determination amongst the workforce (Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan, 2017). The study of Adams, Little, and Ryan (2017), recapitulated that the attainment of competence, autonomy and connection within the workplace augments the motivation of the employees as they feel valued and pose effective outcomes. In line with that, the extrinsic as well as the intrinsic motivation are evidenced to be increased by the attainment of autonomy within the job role. The autonomy and the augmented level of connection are indicative of the job satisfaction and motivation of the employees which contributes to the enhancement of the well-being as well as the mental health of employees. The study of Ryan, and Deci (2017), further accentuated that the acquisition of autonomy, competence and connection tend to be substantial for offering the employees satisfaction along with extensive opportunities to foster their wellbeing and mental health.

2.11. Chapter Summary

The well-being and mental health of the employees refer to be affected owing to the operations of their workplace and other factors. In this chapter, mental health and well-being along

with their significance have been discussed, which illustrated that adequate mental health ensures the higher engagement and productivity of the employees. The physical working conditions, unsupportive organisational culture, adverse interpersonal relationships, lack of organisational support, job insecurity, inadequate work-life balance as well as work-related stress have been revealed to be the factors affecting the mental health of the personnel. In line with that, it has been reflected that the detrimental mental health of employees posits an adverse influence on the physical health of employees. Along with that, it results in higher dissatisfaction, lack of motivation, aggression as well as the productivity and engagement of employees, which lead to the affected profitability of the organisations.

In addition to that, the influence of the Pandemic on the well-being of the workers has been gauged which indicated that the job insecurity and higher lay-offs adversely affected their mental health and results in persistent stress. Moreover, the organisational approaches for supporting the mental health of employees have been examined, followed by the investigation of challenges encountered by the organisations in confronting the mental health illness of employees. Finally, the review has been supported by the theoretical underpinning encompassing the self-determination theory and affective events theory, which has highlighted the interconnection of the workplace events with the response of employees along with its influence on their wellbeing.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The methodology chapter upholds the substantial stance as it demonstrates the adopted methods and designs for proceeding with the research in order to advance the credibility of this respective research. Further, the methodology highlights the deployed tools and techniques for elucidating the crucial aspects pertaining to the theoretical concepts of the chosen methods and techniques for facilitating the insights of the peer reviewers. In line with that, the methodology of this respective research involves the contemplation concerning research philosophy, approach and design in order to emulate the predicated perspectives as well as beliefs. Furthermore, the discussion concerning the employed data collection method has been included in alignment with its corresponding significance. In addition to that, a brief overview of the sampling technique adopted for recruiting participants along with the sample size has been included. Subsequent to that, the data analysis technique based on the deployed methods has been accentuated. Moreover, the ethical consideration and research limitation encountered by the researcher in terms of maintaining the validity of the research has been incorporated.

3.2. Research Philosophy

It has been iterated by the study of Saunders et al. (2015), that the research philosophy delves into the predicated perspectives and the beliefs of the research concerning enhancing the value of research as well as bestowing the findings in a well-determined manner. Díaz (2015), reflected that there are three prevalent philosophies including pragmatism, interpretivism and positivism, which are adopted based on the nature of the research. The positivism philosophy probes into the objective view of the social world and research to attain factual insights (Park, Konge, and Artino, 2020). However, interpretivism gauges the subjective view pertaining to individual beliefs as well as the motivation for attaining the comprehension of social phenomena (Ryan, 2018). Moreover, pragmatism tends to be the integration of both positivism and interpretivism philosophies, which explores the objective as well as the subjective view related to the specified social settings (Kaushik, and Walsh, 2019).

With regards to that, the interpretivism research philosophy has been deployed in this research as the respective area pertains to exploring the subjective view of the employee experiences in terms of their mental health within the workplace. The adoption of the

interpretivism philosophy has enabled the researcher to probe into the crucial aspects pertinent to well-being and the mental health of employees by acquiring extensive insights into the corresponding social settings (Alharahsheh, and Pius, 2020).

3.3. Research Approach

Woiceshyn, and Daellenbach (2018), accentuated that the research approach refers to the sequential steps of the adopted approach for responding to the research problem and the research questions. In line with that, there are two pre-dominant research approaches involving the inductive as well as deductive approaches. Armat et al. (2018), emulated that the deductive approach involves the investigation as well as testing of the existing theories and commences from the generalised observations to the specified ones. On contrary to that, Young et al. (2020), reflected that the inductive approach has been grounded on the aim of developing a theory by undertaking the specified observations and then moving towards the broader scoped generalisations.

With regards to that, the inductive approach has been deployed for this research in order to gauge the assumptions relating to the well-being of the employees within the workplace along with the organisational approaches. The deployment of the inductive approach has empowered the researcher to explore the specified observations as well as measures relating to the mental health of the employees and its influencing factors for moving towards the generalised perspectives (Liu, 2016).

3.4. Research Design

It has been elucidated by the study of Dannels (2018), that the research design serves as a crucial channel for addressing the research questions in order to devise a considerable conclusion as well as interpretation. The two substantial research designs encompass the qualitative and quantitative designs which are grounded on the beliefs of the research area (Sileyew, 2019). With regards to that, the qualitative research design has been adopted in this research for attaining extensive insights and data pertaining to the factors affecting the wellbeing as well as the mental health of the employees along with the pertinent organisational approaches. Moreover, the phenomenon related to the mental health of the workforce tends to be intricate to explore, which has compelled the researcher to deploy the qualitative research design and acquire comprehensive

data related to the employees' experiences for scrutinising the research problem (Johnson, Adkins, and Chauvin, 2020).

3.5 Data Collection Method

Primary as well as secondary data collection methods imply to be two crucial methods adopted for obtaining the data relating to the research area in order to conduct credible research. Heap, and Waters (2019), highlighted that primary data collection refers to acquiring first-hand data from the research participants for the specified aspects of the study. In contrast to that, secondary data collection involves the acquisition of the data from the pre-existing literature including research articles from the well-esteemed journal, books, newspapers, Government publications, annual reports, official websites of the companies, public records as well as statistical reports (Raj, 2020).

With regards to the nature of this respective research area, the researcher has adopted the primary data collection method for attaining firsthand insights into the employees' experiences in their work along with the mental health as well as organisational approaches. The adoption of the primary data collection method has remained effective for this respective research, as it enabled the researcher to obtain specific and elicit evidence in terms of the experiences of the employees (Mazhar et al. 2021). For attaining the primary qualitative data, open-ended interviews have been conducted with the employees of the UK.

3.6. Sampling Technique

The sampling techniques refer to the methods of selecting the sample from the population for collecting the required data from the participants. The study by Sharma (2017), iterated that the sampling technique implies the phenomenon of collecting data, which facilitates the researcher to acquire authentic as well as relevant insights. There have been two prevalent sampling techniques involving probability sampling as well as non-probability sampling. In line with that, the convenience sampling technique has been employed for recruiting the research participants in order to ease access to the respondents in a time-effective manner (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016). The deployment of the convenience sampling technique has remained effective for this research, as it enables the researcher to attain comprehensive data from the participants that can be recruited conveniently.

3.7. Sample Size

The sample size demonstrates the adequate representation of the entire population for attaining the highly accurate measures. The selection of an adequate sample size augments the validity of the research outcomes and their interpretations (Taherdoost, 2017). The study of Sim et al. (2018), highlighted that the sample size for the qualitative and quantitative research varies as the sample size for the qualitative research has been relatively lower and accounted for 10 participants. With regards to that, the interviews for this research have been conducted with 10 managers of MNCs in the UK for attaining comprehensive knowledge pertaining to the well-being of the employees along with their mental health within the organisation.

3.8. Data Analysis Technique

Mihas (2019), emulated that the data analysis techniques reflect the tools, as well as techniques employed for analysing the collected data from different methods. The study of Ong, and Puteh (2017), iterated that the distinctive type of data has been analysed by different techniques as the primary quantitative data is analysed through statistical software and techniques. Further, the primary qualitative data and secondary qualitative data are analysed through thematic analysis and content analysis respectively (Harding, 2018). With regards to that, this respective research has adopted the thematic analysis for analysing the data collected through the open-ended interviews of the 10 managers of the MNCs. The deployment of the thematic analysis has empowered the researcher to categorise the collected data based on the repeated patterns by constructing the relevant themes in order to adequately interpret the responses.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations imply the concerns that are envisaged whilst proceeding with the steps of the entire research study for maintaining the reliability and the rationality of the research along with its findings (Cacciattolo, 2015). With regards to maintaining the validity of this respective research, the researcher has remained considerate concerning avoiding bias in recruiting the research participants. In line with that, the researcher has ensured the provision of the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents by protecting the transcripts and records in the password-protected databases along with offering them pseudonyms for obscuring the identity of the individuals (Arifin, 2018). Moreover, the research respondents have been informed about

their withdrawal rights and their voluntary participation is ensured for avoiding any psychological harm to them.

3.10. Research Limitations

The research limitations tend to be the constraints that have affected the quality of the research to some extent and remain uncontrollable for the researcher (Ross, and Zaidi, 2019). The limitation relating to this research involves the collection of extensive data consequence to be time-consuming. The process of recruiting the respondents for the interviews and conducting the interviews was evidenced to be labour intensive and time-consuming as a process, which limited the sample size of the research.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

This respective chapter tends to be crucial in the entire dissertation as it involves the presentation of the findings derived from the collected data along with its interpretation, which aims to convey the core of the research as well as its conclusions. This part of the research explores the procedure of reviewing the gathered data in accordance with the asserted evaluation, accompanied by its interpretations as well as discussion, in order to demonstrate the appropriate results. Moreover, peer reviews can recapitulate the information obtained from the analysed data in this chapter's potential results. The objective of this chapter is to demonstrate the manner study findings have been collected in answering the research questions and objectives in order to devise a comprehensive conclusion. With regards to that, for analysing the responses of the respondents, thematic analysis has been deployed, which has enabled the researchers to construct the relevant themes. In addition to that, the discussion has been incorporated into this chapter by triangulating the analysed results with the pre-existing research studies in order to add value to the dissertation.

4.2. Thematic Analysis

The study of Javadi, and Zarea (2016), demonstrated that the thematic analysis is apposite for analysing the primary qualitative data collected through the participants' interviews. The deployment of the thematic analysis offers flexibility to the researcher in terms of interpreting the comprehensive data by permitting them to approach the broader sets by sorting the data into the relevant themes. Further, the study of Terry et al. (2017), reiterated that the thematic analysis implicates probing across the set of data for identifying, analysing, as well as reporting the repeated patterns in accordance with the research questions and the interview questions. This respective phenomenon aids in the construction of the relevant themes for addressing the context of the research by summarising the collected data and findings.

With regards to that, the collected data from 10 managers of the UK has been analysed by thematic analysis which lead to the construction of themes in order to present the findings in a sorted manner. Moreover, the five crucial themes have been established involving the assessment of factors, evaluation of employees' behaviours within the workplace and exploration of the influence of the Pandemic on the mental health of workers. Subsequent to that, the themes entailing

the emphasis on the supporting approaches of organisations for employees' wellbeing along with the obstacles faced by companies have been incorporated.

4.2.1. Theme 1: Ascertaining the Factors Distressing the Wellbeing and Mental Health of Personnel at their Workplaces

The sustenance of the robust well-being and the mental health amongst the workforce tend to be substantial as it leads to their productivity within their workplace. However, there have been various work-related factors that remained evidenced for distressing the well-being as well as the mental health of workers. This respective theme has been concerned with ascertaining the work-related factors that disturb the mental health of personnel and pose a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. One of the respondents has illustrated the factors that are problematic at his workplace in the following statement:

“The unsupported organisational culture and inadequate communication channel in the organisation affects the wellbeing as employees need the requisite level of support from the upper authorities.”

The aforementioned statement has illustrated that the unsupportive organisational culture which is reluctant to value, acknowledge and appreciate the employees affects their quality of living. Further, the absence of adequate communication channels as well as the lack of open communication within the organisation offers the employees no appropriate probability of expressing their concerns, which in response deteriorates the well-being of the workers owing to the fact that they need an appropriate level of support. A similar has been endorsed by the study of Ogbeibu, Senadjki, and Gaskin (2018), that the requisite level of acknowledgement, support and appreciation tend to be significant for employees to feel valued and pose a constructive influence on their wellbeing.

In response to a similar question, one of the respondents has responded with the following statement:

“The lack of feedback system and the extensive corporate politics lead the workplace to be a toxic surrounding, and the prevalence of it contributes to the development of an unhealthy environment which persistently affects the mental state.”

This respective statement demonstrated that the inappropriate feedback system in the organisation extends its support to the corporate politics which results in the escalation of toxicity within the workplace. The inadequate feedback system fails to accord to the motivation and satisfaction of the workforce as the sustenance of proper recognition to the employees got neglected leading to pose a long term impact on the mental wellbeing of the employees. This respective finding has been in alignment with the study of Muqadas, Rehman, and Aslam (2017), which states that the lack of appreciation and recognition alleviates the motivation of employees to perform the basic business activities that tends to be an indicator of the affected mental health.

However, one of the respondents has responded with:

“The interpersonal conflicts and social rejection in the workplace develops a feeling of devaluation and demotivation that consequences in lack of organisational commitment, stress and dissatisfaction.”

The preceding statement reflects that interpersonal conflicts lead to the social rejection of the employees owing to the bad communication channels, which results in higher job stress and dissatisfaction. The persistent stress contributes to the emergence of anxiety and depression which emulates the detrimental well-being of the employees and alleviated their productivity. The study of Ogbeibu, Senadjki, and Peng (2018), accentuated the similar notion that the interpersonal conflicts within the workforce entailing the conflicts concerning ego, the difference in value, as well as frustration results in the lack of organisational commitment and engagement, consequences in the affected mental health of workers.

Upon inquiring the further, one of the respondents stated that:

“The physical working conditions of the office such as the condition of office supplies, the concentration of lighting and the décor of the office affects the wellbeing as well as the association of the employees.”

This above-mentioned statement elucidated the significance of physical working conditions of the workplace in fostering the mental well-being of the personnel by reflecting that the conditions of office supplies and concentration of lighting affect the moods and well-being of workers. The study of Konstantzos et al. (2020), recapitulated the same perspective that the concentration of

lighting in the workplace involving the dim lighting and the loud lighting influences the association and physical health of personnel.

Furthermore, the other respondent has responded that:

“The limited authority and fewer opportunities to grow and participate within the organisation lead to the feeling of dissatisfaction which affects the wellbeing in long-run.”

This respective statement accentuated that the lack of authority and participation of the employees in the decision-making processes of the organisations develop a sense of dissatisfaction in the workers, the persistence of which adversely affects their wellbeing. This statement can be backed by the study of Halkos, and Bousinakis (2017), which indicated that the feelings of dissatisfaction and disvalue develop the negative repercussions in terms of the well-being of the workforce along with their productivity.

One of the participants highlighted these specified factors that remain distressful for the wellbeing:

“The extensive workload, inflexible working hours and unsupportive upper authorities influences the wellbeing as the prolonged stress results in the anxiety and extreme burnout, which leads to the conditions of insomnia in various circumstances.”

The percussive response has recapitulated that the extensive workload, inflexible working hours along with unsupportive organisational culture decrease the productivity of the workforce owing to the extreme impact on the wellbeing of personnel. The disturbed mental well-being then increases the anxiety and burnout leading to the aggressive as well as anguish behaviour of the workers.

Moreover, one of the employees claimed that:

“Lack of safety and health policies for the employees, higher performance pressure, job insecurity and incompliance of the acquired skill sets with the job requirements creates a feeling of restlessness that influences the mental wellbeing at the workplace.”

The aforementioned statement explicated that the negligence of the organisations towards devising the safety and health policies for the employees along with the sense of insecurity in terms of employment deteriorates the wellbeing of the workforce. Further, these respective aspects develop

a sense of disvalue amongst the employees along with the fear of getting replaced alleviates their organisational commitment and mental wellbeing. Similar findings have been presented by the study of Extremera et al. (2020), which iterated that the sense of disvalue and negligence of the organisations lead the employees to experience fear and insecurity which consequences in the escalated level of anxiety.

4.2.2. Theme 2: Evaluating the Behaviours and the Attitudes of Workers at the Workplace While Suffering From Mental Health Illness

The workplace-related factors have been revealed to pose a considerably negative or positive influence on the mental well-being of the workforce, however, the early detection of the mental health illness eases the procedure of recovery. Different individuals suffering from mental health illnesses exhibit different behaviours and attitudes grounded on their personality traits as well as the ability to cope with those issues (Kotera, Green, and Sheffield, 2019). In this respective theme, the managers have been asked about the prevailing behaviours of workers at their workplace while suffering from mental health illnesses in order to attain extensive insights into the interrelated patterns. One of the participants has explained that:

“The workers with mental health issues exhibit a sense of withdrawal from the social settings along with the aggression and frustration leading to the hostility and low energy.”

The percussive statement has elucidated that the workers dealing with the mental health issues demonstrate a clear sense of withdrawal from the social surroundings especially with the friends and the colleagues leading to the uneasiness. Further, the employees reportedly exhibit more anger issues and frustration towards themselves and others which contribute to the higher hostility in their workplace relationships as well as the lower energy to perform basic tasks. These findings have been in line with the study of Dionisi, and Barling (2018), which iterates the standpoint that the employees experiencing the issues relating to the mental well-being finds themselves in extremely hostile conditions by cutting the associations within the organisation, resulting in the disturbance of personal life.

One of the respondents has highlighted that:

“The personnel with mental health concerns lose their basic capability to cope with the stress and the daily problems owing to their alleviated ability to concentrate on any particular stance and conditions.”

The aforementioned statement has demonstrated that the persistent pressure and the mental health concerns seize the capability of the workers to find the solutions pertaining to their daily problems, which reflects their inability to overcome the stress. This respective situation has been revealed to be a result of a lack of concentration on any circumstance owing to distorted thought patterns.

Further, one of the participants has accentuated the greater change in behaviours of workers by stating that:

“The persistent stress, anxiety and depression amongst the workers' consequences in their reduced ability to function, participation in the organisational practices along with the decreased productivity due to inadequate performance, leading to the higher turnover rate.”

The above-mentioned statement has accentuated that the continuous stress, depression and anxiety affect the primary capacity of the functioning which adversely influences the participation level of workers in the organisational practices. The persistency and the long-term effect of stress results in chronic depression and anxiety lessen the productivity of personnel along with their performance which frequently increases the turnover rates of the company.

In responding to a similar question, one of the respondents has extended his opinion by stating that:

“While dealing with the mental health issues, the employees demonstrate a confused state of personality reflecting the worries and extreme transitions in moods from lows to high which increases the trouble in comprehending the situation.”

The last statement of this respective theme explicates that the employees who tend to suffer from any type and level of mental health issue exhibit an extensive level of confusion in comprehending the situations as well as the issues. Further, the extreme change in the moods of the workers regardless of any specified work event has been reported due to their inability to overcome worries. This corresponding notion has been backed by the study of Kotera et al. (2019), which elucidates

that the persistent detrimental mental state of the workforce integrates the confusion and lack of clarity in the personalities of the workers.

4.2.3. Theme 3: Investigating the Influence of Pandemic on Mental Health of the Workforce

The third theme delves into probing the influence of the Covid-19 on the mental well-being of the workforce as the sudden outbreak posed adverse repercussions relating to the well-being of the workers. The coronavirus pandemic has exposed the employees to the higher risks of transmitting the virus along with the higher stress pertaining to the stability of their jobs and their financial wellbeing (Sanchez et al. 2020). In response to the inquiry about the effect of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing, one of the respondents has stated that:

“The covid-19 is remained a contributor to escalating the risks of physical health and mental wellbeing as the closure of business operations increased the lay-off rate of employees. The higher lay-offs, job insecurity and financial crisis developed a fear and stress, the persistence of which impaired the mental wellbeing.”

This statement reflected that the covid-19 affected the psychological as well as physical health of the workers by exposing them to higher risks of getting affected. Further, the failure of the businesses and increasing lay-off rate majorly distressed the psychological wellbeing of the workforce as they experience the integrated fear of job insecurity as well as the financial crisis. The same notion has been acclaimed by the study of Graham et al. (2020), that the sudden outbreak of the coronavirus emerges the agitation in the individuals because of the risk of damaging their physical health along with the psychological issues owing to the increasing financial loss as well as insecurity.

However, the other respondent has responded with:

“In my opinion, the social isolation, staying away from family, restrictions of quarantine and fewer interactions physically affected the mental wellbeing of the workers as they were already tensed about their job and its security.”

This percussive statement has emulated that the social isolation and restrictions of the quarantine along with less physical interactions with the social setting posed a negative impact on the mental wellbeing of the workers. The previously stressed workers have experienced the fear of losing

their family as they were restricted to their households which increases the adversity of the situation.

In addition to this, another respondent has heightened that:

“For me, the major aspect would always be the social isolation because even after the revival of business operations virtually, employees seemed to be distressed in adopting telecommuting for the prolonged period.”

This statement has reflected that despite all the financial crisis and job lay-offs, the crucial impact is posited by the social isolation as most of the employees remained distressed even after the revitalisation of the business operations and their jobs virtually. The employees faced feelings of anxiety, risk and depression due to the prolonged isolation, which affected their well-being. These respective findings have been in line with the study of Burn, and Mudholkar (2020), which iterates that along with the job insecurity, financial crisis and the lay-offs, the social isolation and quarantine remained the considerable factors distressing the wellbeing of the workers.

4.2.4. Theme 4: Gauging the Approaches of Organisations for Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Workers

The economic cost relating to the affected mental well-being of employees has been high for the organisations including the turnover rate, lower productivity and the lessened profitability. With these respective repercussions along with the evident significance of the workers' well-being, the organisations have been proactively offering support to employees for maintaining their well-being (Bryan et al. 2018). This fourth theme entails the analysis of the adopted approaches of the UK organisations for facilitating the wellbeing of their workforce. Upon asking which, one of the respondents have responded that:

“The organisation in which I work primarily identifies the issue that has been prevailing amongst the workforce to gauge its psychological influence. Then in accordance to that, the training programmes such as stress management training and mental wellbeing training are designed.”

This above-mentioned statement has underlined the approaches adopted by one of the UK organisations that grounded its emphasis on analysing the issues initially along with its influence on the psychological wellbeing of the workers. Further, the organisation then design a respective

training programme including the well-being training and the stress management training for augmenting the emotional well-being of the workers. Tetrick, and Winslow (2015), validated the significance of providing the stress management training to the workforce by affirming that the external issues and the workplace issues lead workers to experience the prolonged stress, which necessitates it for the organisations to design the stress management training as well as the wellbeing training for them.

Further, the other participants have reflected on the pre-dominant approach by stating that:

“The inclusion and flexibility have been offered to the employees suffering from mental well-being issues along with the adequate level of support in order to maintain a positive work culture that fosters the emotional wellbeing of the workers.”

The above-mentioned statement mirrored that the organisations of the UK integrate flexibility and inclusivity in their organisational policies for extending the support to the affected employees in the workforce. Moreover, the organisations ensure the provision of the requisite level of support to the workers along with maintaining a positive work culture in order to restore their emotional as well as psychological wellbeing.

In addition to that, the other respondent acclaimed that:

“In my organisation, the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is designed for the workforce in order to ease the access of mental health services and the mental health professional via one-to-one appointment and the telephonic therapies.”

This percussive statement has emphasised that several organisations devise the employee assistance programme (EAP) for connecting the workforce with the psychological professionals in order to offer them a platform to communicate their mental wellbeing concerns. In addition to that, the organisations of the UK ensure access to therapies by offering them confidentiality in terms of their encountered concerns, which results in boosting the emotional wellbeing of personnel along with resilience. It has been endorsed by the study of Joseph, Walker, and Tyszkiewicz (2018), that the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) implies to be substantial for assisting the employees in attaining the advice confidentially relating to their mental health concerns, which are leading the higher stress and the distraction.

4.2.5. Theme 5: Obstacles Encountered by the Businesses in Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of the Workforce Subsequent to the Pandemic

Subsequent to the control of the prevalence of coronavirus and the revival of on-site as well as virtual business operations, most of the employees re-joined their positions with prolonged stress, anxiety and depression. These relative mental health issues and their concerning economic cost have led the companies to devise various strategies for supporting the workers, however, the companies faced numerous obstacles in addressing those prevalent psychological concerns after the coronavirus (Rudolph et al. 2021). In line with probing the obstacles encountered by the businesses while addressing the issues, one of the respondents has contemplated that:

“The stigma and the feeling of shame develops the fear of disclosing the mental health issues in the workplace that hindered the execution of approaches and strategies by the organisations for supporting the mental health and increasing the awareness related to these issues.”

This respective statement accentuated that the workers feel ashamed of disclosing their psychological issues due to the associated stigma in the society which decreased the effects of the executed strategies and training for them. The reluctance to participate in the training and adopt the strategies was because of these specified stigmas that neglect the organisational efforts for supporting their wellbeing.

In response to a similar question, the other respondent has responded with the following statement:

“Employees tend to obscure their mental health concerns due to the societal judgemental and the stigma associated with the psychological disorders. This leads employees to exhibit reluctance against the organisational approaches to support the psychological wellbeing of workers.”

This respective statement has been interconnected with the aforementioned statement that reflects the higher inclination of the employees towards obscuring their mental health issues due to the fear of being judged and social exclusion, which leads them to exhibit greater reluctance. The higher reluctance of the employees resulted in the ineffective execution leading to the attainment of undesired results. The obscuring of the mental health issues and non-participative behaviour of the employees allude to being the major obstacle for the organisations to support their wellbeing subsequent to the pandemic.

Moreover, another participant has revealed that:

“The lack of managerial expertise in assessing the changes in the moods and behaviours of employees against their affected wellbeing, which increases the economic costs of the businesses as subsequent to the pandemic, the extensive number of employees had the mental health issues.”

The percussive statement has revealed that along with the workforce reluctance, another issue was the incompetence of the management to assess the transitions in the behaviours and the moods of the workers along with their adverse wellbeing. As the majority of the employees tend to be experiencing mental health challenges after the pandemic, the management of some organisations lacks the capacity to assess as well as handle such illnesses by detecting the different symptoms. These findings have been in alignment with the study of Kniffin et al. (2021), which articulated that the incapability of assessing the distinctive symptoms of the extensive workforce by the management posed a higher economic cost for the businesses as reflected to be the crucial obstacle in supporting the psychological wellbeing of the workers.

4.3. Discussion

It has been iterated by the study of Brooks, Rubin, and Greenberg (2019), that there are various factors, which distress the mental well-being of the workers in their organisations, however, the level of pressure and stress varies on the basis of the capacity of each employee. The crucial factors involve the external environment of the workplace, interpersonal conflicts, lack of adequate organisational support along with work-related stress. These respective assertions have been effective in supporting the findings of this research as it highlights that the work-related stress, lack of stability and organisational support along with the interpersonal conflicts posed a crucial impact on the psychological wellbeing of the workers. However, this research has extended the scope of the affecting factors by probing that the higher job insecurity, dissatisfaction, performance pressure and the negative work environment influence the well-being of the workforce along with all other aspects.

Further, the study of Tran et al. (2018), reflected that the workers facing the mental health challenges exhibit the symptoms in terms of the escalated level of anger, anxiety, loss of productivity as well as performance. However, Conway et al. (2021), asserted that the primary transition in the behaviour, concentration level and approach to handling the situation and problem revealed to be major indicators of their mental state. Similar has been evidenced by the findings of this research as it demonstrated that the employees demonstrated the distorted concentration

level, social exclusion, burnout and anger issues owing to the prolonged stress and anxiety, which resulted in the alleviation of productivity.

Furthermore, the study by Giorgi et al. (2020), reiterated that the coronavirus pandemic affected the physical and mental well-being of the workers due to the higher layoffs, social restrictions on mobility, quarantine and financial crisis, which causes the prolonged stress amongst the personnel. This respective notion has been similar to the results of this study, which reflected that the social isolation and job insecurity due to the higher lay-offs as well as the failure of the organisations impacted the well-being of the workers the personnel. Moreover, in the context of organisational approaches for supporting the psychological wellbeing of the workforce, the study of Campbell, and Gunning (2020), emulated that the organisations are being negligent to adopt the mental wellbeing strategies as the gap in the policies and implementations has been observed. In contrast to that, the study of Patel, Swift, and Digesu (2021), acclaimed the significance of workers' well-being for reducing the economic cost and the increasing the productivity of the workforce, the organisations have been actively designing the well-being policies along with ensuring their compliance. Similar to that, this research revealed that for supporting the emotional as well as the physical well-being, organisations have been devising the approaches pertaining to increasing flexibility, support and training for managing stress and wellbeing.

In addition to that, the study of Edwards, and Kotera (2021), underlined that the organisations faced the major obstacles in attaining the desired results of the training for ensuring the wellbeing of the workers. The obstacles hindering the execution of the training and support strategies involve self-stigma along with the social stigma associated with the disclosure of these respective challenges associated with mental wellbeing. The equivalent findings have been iterated by this research, which emphasised that the social stigma and the fear of getting judged lessened the probability of workers disclosing their well-being issues and participating in the organisational training for improving wellbeing. In conclusion to that, the results also elaborated that the lack of managerial expertise in assessing the different symptoms of workers with mental health issues remained one of the crucial obstacles to hindering the success of the effective execution of organisational approaches for supporting the workforce.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Concluding the discussion provided above, it can be evaluated that mental health is a significant consideration for an individual or a group as their attitude, behaviour and their perception towards life are highly dependent on their mental health well-being. Different factors can influence the mental health of an individual or a group whereas the influence can be positive or negative or both. Similarly, the discussion provided above has emphasised the importance of mental health being influenced through the workplace environment for an individual that needs to be planned effectively, efficiently and appropriately so that all the ethical guidelines can be followed extensively and the corporate objectives of the workplace can be met successfully. Simultaneously, some key aspects need to be acknowledged when mental health considerations are being focused on in a given workplace situation, which is further summarised below.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

As per the key findings that can be analysed through the following study, it can be deduced that the mental health well-being matter for every individual whereas it can change and be influenced by other factors frequently. However, the workplace or the employment setting of an individual might be an important trigger towards the changing mental health situation for an individual and different aspects have been contributing to the anticipated change extensively. Similarly, one of the major influencers of mental health in a workplace is the behaviour of the management and the leaders. At this point, the aspect of manager X and manager Y is applicable whereas when a manager having an X style attitude is managing the employees, then they will be reluctant to do their job as they will become extremely burdened. When the employees are having immense workload as a burden, they tend to become demotivated and are not enjoying their responsibilities at all. Their work-life balance is disturbed and they barely have time for socialising. All of these aspects when accumulated, tend to disturb the mental health condition of an individual and they are eventually distanced from their friends and family members.

Furthermore, it has also been analysed through the following discussion that constant pressure and an adverse attitude from the workplace managers and leaders are also very harmful to the mental health condition of the workforce. The adverse behaviour and attitude include traits of strictness, rudeness, discrimination and favouritism which all leads to an individual developing

the feeling of being ‘undervalued’ in their workplace and hence deteriorate the mental health condition of the individuals.

Additionally, it has also been confirmed that the recent Covid-19 pandemic outbreak also had some serious impacts on the mental health condition of the global workforce. A majority of the workplaces were eventually commanded to shut down their activities and hence they were forced to exit their respective industries to control the fixed costs and expenditure. As a result, several individuals lost their employment roles and they were ultimately enforced to sit at home without a supporting income for their families. Hunger grew extensively while the global inflation rate increased constantly, causing major distress to the mental health of the workforce. As a result of the deteriorating mental health of the global workforce, a majority of the individuals took wrong steps in life by being indulging in illegal activities such as robbery and theft whereas some of them even committed suicide alone or along with their families to ultimately get rid of the growing concern of unemployment and severe hunger.

5.3 Conclusion

Hence, concluding the following study, it can be analysed that the mental health of individuals within a workplace is important as it directly impacts the performance structure and the success of the activities being carried out in the workplace. A positive mental health condition of the workforce will ultimately provide positive and beneficial results for the organisation which have been anticipated at the initial stage when the corporate objectives, aim and goals of the business were being established and acknowledged extensively. Furthermore, a positive mental health situation of the employees allows the workforce to reflect a positive organisational culture which encourages the organisation to set a beneficial example within the industry and it is recognised positively as well. Achieving global recognition in terms of a beneficial organisational culture opens new and enhanced opportunities for the organisations and it allows the workforce to be exposed to global working conditions through which different levels of self-actualisation are achieved and they remain positive and motivated towards their responsibilities, benefiting their mental health successfully.

Moreover, when the mental health of the organisational workforce in a workplace is managed effectively, efficiently and closely, the management has a positive vision of their managerial and planning responsibilities. The workforce’s attitude and behaviour remain

transparent and they are not hesitant in sharing their views, perceptions or any issues they are facing related to the workplace. Thus, with all these positive aspects, an organisation can improve its international relations with other nations and workforces from all across the world are encouraged, motivated and inclined towards working in such an organisation where they can maintain a beneficial work-life balance, benefiting their mental health conditions in the long term.

Furthermore, positive mental health conditions for the workforce can be an asset for the organisation that needs to be managed optimally by the higher authorities, management and the organisational leaders. Other than employing expensive assets and other prediction or assessment tools, employees having a fresh mind and a dedicated and committed behaviour will ultimately step forward in the light of recommending the organisation with key improvements or necessary steps that they can take collectively in terms of improving and enhancing the existing performance and success measures of the business. In this way, creativity and innovation are triggered which is an important consideration for overcoming competitive challenges. However, all of the advantages identified above relate to a positive mental health condition for the workforce which needs to be ensured by the higher authorities through their planning and their optimisation procedures accordingly.

5.4 Recommendations

In continuance with the discussion provided above, some key recommendations need to be acknowledged and they should be included within the upcoming plans of an organisation. Initially, it is recommended that mental health checks need to be done in the form of annual audits by the governmental and mental health service organisations that are approved by known healthcare bodies such as NHS, WHO, etc. These checks will ensure whether the organisations can care for the mental health condition of its employees and take necessary actions where required. Additionally, awareness sessions conducted by the state and other regulatory or healthcare bodies are also important as they will acknowledge the individuals and the organisations as well regarding the importance of the mental health well-being of its employees as humans and for the long term benefits of organisational performance.

Moreover, considering the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, rather than closing organisational activities and being led to a redundancy situation, the organisations need to plan for their organisational activities strategically. They can take the initiative of training their employees

regarding modern working techniques such as digital adherence and technical understanding through which the individuals can work online from their homes. At this point, due to the global recession, their salaries can be reduced but their employment positions can be maintained so that they can keep supporting their families effectively and efficiently. Simultaneously, any of the possible strategies which can be applied at this point are highly acceptable and hence they should be planned strategically.

5.5 Future Implications

Additionally, there are certain implications of this discussion that might be influential in the future and hence they need to be planned optimally. The digital plan that has been recommended earlier has been analysed for being established as a long term trend and hence it would require significant investment considerations from the management of different organisations. This could be an expensive consideration and hence it might result in a high amount of delayering procedures in the future.

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