Assessing the Role of HR in Supporting Employee Well-Being and Mental Health

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Abstract

HR plays a pivotal role in supporting employee well-being and mental health through comprehensive wellness programs and flexible work arrangements. They promote mental health awareness, destigmatize issues, and encourage open communication. Training managers in emotional intelligence and empathetic leadership helps create supportive environments. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) offer confidential counseling and resources. Overall, HR's initiatives reduce stress, improve job satisfaction, and enhance productivity.

This study investigates the pivotal role of Human Resources (HR) in promoting employee well-being and mental health within organizations. As workplaces increasingly recognize the impact of mental health on productivity and overall organizational culture, HR departments are positioned to implement effective strategies and initiatives. Through a mixed-methods approach, this research analyses current HR practices, employee perceptions, and outcomes related to mental health support. Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews reveal that proactive HR policies, such as mental health training, employee assistance programs, and flexible work arrangements, significantly enhance employee well-being. Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of creating a supportive organizational culture that prioritizes mental health. The study concludes with recommendations for HR professionals to adopt comprehensive, evidence-based approaches to foster a healthier workplace, ultimately leading to improved employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Keywords: Employee Wellbeing, Mental Health, Workplace, Employee Satisfaction.

Introduction

Assessing the role of Human Resources (HR) in supporting employee well-being and mental health is increasingly vital in today's workplace, particularly within organizations like Ashwini Electronics. As employees spend a significant portion of their lives at work, it becomes essential for companies to foster an environment that prioritizes mental health and overall well-being.

HR departments are uniquely positioned to lead this transformation. Traditionally seen as a function focused on administrative tasks like recruitment, payroll, and regulatory compliance, HR has expanded its role to encompass the broader management of employee welfare. This evolution reflects a growing awareness that mental health is closely tied to productivity, engagement, and job satisfaction. By implementing mental health awareness programs, designing flexible work policies, and fostering an open, supportive culture, HR can play a pivotal role in maintaining a healthy, resilient workforce.

In light of these changes, this article aims to explore how HR strategies are evolving to meet the challenges of employee well-being and mental health. By examining best practices within organizations like Ashwini Electronics, this research will assess the effectiveness of various HR initiatives in improving mental health outcomes and overall employee satisfaction. Understanding this dynamic can offer valuable insights into how businesses can better support their employees in the increasingly complex and demanding modern work environment.

Review of literature

1. **Oluwafunmi Adijat Elufioye (2024)** This paper reviews the evolving landscape of HR initiatives designed to promote and support employee well-being in the workplace. As organizations recognize the profound impact of mental health on employee performance, engagement, and overall organizational success, a strategic integration of mental health initiatives into HR practices is becoming paramount. The paper explores the multifaceted nature of employee well-being initiatives, encompassing flexible work arrangements, comprehensive health and wellness programs, and destigmatizing mental health conversations within the workplace.

2. **Chito Mataac (2023)** This entails prioritizing physical and mental health, implementing stress-reducing techniques, and creating comprehensive policies and programs. HR also plays a key role in destigmatizing mental health issues by fostering an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their health concerns. Effective communication and awareness campaigns further contribute to a culture that values mental health as integral to overall well-being. Additionally, HR facilitates mental health support programs like Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and collaborates with healthcare providers to integrate mental health services into comprehensive health benefits.

3. **Tina. H. P. Kowalski (2017)** In a fast changing and fast-paced global workplace, where maintaining competitive advantage is paramount to success, identifying ways of sustaining employee well-being is of increasing importance to a range of stakeholders, both within the context of work and beyond. Within the workplace, well-being is important not only to individual employees in terms of maintaining their own good health, but also to managers and organisations as there is evidence to suggest that poor well-being at work can have adverse effects on performance and overall productivity.

4. **Kayla Follmer (2021)** This introduction article starts with an overview of what we know and do not know about mental illness in the context of work and why more insights related to mental illness at work are much needed. The special issue features a unique set of articles that employ different methodologies and approaches to studying mental illness at work. Theoretical perspectives presented include tension-centred theory, ethical HRM, diversity theory, person-job fit, and critical disability studies.

5. **Ananda Fortunisa, Muhammad Rizky Darmawan (2022)** The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of employee mental health. The research method is by reviewing 50 articles selected and screened based on key findings. This research reveals that mental health and gratitude are understood in a variety of ways. Mental health is primarily defined as mental health experiences and responses, and workplace learning primarily refers to learning through participatory practices. In addition, this study describes the relationship between mental health and learning in the workplace.

6. **Apurvakumar Pandya (2022)** The mental health initiatives at the workplace are growing in numbers over the past few years. Public and private sectors continue to explore avenues to navigate and adapt initiatives to promote employee's mental wellbeing. However, such initiatives in the Indian context are not thoroughly studied. We attempted to review existing literature on workplace mental health interventions in the Indian context.

7. **Chidiebere Ogbonnaya (2021)** To counterbalance the predominant performance focus in HRM research, we reviewed the critical perspective that highlights the deleterious consequences of HRM systems on employee well-being. To resolve these research contradictions and drawing on the notion of workforce sustainability.

8. **Kristen Tran (2022)** An approach which embeds social and psychological dimensions of prosperity, alongside the economic, is needed to inform the effective allocation of investments in the post-pandemic world. The authors advocate for a transdisciplinary framework of Mental Wealth to be applied in innovating population-level policy interventions to address the growing challenges brought on by COVID-19.

9. **Jerome M Adams (2020)** On average, employed US adults spend more than half of their waking lives working or engaging in work-related activities. The time spent at the workplace, the tasks performed there, and the work environment all affect overall health. We know many colleagues for whom their job is a great source of joy and fulfilment wellness

10. **Anya Johnson, Shanta Dey (2020)** The mental health and well-being of employees is an increasingly important issue, both in terms of the financial costs to the Australian economy and human costs to society. This review examines two major technology-driven trends in the workplace and presents evidence for their impact on mental health, both positive and negative. First, we consider *how we work*, with a focus on changes which have been driven by automation and advanced technology in the workplace.

11. **Nicole Cvenkel (2020)** Work-life balance is growing to be an issue of focus for organizational leaders, employees, HR professionals, and wellness coordinators as individuals and the organization benefit from having health and well-being when work-life balance is embraced strategically, which in turn impacts on productivity and performance.

12. **Abbey Lewis (2022)** In her article, which draws on both her personal experience and detailed research, Greenwood notes that while most of us will suffer from at least an occasional mental health problem, 60% will never talk about their mental health status with anyone doing well for them in the workplace.

13. **Michael Asiedu Gyensare, Samuel Adomako (2023)** This study examines how green human resource management (HRM) practices impact employees' subjective well-being through the mediating mechanism of employees' green behavior (EGB). We further explore the moderating role of resource commitment.

14. **Remya Lathabhavan (2024)** Organisations are increasingly adopting and adapting to technological advancements to stay relevant in the era of intense competition. Simultaneously, employee mental well-being has become a prominent global concern affecting people across various demographics

15. **Erika Lucas (2015)** Recent press reports about the health risks of the ‚sedentary' lives led by office workers has brought the issue of employee well-being to the fore. Research from On your Feet Britain, together with the British Heart Foundation, suggests that sitting for long periods of time at work is linked to a host of health problems.

Objectives of the study
- To examine current HR policies on well-being and mental health of the employee
- To evaluate HR role in Mental health awareness and education
- To evaluate the impact of HR – led intervention on employee productivity

Statement of the problem
The study on assessing the role of Human Resources (HR) in supporting employee well-being and mental health at Ashwini Electronics addresses a critical issue in contemporary organizational management. Despite the growing recognition of mental health as a vital component of employee productivity and overall workplace satisfaction, many organizations still struggle to implement effective strategies for supporting their employees' mental well-being.

Research Methodology
It involves descriptive research type, data collected with help of structured questionnaire. The motto of descriptive research is to describe attributes of population.

Sources of data collection:
Primary data: Primary data is one which is newly discovered and fresh in nature.
Secondary data: Secondary data is one which is dependent in nature. Basically, it is dependent data which is already collected by others.

Population & sampling unit:
Population: The target population will include employees of Ashwini Electronics to ensure diversity in perspectives.
Sampling unit: The sampling unit for this study will include employees from various organizational levels and departments within Ashwini Electronics.
Sample method:
A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure representation from various departments and job roles within the organization.
Sample size:
Sample size refers to the number of respondents; here the sample size is 45.

HYPOTHESIS 1:
H0: There is no significant difference in employee satisfaction between organizations with comprehensive HR policies on well-being and mental health and those with minimal or no such policies.
H1: Organizations with comprehensive HR policies on well-being and mental health have higher employee satisfaction compared to organizations with minimal or no such policies.

HYPOTHESIS 2:
H0: There is no significant difference in mental health literacy between employees who receive regular HR-led mental health awareness training and those who do not.
H1: Employees who receive regular HR-led mental health awareness training have higher levels of mental health literacy compared to those who do not.

HYPOTHESIS 3:

H0: The effectiveness of HR-led mental health interventions does not significantly affect employee job performance or workplace stress.

H1: The effectiveness of HR-led mental health interventions is positively associated with improvements in employee job performance and reduced workplace stress.

Data analysis

Table showing employee age group

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Under 25	34	75.6%
25-35	09	20%
35-44	02	4.4%
44 and above	-	-
Total	**45**	**100%**

Analysis:

By analysing the above table, the 75.6% of the employees belongs to the age group under 25, 20% belongs to the age group of 25-35 and the remaining 4.4% belongs to the age group of 35-44.

4.1 Graph showing employee age group
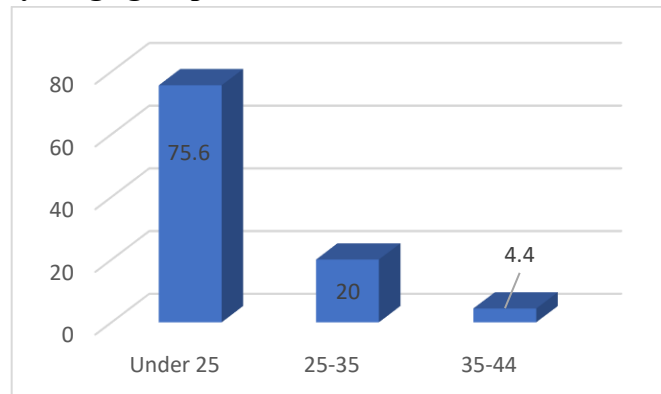
Interpretation:

The above graph shows that the majority of the employees within the company are belonging to the age group under 25. This shows that the employees are younger and they can work more in the organization to achieve the goals of the organization.

**Table showing the years of experience of the personnel**

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Less than a year	19	42.20%
1-3 yrs	17	37.80%
4-6 yrs	5	11.10%
More than 6 years	3	8.90%
Total	**45**	**100%**

Analysis:

The above table shows the years of experience the employees of Ashwini electronics have for working in

the company. 42% of the employees have the experience for less than a year, 38% of the personnel have experience for 1-3 years, 11% of the people have experience for 4-6 years and the remaining 9% of the respondents have more than 6 years of experience in working in an organization.

4.4 Graph showing the years of experience
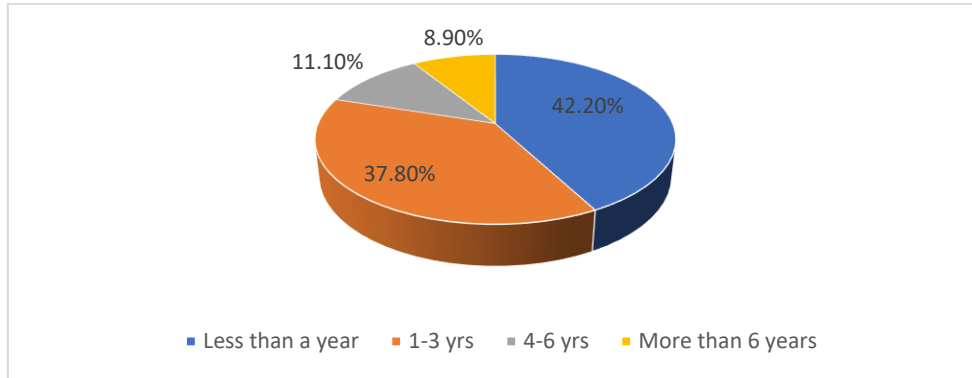
Interpretation:

The data indicates that a significant portion of the workforce (42.2%) has been with the company for less than a year. This high percentage suggests that Ashwini Electronics may have recently hired many new employees, which could reflect growth, expansion, or turnover within the organization.

Table showing the effectiveness of HR department related to stress management workshop

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Very effective	19	42.2
Effective	14	31.1
Neutral	9	20.0
Ineffective	2	4.4
Very ineffective	2	4.4
Total	**45**	**100%**

Analysis:

The above table shows the effectiveness of HR department related to the mental health and well-being of the employees at Ashwini Electronics. The responses states that the HR department is very effective related to mental health and well-being of the employees with 42%.

Graph showing the effectiveness of HR department related to stress management workshop
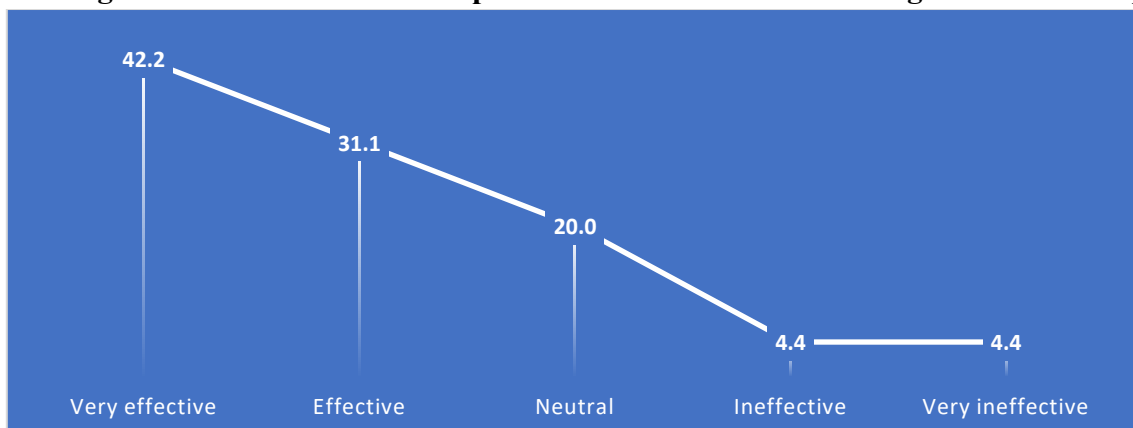
Interpretation:

While the majority perception is positive, there is still room for improvement. The 20% of respondents who remained neutral and the 8.8% who rated HR as ineffective or very ineffective suggest that some employees may not be fully satisfied with the support provided or are unaware of the available resources.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

H0: There is no significant difference in employee satisfaction between organizations with comprehensive HR policies on well-being and mental health and those with minimal or no such policies.

H1: Organizations with comprehensive HR policies on well-being and mental health have higher employee satisfaction compared to organizations with minimal or no such policies.

Independent Samples Effect Sizes					
		Standardizer	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
12. How would you rate your overall well-being at work?	Cohen's d	.721	1.212	.490	1.921
	Hedges' correction	.734	1.190	.481	1.886
	Glass's delta	.900	.970	.177	1.732
a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes. Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation. Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor. Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.					

Interpretation

The results of the analysis provide strong evidence to support the hypothesis that organizations with comprehensive HR policies on well-being and mental health have higher employee satisfaction compared to those with minimal or no such policies.

Hypothesis 2

H0: There is no significant difference in mental health literacy between employees who receive regular HR-led mental health awareness training and those who do not.

H1: Employees who receive regular HR-led mental health awareness training have higher levels of mental health literacy compared to those who do not.

Chi-Square	3.116[a]	14.535[b]
Df	2	1
Asymp. Sig.	.211	<.001

Interpretation

The Chi-Square test results indicate that there is no significant association between awareness of HR policies related to mental health and the frequency of training provided, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.211, which

is greater than the conventional alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis in this case.

Hypothesis 3

H0: The effectiveness of HR-led mental health interventions does not significantly affect employee job performance or workplace stress.

H1: The effectiveness of HR-led mental health interventions is positively associated with improvements in employee job performance and reduced workplace stress.

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.184	1	.184	.162	.689[b]
Residual	46.514	41	1.134		
Total	46.698	42			
a. Dependent Variable: 14. How often do you experience work-related stress?					
b. Predictors: (Constant), "8. How 2 do you believe the HR department is in implementing policies					

Interpretation

The analysis suggests that the effectiveness of HR-led mental health interventions does not have a significant impact on employee workplace stress. The findings support the null hypothesis (H0), indicating no positive association between HR policies and improvements in workplace stress levels.

Findings

- The findings state that the encouraging regular breaks are very effective.
- The findings state that the encouraging of flexible schedule people believe are to be shared with very effective and effective.
- The findings state that encouraging of flexibility to use sick leave are tied with very effective, effective and neutral.
- Most of the employees in the organisation are female.
- It is found that majority of the age group of employees are under 25.
- It is found that 42% of employees have less than a year experience and 37% of employees have 1-3 year's experience
- Most of the employees state that they are aware of HR policies in the company
- Most of the employees in the company belong to supply chain department.
- The findings state that the encouraging regular breaks are very effective.
- The findings state that the encouraging of flexible schedule people believe are to be shared with very effective and effective.
- The findings state that encouraging of flexibility to use sick leave are tied with very effective, effective and neutral.
- The findings state that employees agree to say yes for the company's employees assistance program.
- The findings state that employees satisfaction in reimbursement for mental health treatments are: 38% being very effective and 27% being effective
- The findings state that employee satisfaction in team building activities focused on wellness are:

29% being very satisfied and 33% being satisfied

- The findings state that employee statisfaction in relaxation rooms or spaces in the workplace are: satisfied with 35.6% and very satisfied with 33.3%
- The findings state that employee satisfaction In job sharing arrangement are: 37% with satisfied and 31.1% being very satisfied.

- The findings state that employee satisfaction in yoga and meditation classes are: 38% are satisfied and 31% being very satisfied.
- The findings state that providing of regular training or workshops on mental health awareness and stress management are: 40% being occasionally and 36% being yes.
- The findings state the rating of overall well being at work are: 31% being excellent and 40% being fair.
- The findings state the support of work environment in their mental health are: 47% being some extent and 24.4% being great extent.
- The findings state the employees facing work related stress are: 38% being occasionally and 22% being very frequently and frequently
- The findings state the overwhelming of workload of employees being: 73% being yes and 27% being No
- The findings state the healthy work life balance of employees being: 53% as yes, 22% being No and 24% being maybe.
- The findings state that the activeness of Hr in addressing the mental health issues of employees are: 42% being No, 31% being yes and 27% being maybe

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research underscores the vital role that Human Resources (HR) plays in fostering employee well-being and mental health at Ashwini Electronics. Through strategic initiatives such as wellness programs, mental health awareness campaigns, and supportive workplace policies, HR can significantly enhance the overall employee experience. Our findings indicate that when HR prioritizes mental health, it not only improves individual employee resilience and satisfaction but also boosts organizational productivity and morale.

Suggestions & Recommendations

- Implement holistic wellness programs that address physical, mental, and emotional health, including fitness challenges, mindfulness sessions, and stress management workshops.
- Provide access to mental health professionals through employee assistance programs (EAPs) and online counselling services.
- Create a culture of openness where employees feel safe discussing mental health issues without fear of stigma.

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