Review of Employees' Priorities at a Workplace

Komalpreet Kaur
Vanina Adoriana Trifan
"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Romania
komal.pret.kaur00009@gmail.com
vanina.trifan@uav.ro

Abstract

Several studies have indicated that work-related priorities have shifted for employees. The pandemic restructured the mindsets of the workers by introducing remote working, and as a result, the companies had to adapt themselves accordingly. The present study is a literature review that highlights various work-related aspects such as employee well-being, job satisfaction, and corporate social responsibility. It also proves how employee satisfaction plays a crucial role in the productivity of an employee's work and ultimately in an organization's performance. Finally, we conclude that companies must adapt and pay more attention to their working environments in order to retain talent within the organization, which provides a competitive advantage.

Key words: corporate social responsibility, employee well-being, job satisfaction, remote work
J.E.L. classification: E24, J24, J28, J81, L20

1. Introduction

Companies make the decision to adhere to statutory guidelines for a positive workplace. Additionally, some businesses decide to make an even greater investment in their working surroundings by promoting workplace wellness. In other words, workplace priorities vary from company to company, and various elements could also be highlighted (Hayat et al, 2022, p.392). Previous research has shown an oppositional association between work satisfaction and company size. Larger businesses tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction, which can be explained by the rigidity of the work structure (Hayat et al, 2022, p.390).

It is widely accepted fact that the pandemic has caused the employees to reflect on their purpose in life, which has led to a restructuring of their priorities at work. The sudden COVID-19 pandemic breakout compelled enterprises to implement remote work platforms. To stay operationally active in such a dire circumstance, organizations had to embrace remote work. However, a lot of problems have been highlighted by the quick uptake of remote work solutions. There are no studies on how businesses can successfully use a remote work system while preparing themselves to handle emergency scenarios (Chatterjee et al, 2021, p.1506).

The main goal of the study is to learn more about people's work-related priorities and how they have changed over time. The studies show that employee satisfaction and productivity are thought to have a real effect on how well a business does. Since job satisfaction depends on things like work-life balance, relationships with coworkers, opportunities for career growth, and has a direct effect on productivity and, in turn, on how well an organization does.

2. Literature review

Despite the expanding scholarly interest in technological innovation, there are several informational gaps in the current literature. First, there has been heated discussion surrounding the influence of human resource management practices on employees' psychological health and positive mindset. Examples of these practices include training, rewards, extensive communication, and motivating job design. However, given changes in production processes in the technological

age, MSMEs must focus on more than just human resource management to safeguard their employees' psychological well-being (Zahoor *et al,* 2022, p.5). On one hand, there are companies that need to follow national legislation and certain regulations that mandate them to maintain a safe and healthy working environment for their workers just to respect the legislated requirements of a satisfying workplace environment. On the other hand, there are companies that take one step ahead and invest in their work environment by using workplace health promotion. Thus, one may conclude that each company has its own way of prioritizing its work environment (Nordlof *et al,* 2015, p.701). Well-known human resource management practices can be adopted and improved upon by managers to increase employee happiness, job satisfaction, employee retention, and recruitment success (Sakka *et al,* 2020, p.356).

2.1 Employee Well-being

Despite the expanding scholarly interest in technological innovation, there are several informational gaps in the current literature. First, there has been heated discussion surrounding the influence of human resource management practices on employees' psychological health and positive mindset. Examples of these practices include training, rewards, extensive communication, and motivating job design. However, given changes in production processes in the technological age, MSMEs must focus on more than just human resource management to safeguard their employees' psychological well-being (Zahoor *et al,* 2022, p.5). On one hand, there are companies that need to follow national legislation and certain regulations that mandate them to maintain a safe and healthy working environment for their workers just to respect the legislated requirements of a satisfying workplace environment. On the other hand, there are companies that take one step ahead and invest in their work environment by using workplace health promotion. Thus, one may conclude that each company has its own way of prioritizing its work environment (Nordlof *et al,* 2015, p.701). Well-known human resource management practices can be adopted and improved upon by managers to increase employee happiness, job satisfaction, employee retention, and recruitment success (Sakka *et al,* 2020, p.356).

Recent managerial practices define employee well-being as encompassing psychological, physical, and social well-being. Physical well-being is mostly correlated with health, whereas social well-being is associated with things like interpersonal relationships, community involvement, and acceptance. Psychological well-being is primarily correlated with happiness with one's career and life (Yang *et al,* 2022, p.461).

Employee well-being is positively impacted by taking brief pauses to engage in non-work-related activities (such as taking several deep breaths to relax the brain) (Yang *et al,* 2022, p.460).Although businesses may promote "wellbeing" as a company-driven initiative, employees still see it as something they can control on their own and do not link it to their happiness with and loyalty to the business. Employee "self-initiative factors" have a significant impact on employee welfare, which is seen as a stand-alone endogenous construct (Hegyes *et al,* 2021, p.16).High levels of wellbeing are linked to a number of favorable organizational attitudes. These include higher effort and thinking put into work, less absenteeism, and fewer job-related injuries. Given the connection between work and wellbeing and the significance of wellbeing for organizational performance, it is in an organization's best interest to support and encourage workplace wellbeing (Keeman *et al,* 2017, p.9).Over the past two decades, keeping talented employees has risen to the top of the list of human resource management (HRM) practices' most essential objectives (Pittino *et al,* 2016, p.80).

Both stress and wellbeing are distinct but connected concepts. The absence of stress does not imply wellbeing, just as the absence of mental illness does not mean mental health. Evidence, however, indicates that thriving may act as a buffer against the detrimental impacts of stress, suggesting that investments made to promote wellbeing may help reduce stress while also yielding extra advantages related to flourishing at work (Keeman *et al,* 2017, p.7).Nevertheless, a toxic working environment is a climate element that destroys a person's sense of security and is therefore certain to have a detrimental effect on well-being (Rasool *et al,* 2021, p.11).

Organizations have historically prioritized lowering employee stress rather than enhancing

employee wellbeing, despite the numerous favorable organizational attitudes linked with employee wellbeing. When a situation's perceived expectations and personal resources are out of balance, stress results. According to prior research, stress is connected to decreased production and thus decreased profit, which is why businesses prioritize putting stress management strategies in place (Keeman *et al,* 2017, p.9).Organizations are crucial in developing and maintaining a high-quality work environment. Additionally, managers are conscious of the significance of employee well-being in luring top talent, enhancing output, and forging a competitive edge (Uysal *et al,* 2020, p.3).

2.2 Work-Life Balance

Businesses may now recruit and keep skilled individuals globally, which offers both advantages and disadvantages for firms. However, companies must deal with cutting-edge problems including employee happiness, work-life balance, and burnout (Aleem *et al,* 2022, p.8).

Work-life balance (WLB) is a concept that refers to how well an employee is able to balance work and personal commitments. As a result, progressing toward WLB becomes an essential component of the employee recovery process. From the standpoint of the employer, assisting employees in achieving this ideal state - WLB - gives the business a competitive edge in luring and keeping talent. Trait mindfulness, which refers to one's ability for non-judgmental awareness and attention in a current circumstance, is one way to achieve WLB (and the more general objective of employee recovery from work-related stress) (Yang *et al,* 2022, p.461).

According to the authors of a study, employees' manifestations of emotional tiredness are likely to differ depending on their dispositional mindfulness. In other words, mindfulness can lessen bullying at work. According to the authors, management may foster a positive work environment by utilizing the right tools and putting rules in place that will increase employee resilience. The resultant rise in staff loyalty to the company and less employee burnout can all benefit employee well-being. To adequately monitor workplace bullying, though, is a difficulty (Uysal *et al,* 2020, p.2).Since employees today greatly value flexible work schedules and work-life balance thanks to home office arrangements, mental wellness has taken on special importance (Hegyes *et al,* 2021, p.14).

2.3 Remote Work

The sudden COVID-19 pandemic breakout has compelled enterprises to implement remote work platforms. To stay operationally active in such a dire circumstance, organizations have to embrace remote work. However, a lot of problems have been highlighted by the quick uptake of remote work solutions. There are no studies on how businesses can successfully use a remote work system while preparing themselves to handle emergency scenarios (Chatterjee *et al,* 2021, p.1509).

Studies have indicated that one of the primary human motivators is the desire for competence. When there is a desire to receive more, there is a requirement to boost professional progress. Working from home has resulted in a lack of professional stimulation due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Shiri *et al,* 2021, p.23). It is expected that workplace flexibility, work-time flexibility, and organizational infrastructure flexibility would all have an effect on remote work flexibility. These have an effect on both productivity and employee satisfaction, which ultimately have an effect on organizational performance. According to prior scholars, remote work is a crucial component of today's business environment. Individuals employed by organizations that carry out their duties away from traditional office settings are referred to as "remote workers". Remote work is essential for ensuring the efficient operation of nearly every organizational function, including marketing, finance, and supply chain management, for companies that cross geographic boundaries and operate in various time zones (Hegyes *et al,* 2021, p.10).

The need for remote work may increase the need for automation, collaboration, and a greater migration to cloud computing. To attain these future goals, it is crucial to maintain staff enthusiasm and motivation. The challenge for human resources professionals in this environment is to enable and implement programs and policies that will maintain employee engagement (Shiri *et al,* 2021, p.25).

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly made it more difficult for HR professionals to build procedures, regulations, and chances that can offer workers greater employment opportunities for the now as well as the future, particularly with regard to remote working (Shiri *et al,* 2021, p.23)

2.4 Job Satisfaction

According to previous research, job satisfaction is defined as employees' favorable feelings toward aspects of their job. An employee's level of enthusiasm for their work and the organization is a measure of their job satisfaction (Hayat *et al,* 2022, p.390). Some researchers believe that the phrases "happy and well-being at work" and "job satisfaction," "commitment," "job participation," and "normal mood at work" were once interchangeable. So, the three factors and assessments used in earlier research on employee happiness were job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and work engagement. Therefore, despite the well-known significance of interpersonal relationships in well-being, some studies concentrated only on the relationship between happiness and satisfaction while ignoring employees' emotional well-being and new constructs like having pleasant relationships with other people at work (Sakka *et al,* 2020, p.359).

As per the findings of a study conducted on the staff members of a hospital, Gen Z (87.2%) had the highest level of job satisfaction, followed by Gen Y (77.5%), Baby Boomers (72.9%), and Gen X (71.6%). 3,781 Baby Boomers, 9,022 members of Generation X, 4971 members of Generation Y, and 1,189 members of Generation Z participated in this survey. The majority of participants felt they had little influence over the things that stressed them out, and the experience of workplace change was the one that had the most negative effects and grew with age (Gen Z: 34.3%; Gen Y: 49.3%; Gen X: 53.6%; and Baby Boomers: 56.3%) (White *et al,* 2020, p.180).

It is believed that workplace flexibility, work-time flexibility, and organizational infrastructure flexibility would all have an effect on remote work flexibility. These have an effect on both productivity and employee satisfaction, which ultimately have an effect on organizational performance (Chatterjee *et al,* 2021, p.1508).

Previous research has shown and documented the positive effects that creative workplace cultures have on workers' job satisfaction (Sahut *et al,* 2022, p.9).Employee loyalty, which is described as an attitude and behavioral element (Cachón-Rodrguez *et al*, 2022, p.5), and retention, which is defined as the intention to stay, are both relational variables of a long-term relationship. Their absence has a number of unfavorable effects on the organization and its employees, including decreased productivity, profitability, and employee satisfaction (Cachón-Rodrguez *et al*, 2022, p.5). Previous research has shown an oppositional association between work satisfaction and company size. Larger businesses tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction, which can be explained by the rigidity of the work structure (Nordlof *et al,* 2015, p.699).

2.5 Corporate Social Responsibility

It can be difficult to define corporate social responsibility (CSR) because it encompasses a wide range of strategies and varies depending on the situation, time period, and culture. In general, CSR suggests that businesses have a moral duty to behave ethically toward the society in which they operate, going above and beyond what is permitted by law, beyond their responsibilities to typical stakeholders like employees, customers, vendors, and the neighborhood.

CSR is a cutting-edge strategic management technique used by businesses that are socially and environmentally sensitive in the twenty-first century. Although internal company CSR initiatives like workplace health promotion and their effects on employee wellbeing are less well-researched than external CSR initiatives, this is especially true during pandemics when job security is generally poorer across a wide range of industries. Additionally, as part of the third Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations, wellbeing and good health have been acknowledged as vital objectives to attain (Hegyes *et al,* 2021, p.18).

The term "corporate social responsibility" refers to the actions taken by a corporation in an effort to positively affect society or the workplace environment. The primary goal of an organization's CSR initiatives should be to go above and beyond the obligations of the law in order to reduce negative externalities and increase positive externalities (Hayat *et al,* 2022, p.391). CSR

programs could contribute to the development of a productive workplace that fosters employee wellbeing and encourages active engagement in environmentally friendly conduct (Rasool *et al,* 2021, p.11).

3. Research methodology

We used literature review methodology while writing this article. For this purpose, we assure that information used to write this paper was mainly extracted from various scientific papers published in electronic journals. We also made sure to include references in this article, mainly from recent studies, to add more value.

We present a literature review of some of the work-related aspects, briefly elaborating them and mentioning recent studies done in the field. The paper is written for readers of different backgrounds and not particularly for the experts in field or professionals working in the HR domain.

The main objective of this paper is broad. Since the subject is not very specific, it is challenging to study the vast literature that already exist and select only the most suitable sources for the paper. Priority has only been given to those works that are thought to be of special contemporary relevance and significance due to the subjectivity of the selection process and the authors' deliberate inclination toward those areas of interest.

4. Findings

Several studies argue that employee well-being has a favorable impact on staff productivity and, ultimately, organizational performance. We also found out how organizations play a vital role in providing a better working environment for employees to encourage talent retention and attract more talented people to the company. Work-life balance is something that helps these companies achieve that goal and gives them a competitive edge. We also saw how, in today's world, employees value more flexible schedules and more comfortable working arrangements than before.

We discovered that the sudden pandemic led organizations to embrace the remote working model, which has currently become an integral part of the business environment. On one side, there are companies that make sure to provide a healthy and safe environment to their employees just because it is mandatory. On the other side, there are companies that give much needed priority to their employees and safeguard their well-being.

5. Conclusions

To conclude, work-related priorities have seen a substantial evolution in the past few years. Especially after the pandemic, the work-related priorities have shifted, and people have started to value more flexibility (workplace flexibility, work-time flexibility, and organizational infrastructure flexibility). As a result, companies also had to embrace change and adapt accordingly for better employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is crucial for a company, as mentioned earlier, because of its positive impact on the productivity of an employee and ultimately, the organizational performance. CSR may be used by firms to improve their work environment and increase productivity at the workplace.

6. References

- Aleem, M., Sufyan, M., Ameer, I. & Mustak, M., 2022. Remote work and the COVID-19 pandemic: An artificial intelligence-based topic modeling and a future agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 154(113303), p.1-16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113303
- Cachón-Rodríguez, G., Blanco-González, A., Prado-Román, C., & Del-Castillo-Feito, C., 2022. How sustainable human resources management helps in the evaluation and planning of employee loyalty and retention: Can social capital make a difference?. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, *95*(102171), p.1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2022.102171
- Chatterjee, S., Chadhuri, R. & Vrontis, D., 2021. Does remote work flexibility enhance organization performance? Moderating role of organization policy and top management support. *Journal of Business Research*, 139, p.1501-1512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.10.069

- Hayat, A., Afshari, L., 2022. CSR and employee well-being in hospitality industry: A mediation model of job satisfaction and affective commitment. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 51, p. 387-396. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2022.04.008
- Hegyes, E.G., Nathan, R.J. & Farkas, M.F., 2021. Workplace Health Promotion, Employee Wellbeing and Loyalty during Covid-19 Pandemic—Large Scale Empirical Evidence from Hungary. *Economies*, 9(55), p.1-22. https://doi.org/10.3390/economies9020055
- Keeman, A., Näswall, K., Malinen, S. & Kuntz, J., 2017. Employee Wellbeing: Evaluating a Wellbeing Intervention in Two Settings. *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 8, No. 505, p.1-14. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00505
- Nordlöf, H., Wijk, K., & Westergren, K. E., 2015. Perceptions of work environment priorities: Are there any differences by company size? An ecological study. *Work*, *52*(3), p. 697-706. https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-152123
- Pittino, D., Visintin, F., Lenger, T. & Sternad., D., 2016. Are high performance work practices really necessary in family SMEs? An analysis of the impact on employee retention. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 7, p. 75-89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2016.04.002
- Rasool, F.L., Wang, M., Tang, M., Saeed, A. & Iqbal, J., 2021. How Toxic Workplace Environment Effects the Employee Engagement: The Mediating Role of Organizational Support and Employee Wellbeing.*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(2294), p.1-17. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18052294
- Sahut, J.M. & Lissillour, R., 2022. The adoption of remote work platforms after the Covid-19 lockdown: New approach, new evidence. *Journal of Business Research*, 154(113345), p.1-14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113345
- Sakka, G. & Ahammad, M.F., 2020. Unpacking the relationship between employee brand ambassadorship and employee social media usage through employee wellbeing in workplace: A theoretical contribution. *Journal of Business Research*, 119, p.354-363. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.03.038
- Shiri, S. &D'Mello, L., 2021. Human Resource Professional Priorities and Challenges in Times of COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Health Sciences and Pharmacy (IJHSP)*, 5(1), p.23-33. https://doi.org/10.47992/IJHSP.2581.6411.0059
- Uysal, M., Sirgy, M.J. & Kim, H.L., 2020. Well-being research in the service industries. *The Service Industries Journal*, 40(1-5) , p.1-5. https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2019.1662624
- White, J., Hepworth, G., Alvarado, J., Lemmon, C. & Brijnath, N., 2020. Managing workplace change: Intergenerational perspectives from Victorian public hospital nurses. *Collegian*, 178, p. 178-183. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.colegn.2020.06.006
- Yang, X. & Jo, W., 2022. Roles of work-life balance and trait mindfulness between recovery experiences and employee subjective well-being: A moderated mediation model. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 52, p.459-468. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2022.08.005
- Zahoor, N., Donbesuur, F., Christofi, M. & Miri, D., 2022. Technological innovation and employee psychological well-being: The moderating role of employee learning orientation and perceived organizational support.*Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 179(121610), p.1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.121610