



How Does Organisational Situations affect the Mental Health of the Employees

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Abstract

An organisation is founded with the hope that it will endure and develop. The goal is to grow the business to a significant size in the future. A company is created by its employees, they are the core of any organisation since they determine how quickly it will grow; nevertheless, this does not lessen the significance of other external variables. However, when employees are talked about, the management is too. Any business must comprehend the psychology of its staff, whether they are functioning under pressure or independently with only the goal of advancement in mind. Therefore, it is crucial to understand an employee's issues and how that affects their mental health in this regard. Additionally, it is also important for an organisation to know that employees need empowerment and should work towards ideating those as well as implying the same.

Keywords: Management, psychology, employees, mental health

Introduction

The establishment and maintenance of a work culture in the workplace depends heavily on psychology. As workplace culture sets the ground rules for each individual working in the firm. A predetermined mindset or psychology can also help a manager suggest healthier behaviour at work, lessen unfavourable feelings, and boost efficiency and productivity.

Every person has a unique manner of thinking and functioning. Even though an organisation is run by numerous people, it must behave as if it were a single person. This will only be possible if all employees think alike and to do this, they would require a clear vision. Furthermore, to gain that perspective, a manager would need to direct them for the same. A manager can only achieve this, then, if the organisation has a predetermined psychology and operates on that foundation.

Change management is a crucial stance in an organisational setting. There are some stages that can be followed in the change management processes such as, prepare the firm for change, plan for the change and craft for the vision, and implementation for the changes as employees' psychology affects the adoption of technology. (V, 2023, 5)

A study on industrial/organisational psychology is often done to understand the employee perspective of how they think of their organisation based on the practices followed. It is a scientific study to understand human behaviour in a workplace. It is fairly understood by the workplaces that the F.W.Taylor's theory of more money, more satisfaction isn't going to sustain an employee's boosted motivation for long periods of time. An employee needs to gain much more than just an incremental salary.

A workplace is made up of multiple individuals with different thought processes, likes, dislikes and a level of expertise. It is not necessarily the case that every employee gets along with all of their colleagues. The management then comes into the frame, wherein they design systems, policies and regulations that keeps the interest of the employees intact. As the workplace environment plays a key role in the attitude of the employee by which they look at the organisation. If they don't feel the stability, satisfaction and the ease in the organisation then the workplace won't find the results either for which they employed those individuals.

The history of Psychology's long journey explains that dynamics will always occur, affecting society's physical and psychological conditions. And vice versa, a person's physical and psychological condition can affect that person's work performance, as well as other people around him. ((PDF) *THE ROLE OF INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE ERA OF SOCIETY 5.0*, 2023)

It is highly essential for the management to know the problems faced by the employees in the organisation. There are few problems faced by the employees on a regular basis, they are so deeply rooted in the workplaces that many a times they are even neglected as a daily routine of the organisation. Those problems start to normalise themselves in the organisation that the conscious minds might not even think about or realise them any more. A few of such problems are:

1. Discrimination

Discrimination is a situation faced by humans based on various factors at almost many stages of life. It is an unfair treatment made to a section of people because they are perceived in a manner not acceptable by the rest of society. Workplaces are one of those locations where discrimination is evident. There are many causes of discrimination, but a few stand out:

a) Gender:

The basis for gender discrimination in an organisation is the person's sex, that is, whether they are a male or female. The greatest example of this is the gender pay gap. It is frequently said that, compared to men, women are paid far less for an equivalent level of job and workload as compared to males.

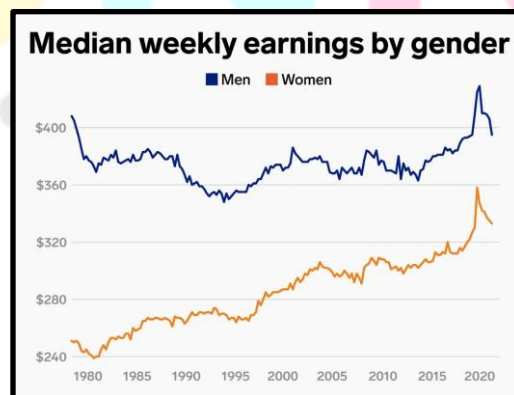


Figure 1

Based on these statistics it is evident that this culture of gender pay gap has been instilled in the organisational working patterns since years. Nevertheless, it's only now that the issue has started to get attention.

b) Race:

People are discriminated based on their skin tones. The discrimination against African-Americans is a significant instance of discrimination. The discrimination is based on the skin tone of individuals. A major case of discrimination is the African-American discrimination issue. Where from the start of slavery in 1660's when the first ever African was brought on American soil to become a slave of the white's until now in the organisations where they experience an unfair treatment.

The graph demonstrates the racism felt by the Africans even after being situated there for generations now and practically being Americans. A good 57% of African Americans have felt a pay gap or missed promotion opportunities just because of their skin colour.

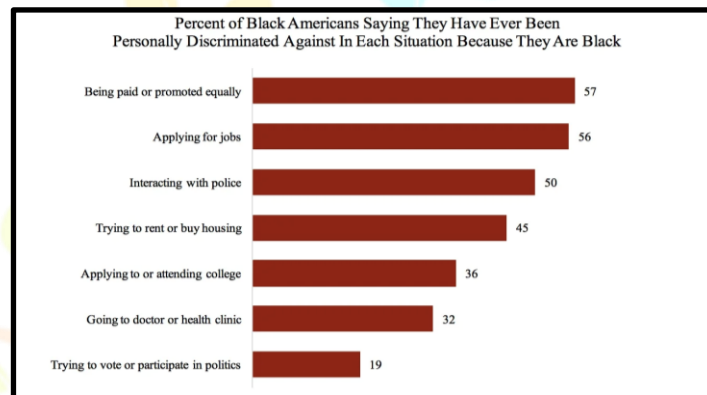


Figure 2

c) Religion:

Religious discrimination is also a common type of discrimination. This typically occurs because of the hateful psychology or attitude of a group of individuals that follow a particular religion and hold opposing religious ideas. To simplify this further, let there be a hypothetical scenario where a hindu employer has two candidates with the same potential level in order to better explain this. Though if one of those candidates is a hindu and the other is a muslim. If the boss chooses the hindu candidate just because of his religion and faith, that defines discrimination based on religion.

d) Country of Origin:

An individual's nationality might reduce their level of opportunities in a different country where their origin isn't well respected. For example, a Syrian origin might face discrimination, if he wished to have an employment opportunity in the States.

e) Sexuality:

The LGBTQ+ community faces a lot of challenges while willing to find work and earn for themselves. Sometimes even when they find work a section of the employees do try to eliminate them or cut them off the channel. This occurs only as a result of their lack of tolerance for things they are unfamiliar with or have never encountered.

f) Disabilities:

Based on behavioural sciences, humans are impatient and don't want to accept another individual which doesn't look "normal" to them. An individual with Tourette Syndrome might not be accepted by a team just with the sole reason that a conversation will consume more time than usual. Under the garb of one disability, the other mental capabilities of that individual will not be considered.

2. Corporate Politics

Corporate Politics is a creation of the human greed for superiority and power. Many people believe that having power gives them the unspoken right to order what they want and live their lives however they choose to. A fraction of those also believe that corporate politics aids them to climb up the corporate ladder and achieve promotions by being the chosen one by the boss. A percentage of people believe that they are victims to corporate politics and are losing their deserved rewards to a more well connected employee. This situation also leads to a lot of wastage of time and money as the minds that should have been occupied trying to benefit the organisation are indulged in worrying about the personal concerns of threat from a colleague. As quoted by David Frankel, "Everyone comes to the table with their own personal goals, egos, aspirations, and agendas, and in order for someone to get what they want, there is always going to be some level of compromise, negotiation, and politicking, where this starts to become problematic is when personal motivations are not aligned with those of the company." (*How to break down Workplace Politics*, 2023)

Impression management also plays a significant role when it comes to corporate politics. As, the people who can use impression management strategically can create favourable impressions about themselves, which may lead to career-building and advancing opportunities. (Sekaja, 2022, #)

3. Emotion of Jealousy

The emotion of jealousy is a product of corporate politics. It comes from the idea of an individual picturing a loss of their opportunity because of another individual, irrespective of the deserving factor. It's the hope of an individual which isn't fulfilled, say getting a promotion or a salary hike or being a project leader for instance. Though jealousy is not always a negative emotion, if it's felt in the right amount, it could act as a fuel to achieve better work. As it boils down to the emotion of not having the best feeling and lacking something which takes an individual to a close to full. So when an individual doesn't feel fully accomplished it might make them strive to work towards being better. However, when the emotion of jealousy crosses its line it is very easy for it to become venomous and eventually convert into a negative emotion and how largely it is perceived. (*How to transform workplace jealousy into a productive emotion*, 2023)

4. How does hierarchy affect negatively to an employee's mental health

While hierarchy could prove to be a benefit to the organisation it could also have its disadvantages. As if the firm has a long chain of command, in that case the lower level of employees might feel inferior and not included in major decisions. They could just be assigned with a task list and that could lead to a feeling of not belonging to the company, this might just demotivate them from work and negatively affect their productivity. Also by the time the lower levels receive their command of action, the message might shift a little than its actual sense, due different people perceiving the information in different ways.

When there are too many levels of hierarchies there is often a confusion between who plays what role. This confusion could lead to conflicts amongst employees since differences of opinion might occur for the same task. And all the people who feel accountable for the task might want to do it their way. A longer chain of command might also mean lots of levels to achieve a big promotion that might actually be of a greater value, this might take away the drive and motivation from employees due to a thought that there might not be a way for them to gain up so many levels in their

tenure at the company. The employee might lack the requirement to freedom while working, since he or she might be answerable to not just the immediate boss but even the super bosses. That might take away their identity and pattern of working. Furthermore, this might negatively affect their willingness to work. (*Effects of work hierarchy and structure on Mental Health*, 2019)

5. Competition

Competition in an organisation is amongst the employees to outperform each other. Companies encourage their employees to be in a healthy competition as that drives employees to challenge themselves and work better and contributes to the growth of the company. The organisation could also believe that this encourages an environment of encouragement and innovation leading to a more productive and efficient work culture in the organisation. However, the competition could also lead to individuals indulging into malpractices like stealing a colleagues work, developing fake data to achieve results faster that might lead to the business incurring long term costs of penalty and bad reputation. This unhealthy competition leads to employees feeling anxious, fearful of losing income and status, and anxiety. All these emotions could affect the mental health of the employees and reduce productivity and efficiency. This would also lead the employees to create a stressful work culture and deteriorate company growth. (*The Pros and cons of competition among employees*, 2017)

While an organisation has a series of issues to resolve and not normalise it, they do also represent their individual values. They try to aid their employees too in ways they possibly can. To highlight a few:

1. How does hierarchy benefit employees

Hierarchy is made in the organisation to give structure and distribute work amongst employees. Also to level and give employees perspective of their roles and duties and who are they accountable to. It is also to ease the employees by giving them a mental support that they have a guiding path in the form of their boss. At the same time motivating them to work effectively for future promotions. Also for the higher management it is a matter of pride and status, which gives them motivation to work harder and delegate and direct work more efficiently with their teams to achieve better results. Employees work better with the idea of getting better pay and promotion and the perks that are attached to the same. (*What is the business hierarchy? definition and examples*, 2023)

2. Reasons why people want to join organisations with good reputations

People want the best working conditions, pay and status for themselves. This comes from working for a brand that is perceived well in the market and how it is talked about. Usually it is the employees of the brand who make the impression of the brand, since they are the ones who are the core of the business, without them the firm wouldn't reach where it has. So the mindset of an individual to work in brands that are well reputed is to fulfil their personal goals in the level of hierarchy of maslow's theory. When these needs are fulfilled an employee feels content, satisfied and motivated to work and perform better. This mental satisfaction keeps them away from situations like corporate politics and indulging in unethical practices.

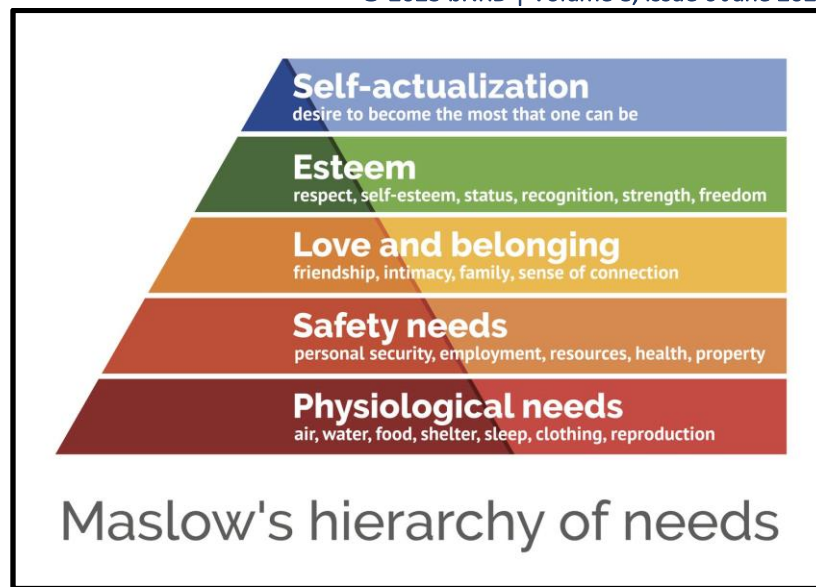


Figure 3

On the contrary, when these needs don't get fulfilled employees choose to leave the organisation and look for better opportunities.

Literature Review

Toxic Workplace, Mental Health and Employee Well-Being, the Moderator Role of Paternalistic Leadership, an Empirical Study. (Mustafa, Mohommad, Ai-Somaidae, May 2023)

The research paper emphasises the impacts of a toxic workplace environment on the employee's mental health. This in turn, affects the productivity and efficiency of the employee and reduces output for the organisation. The paper talked about the major factors that affect the mental health of the employees, namely, dissatisfaction from the job role/position, burnout, income dissatisfaction, etc. The emphasis continued on the paternalistic way of leadership. The paper suggested that based on their primary research, the employees who had paternalistic managers had a better performance, mental health and greater willingness to work.

Objectives of Modern Management Psychology (Prof. Asoc. Dr. Violeta Koleci, Msc. Redon Koleci)

The research paper talks about the modern objectives and requirements the organisation needs to have in order to have a positive workplace environment. The main objectives the paper looks at are diversity and inclusion, upskilling employees and developing leadership qualities, encouraging teamwork, promoting work-life balance and lastly, indulging a sense of purpose amongst employees. The paper further urges the need to individual goals to organisational objectives. As the author believes that it is difficult for an individual to disconnect with their personal goal and focus on just organisational goals. However, if both are aligned then the organisation could also achieve better results, performance and efficiency and the employee's job satisfaction and willingness to work can also be intact.

Reforming Mental Health Laws and Policy at Work Place: Better Late than Never (Noraziah Abu Baker, Mohommad Faizul Hassan, April 2022)

The research paper is mainly highlighting the strengthening of legal laws for keeping the mental health of employees intact at the workplace. It suggests that in the current times, there are still a lot of loopholes in the legal laws in regards to the said issue. The paper directs towards addressing those loopholes and strengthening the laws. As that would improve the mental health of the employees, and that would lead to boosted morale, higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and better workplace culture. It also proposes an inclusion of the protection of mental health laws under employment laws. The paper also suggests to promote mental health precautions within the organisation through different ways like, awareness campaigns, creating a supportive work environment and educating the employees about the importance of mental health leading to employees also taking care of their fellow colleagues.

Methodology

Objectives

- To understand what employees feel about their workplace
- To understand how the organisation affects an employee's mental health
- To analyse an employee's willingness to work for their organisation
- To understand the importance of workplace culture in an employee's mind

The idea behind the research paper is to highlight the managerial issues faced by employees in the organisation and how that affects the psychology or mental health of those employees.

The primary data gathered for the research paper is based on the questionnaire tool. As gaining first hand information from the people working in the organisations would give the actual reality and the information to what exactly happens in the organisations and how it impacts people's lives. A qualitative approach was taken during the research. Since talking about the psychology of people, it is more of a conversation based information to gather rather than stating that a certain percentage of people felt a certain way. This research is more about "what" made those employees feel that way.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1

- Do employees think positive about their workplace management
- Do employees think negative about their workplace management

Hypothesis 2

- Do employees feel good about their mental health due to workplace
- Do employees not feel good about their mental health due to workplace

Result and Discussion

This research was mainly conducted to know the employee perspective of how their organisation treats them. It is significant to know what an employee feels about their workplace and how satisfied they feel after working for that particular employer/company.

The total number of respondents to the questionnaire were 73. The demographics of the respondents were 47 females and 26 males. A major proportion of respondents were based from the western region of India. The age range of the respondents was targeted from 18 to 65, assuming that after 65 most people either have to retire due to company laws or voluntarily retire. A 50.7% which consists of 37 respondents were from the age bracket of 18 to 25, 21.9% from the age bracket of 36 to 45 and 19.2% for the age bracket of 46 to 55, covering the majority of the respondents. Moreover, the respondents belonged to vastly different industries, aiding the research to be bias free towards any particular industry.

The respondents experienced various kinds of leadership styles in their offices, ranging from autocratic, democratic, transactional and laissez faire. From the sample size of the respondents, 50.7% of them felt their organisation follows democratic style of leadership. This is a leadership style where the manager accounts the importance of employee vision in the business decision as much as their own. It is a situation where the manager believes that employees' vision should be considered and heard carefully, since they can have equally valuable suggestions to give as much as the managers themselves could have because of their position and experience.

Furthermore, 80.8% of people felt that their company goals were effectively communicated to them. Then, 84.9% responded that their managers do give them a fair amount of opportunity to individually enhance their professional skills and build their portfolio of work. A major proportion of the respondents, which accounted for 78.1%, also felt that their workplace remains true to its outer market impression, which they have created for their customers and other stakeholders. All these positive claims suggest that a vast majority of the organisations irrespective of their industry respect their employees and put in efforts to maintain managerial policies that keep the rights of an employee intact. Due to the well known fact that a satisfied and secure employee could make a company from just a few lakhs to a unicorn in the matter of time. However, the same employees, if dissatisfied, could also land a unicorn to bankruptcy. The data until this point surely suggests in favour of the organisation's efforts of adhering and building to labour law policies.

To elaborate, as a majority of the respondents belong to the western region of India, the labour laws particularly are stricter in this region too. To begin with, the central government reforms. The central government of India increased the maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks under the Maternity Benefit Act, 2017. (*Initiatives of Central Government*, n.d.)

According to the Gujarat State guidelines for labour laws one of the major recent amendments is that for a compensation payable, under the sub section 3 of section 77, an employer is liable to pay 12% per annum of simple interest to the employee, if they as a company default in paying the compensation payable to the employee within 30 days of its due. This amount needs to be paid with the consideration that from the day the compensation became payable until the day it is actually paid. (*The Gazette of India*, 2023)

Then there are several other acts like the Employee Provident Fund Act, Employee Insurance Act, etc that protects the finances of an employee, and ensures that even their retirement expenses are covered, to support them even when they won't be able to earn anymore. Such policies help an employee get a sense of security, which further leads to them working even better for the company, to acknowledge a sense of gratitude towards the company since they are taking an effort to secure even the future of the particular individual.

While these are all the basic aspects covered and fairly taken care of by the government as well organisation's personal initiatives. There are more serious conditions which an employee feels they have been victimised on. In the survey, the employees were asked which of the following ill practices have they witnessed the most in their organisation. In

that response, 45.2% respondents said Corporate Politics is the most witnessed ill practice followed by emotion of jealousy, discrimination and finally stealing of colleagues' work in a chronological order.

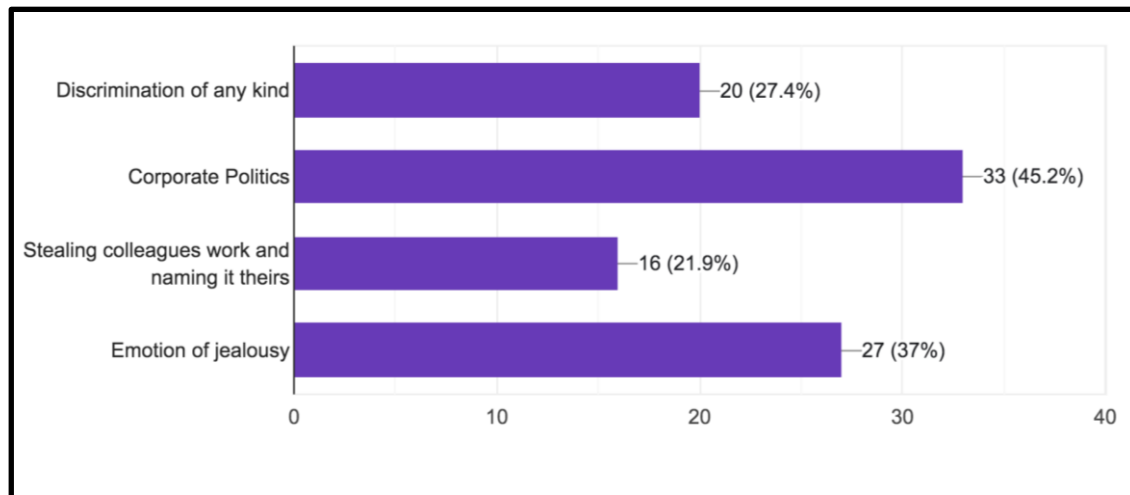


Figure 4

Such events usually contribute negatively to an employee's mental health. As they lose the sense of belonging from the organisation, due to the fact that their mental state tells them if their work, despite all their genuine efforts is not going to make them achieve a certain promotion or recognition then why should they put in that effort. As if biases are going to eventually build the promotion charts instead of genuine work, it is going to demotivate the real performers of the organisation. Corporate Politics also certainly leads to an emotion of jealousy, due to an employee feeling inferior to a certain colleague on the basis of preference by the manager.

To add on, from the respondents who suggested that they have been in a conflict with their colleague/superior/junior, 71.4% believe that their problems were heard and resolved by either the manager or HR, depending on the situation. This is a positive statistic to witness. However, the rest do feel a sense of dejection due the feeling of being disregarded to a genuine issue faced. When it comes to work recognition, 95.9% agree that their work is recognised. Though, 28.8% of those felt that the credit for the same isn't acknowledged. These matters are actual issues that lead to a negative mental health of employees due to rising fears like, insecurity, dejection, jealousy and seclusion.

Further in the survey, the respondents were also asked what they feel about how much importance does a workplace culture have in an individual's life and does their workplace contribute to their mental health in a positive or negative aspect. A part of the question also suggested how reliant is their mental health on the workplace environment.

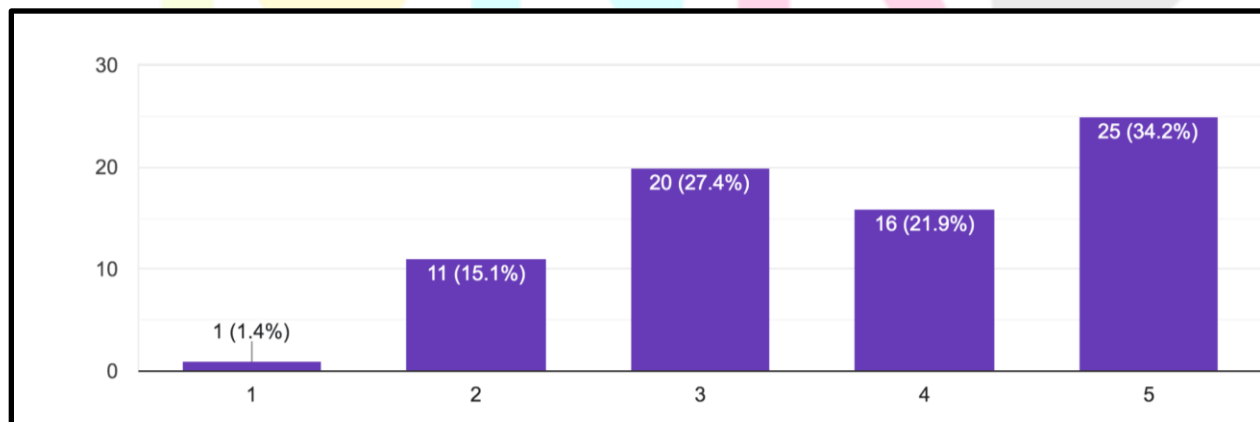


Figure 5

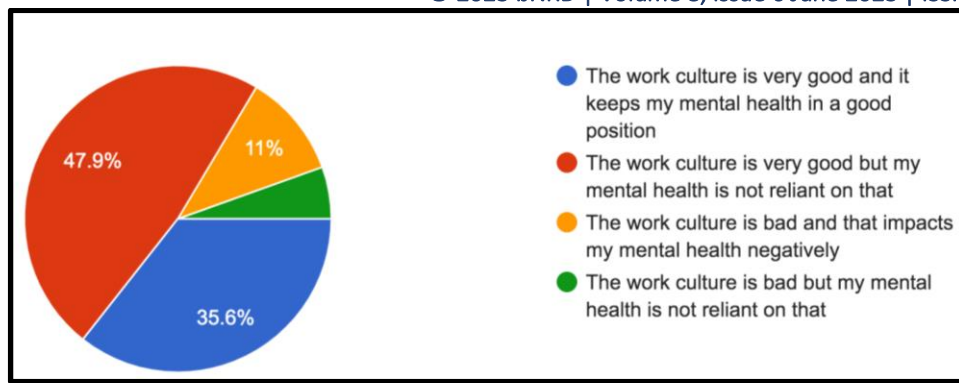


Figure 6

The data points in Figure 5 clearly suggest that a majority feel the importance of a good workplace culture. However, based on figure 6, employees do try to not let their mental health be reliant on the workplace culture. This might be a measure employees take to protect themselves from a bad work culture. To support this argument, 5.5% people from the sample size did respond back stating that their organisation doesn't have a desirable work culture and yet, they have a stable mental health.

Steps management should take to empower employees:

Empowering employees is extremely important as it sets the base clear for how an employee perceives the brand. It sets a vision in the minds of the employees of how the brand is, and on that basis they decide if they think highly of the brand or are not satisfied with the same. To further elaborate, this also clarifies their approach towards the brand and their level of willingness to contribute to the growth of the organisation. There are multiple ways employees could be empowered.

1. Delegate tasks with the vision of development:

First the management needs to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their employees, their interests, their domain everything. Then based on that delegate tasks. This way employees do what they are good at, this gives better returns to the organisation since employees are working on what they are good at. At the same time, it boosts employee morale as they know what they are doing and they are aware that they are doing a fine job at it. This reduces the feeling of cluelessness and inferiority, both these emotions demotivate employees. So delegating tasks based on the employee's individuality could lead to growth.

2. Clarity of expectations and company's vision:

Let employees know what is expected of them and what roles and responsibilities are they accountable for. This clarity gives a line of thought and a clear picture to the employee to work.

3. Employees should be delegated autonomy:

To direct the employees, they do need a brief and a line of thought. That should be communicated effectively to them. However, the management should adhere to the fact that each individual functions differently and has their own way to deal with situations, therefore reaching from Point A to Point B should be told but the "how" could be figured out by the employee themselves.

4. Avail needful resources:

When employees are expected to deliver a certain result, they need the resources for the same as well. The management could make sure all the needs are made available so that the employee doesn't feel left behind because of the lack of resources, or discouraged to achieve their goals.

5. Provide constructive feedback:

When an employee comes to the upper management with a task worked on, the management should take time out to address the employee and its work and review it in a positive aspect of actually helping the employee improve their skills and knowledge rather than just pure criticism because the management is simply in the position to.

6. Encourage inputs:

Understand that an employee also comes with their channel of thoughts and has a more practical knowledge of the ground reality. They are better aware of what practically impacts more or less. Value their inputs, if they have any. Listen to them with the motive of what's best for the company rather than what is easier and quicker for the company. This value will also encourage the employee more as a strong sense of belonging would be felt.

7. Give credit where required:

The management needs to recognise each employee's work and give them credit for their achievements for the company. This improves their drive to work for the betterment of the organisation and also makes them feel highly of themselves, well respected and acknowledged.

8. Work on the culture of the organisation-build trust:

The management needs to take the responsibility to make an employee feel comfortable in the organisational setting. The employee needs to feel trusted and should be able to trust the colleagues and bosses around. They should get that sense of comfort where they can feel free to express their thoughts and ideas.

9. Empathy:

The manager should be available to listen to an employee if they are willing to talk about something related to work or out of work. The employee might be going through something and therefore not being able to focus on work. An open communication culture should be instilled. Though if the manager knows about it and deals with it in empathy then probably the employee feels more valued to the organisation and could positively contribute to the success of the workplace.

10. Hear to listen:

When an employee comes to the management with a complaint, the management should hear what they are saying, understand and then examine what is wrong. Go to the depth of the issue, try to understand the other side too. As a lot of time the complaint could be only a show due to corporate politics.

When an employee comes up with inputs to a particular project or task, listen with an open mind, with the willingness to accept and incorporate those views for the betterment of the organisation. Those inputs shouldn't be treated as a formality or an obligation to hear.

Conclusion

In this study, the major points of examination were the importance of mental health in the organisation setting. In accordance to, the problem faced by employees and what are some of the solutions to overcome that.

To conclude, based on the result and discussions a vast majority do think positively about their workplace culture and also believe that a good workplace culture keeps their mental health intact, if their mental health is reliant on the same.

The government also plays a major role in establishing workplace policies. Though, both the government and the organisations could further take inspiration from different workplaces and government laws across other developed nations.

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