Impact of Workplace Safety, Health, and Wellness Programs on Employee Engagement and Productivity

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Abstract

Purpose: This scoping review addresses the effects of workplace wellness, health, and safety initiatives on employee engagement and output. The scoping review aimed to provide evidence-based strategies to increase employee effectiveness. It also seeks the summarise the most current research on the effects of these programs on employee engagement and productivity.

Methodology: The review involved an extensive search of relevant databases to identify published, unpublished, and grey material. It also evaluated the possibility of bias in the included studies, and the findings were assembled using a narrative synthesis.

Findings: The research discovered that several initiatives impact employees' health, safety, and well-being and how engaged and productive they are inside a business. The integration of well-being programs into the organizational structure is facilitated by strong leadership participation, which also fosters a receptive culture. Additionally, it was shown that employee commitment and participation were vital in obtaining successful program results. Giving employees a voice and a sense of ownership over the programs encourages motivation, engagement, and productivity.

Unique Contribution To Theory, Practice And Policy: The findings of this research will aid in elucidating the relationship between employee engagement and productivity and workplace safety, health, and wellness indicators. The information may be used by businesses and other stakeholders to make choices about how to implement and evaluate workplace safety, health, and wellness initiatives.

Keywords: *Workplace Safety, Workplace Health, Workplace Wellness, Employee Engagement, Employee Productivity, Workplace Safety Programs.*

1.0 Introduction

Background

Workplace safety, health, and wellness programs are among the most critical facets of the contemporary world. This scoping review aims to comprehensively examine and synthesize the existing literature on the impact of diverse workplace safety, health, and wellness programs on employee engagement and productivity; by reviewing relevant studies, identifying and reviewing various types of programs that influence employee engagement and productivity, are implemented in different industries and sectors. Studies showing the ability to increase staff engagement and productivity have helped to quickly recognize its enormous value (Gupta & Sharma, 2016). Hofmann et al. (2017) explain that most people's lives are at work, a virtual world. Therefore, maintaining its security and encouraging workers' health and well-being is essential for both their individual and group well-being (Goetzel et al., 2014). It is particularly crucial in today's highly competitive corporate world, where individuals must provide their best effort to satisfy organizational objectives (Hofmann et al. 2017).

Safety, health, and wellbeing programs may include various actions, such as appropriate training, ergonomic design, health promotion activities, and stress reduction (Mulaney et al., 2021). The authors explain that research has demonstrated that these programs may increase staff participation, work happiness, and efficiency. Their success has been widely proven in different literature (Goetzel et al., 2014).

Research efforts have examined how workplace safety, health, and well-being affect staff participation, inspiration, and performance. However, the success of workplace safety, health, and wellness initiatives has been the subject of prior studies. Still, it has not examined how such programs impact staff engagement and productivity. According to Mulaney et al. (2021), these initiatives may lower the likelihood of accidents, reduce sick days, and boost work satisfaction. However, the immediate effects of such initiatives on employee engagement and productivity need more study and research.

Comparably, research by Ali & Anwar (2021) showed that attempts to improve workplace health, safety, and well-being increased employee job satisfaction, loyalty, and motivation. Workplace safety and health activities were significantly linked to higher production, as per research by Badri et al. (2018). According to the survey, workers at companies who embraced safety and health programs were more productive than those who did not.

Research has also examined how employee output and workplace safety, health, and well-being programs relate. For example, a study by Moore & Piwek (2017) concluded that measures for occupational safety, health, and well-being had a beneficial impact on productivity. Similarly, research by Hofmann et al. (2017) found a correlation between workplace safety and health efforts and higher productivity. Proper interaction and education are crucial to ensuring workplace health, safety, and wellness programs raise employee engagement and productivity. For instance, research by Kent et al. (2016) found that adequate training and communication were necessary for occupational health, wellness, and safety initiatives. However, Lee et al. (2016) found that frequent

training and communication were crucial for guaranteeing the application of workplace safety, health, and well-being policies.

There is an urgency to research the many safety, health, and wellness initiatives and their effects on employee engagement and productivity despite the expanding amount of literature on the subject (Goetzel et al., 2014). Furthermore, while there is proof that putting these programs into place positively affects productivity and employee engagement, additional study is needed to examine the programs' long-term effects and cost-benefit ratio. The findings will provide legislators and businesses with information on the possible impacts of programs for workplace safety, health, and well-being on worker engagement and productivity. This study is anticipated to offer evidence in favor of implementing workplace health, safety, and wellness goals and showing that doing so will increase staff engagement and productivity. This scoping study aims to comprehend better how workplace wellness, health, and safety initiatives impact employee productivity and engagement. The project will review prior research, discover gaps, and offer suggestions for more investigation.

Workplace Safety, Health, and Wellness Programs

Workplace safety, health, and wellness programs are essential activities that businesses use to advance employee well-being and provide a healthy and secure place of work (Knight et al., 2019; Hofmann et al., 2017). These programs include various activities and treatments to avoid occupational diseases and injuries, foster physical and mental health, and improve employee health in general (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). They often include safety training, danger recognition and reporting, PPE usage, and adherence to safe work practices (Janes et al., 2021). As Hofmann et al. (2017) explain, organizations seek to decrease the risk of accidents, illnesses, and injuries at work by establishing safety measures, and making the workplace safer.

Health promotion initiatives seek to enhance workers' general physical health and well-being (Hofmann et al., 2017). They could include initiatives like dietary instruction, exercise programs, health exams, and wellness campaigns (Alameeri et al., 2021). As Hofmann et al. (2017) explain, these programs support preventative healthcare practices, encourage regular exercise, and promote healthy lifestyle choices.

Organizations may increase employee well-being, lower sick leave, and boost productivity by focusing on physical health (Alameeri et al., 2021). Programs for mental health target pressures at work and improve workers' psychological well-being. These programs may provide counseling services, stress management courses, and mental health assistance resources (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). Organizations prioritizing mental health recognize psychological health influences worker engagement, output, and general job satisfaction (Alameeri et al., 2021). Programs for improving workplace design and layout to reduce musculoskeletal problems and advance ergonomic best practices are known as ergonomic programs (Janes et al., 2021). These programs include ergonomic examinations, workplace evaluations, and instruction in good body mechanics (Hofmann et al., 2017). Organizations may increase employee comfort, productivity, and long-term health by designing ergonomic workspaces that lower the risk of physical stress and accidents (Gupta & Sharma, 2019).

Employee Engagement and Productivity

Employee engagement and productivity are two factors that complement each other (Janes et al., 2021). Every organization aiming to succeed and meet its business goals should understand how the two elements work within a firm (Hofmann et al., 2017). Employee engagement includes workers' emotional and psychological bonds with their jobs and organizations (Janes et al., 2021). High staff participation, inspiration, and corporate investment in their work lead to high performance levels, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). A healthy work atmosphere, going above and beyond the call of duty, and higher levels of invention and creativity are typical traits of engaged employees (Janes et al., 2021). However, some factors that impact employee engagement include job autonomy, opportunities for professional growth, fostering leadership, and a supportive workplace culture (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). Contrarily, productivity refers to how effectively and efficiently people use their resources to achieve company objectives. Productive workers regularly produce high-quality work, adhere to deadlines, and positively impact the business (Janes et al., 2021).

Clear objectives and expectations, enough resources, feedback and recognition, and a supportive work environment are all elements that affect productivity, as Saks et al. (2022) clarify. Employee engagement and productivity are inversely correlated and reinforce one another (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). Engaged employees are more likely to be productive because they are motivated and committed to offering their best (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). Increased job satisfaction among engaged workers contributes to lower turnover rates and greater organizational loyalty (Janes et al., 2021: Gupta & Sharma, 2019). On the other side, by giving workers a feeling of success and satisfaction, increasing productivity may lead to higher levels of engagement (Janes et al., 2021). These initiatives indicate a corporate commitment to employee success by offering opportunities for growth and development, raising engagement, and improving performance (Knight et al., 2019). Generally, productivity and employee engagement are intertwined and essential for business success (Gupta & Sharma, 2019).

Problem Statement and Motivation Behind the Research

There is undoubtedly a growth in the need for programs to make a workplace environment bearable for workers (Saks et al., 2022). It has led to various organizations actualizing these initiatives (Knight et al., 2019). It is still essential to assess the impact of different program types on employee engagement and productivity, given that there is a shortage of understanding about the most effective programs to enhance staff wellness and productivity (Gupta & Sharma; Knight et al., 2019). This study investigates the effects of different workplace safety, health, and wellness initiatives on employee engagement and productivity to offer employers knowledge about the most effective programs to deploy in their settings.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:
1. How do various well-being, workplace safety, and health initiatives affect worker inspiration and engagement?

2. How do various well-being, workplace safety, and health initiatives affect worker output?

3. How can wellness, workplace safety, and health initiatives be implemented to boost motivation among workers, participation, and efficiency?

Significance of the Study

The study provides valuable insights to organisations on implementing effective workplace safety, health, and wellness programs in workplaces. Moreover, the study is of great use in the literature world for researchers and other users.

This study is also crucial for organizational leaders and human resource managers in initiating these programs to help their workforce and ultimately increase productivity within organizations (Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2020). Workplace health and safety practitioners also greatly benefit as they get more knowledge and better grasp such programs within a work setting (Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2020). Organizations ultimately benefit from improved job satisfaction, productivity, and harmony (Janes et al., 2021).

2.0 Methodological Concept

The study used a scoping review approach to achieve the study's aim and objectives. The first step involved the creation of a systematic action plan to locate relevant materials. A systematic literature review was used to evaluate the quality and strength of the evidence offered in each research. The study used keywords and phrases to search online databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. A thorough literature review was conducted to find any research gaps. This analysis focused on the kinds of health and wellness programs put in place and their proven impacts on worker engagement and productivity. The search strategy used the PCC (Population, Concept, and Context) framework to identify relevant literature. It incorporated subject headings, keywords, truncation, wildcards, and Boolean operators, to capture a comprehensive range of relevant articles and literature related to the topic. Additionally, the literature used in the study included articles dated from 2012 with only works that were published in English. The data extraction involved recording critical details from the sources pertinent to the research questions and objectives. In synthesising the data, a narrative analysis technique was used to gain a deeper understanding of the subject, where the quantitative data was summarised and assessed to determine the overall evidence on the topic, and results were translated into themes and patterns. Finally, Joanna Briggs Institute Critical Assessment Checklist was utilised as the critical appraisal instrument for the scoping review. Specifically, it was applied to evaluate the quality and methodological rigour of the included research papers, as well as the calibre and validity of the research included in the scoping review.
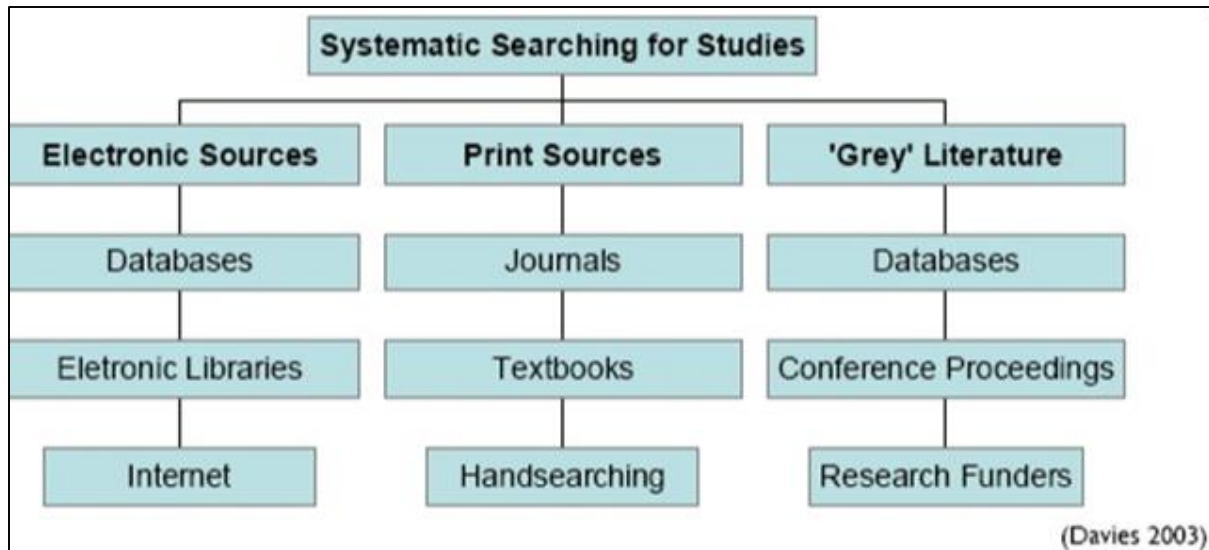
Search Strategy

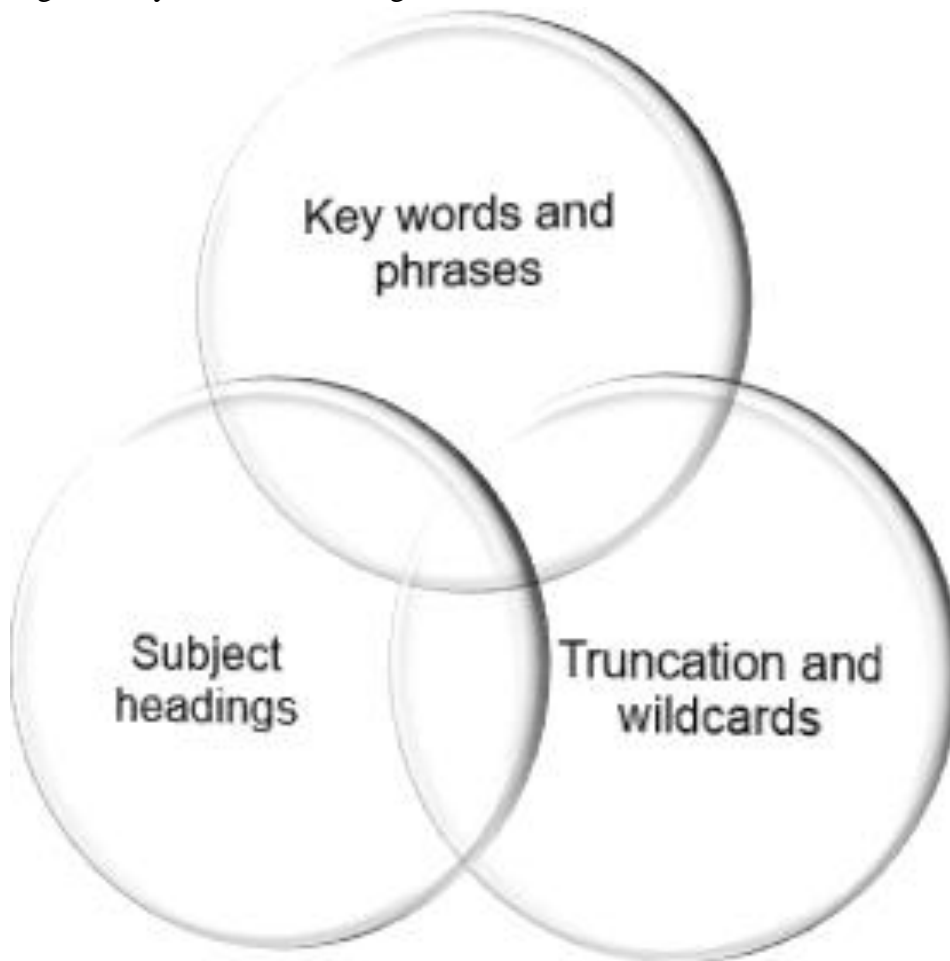Figure 1: Systematic searching for relevant studies.

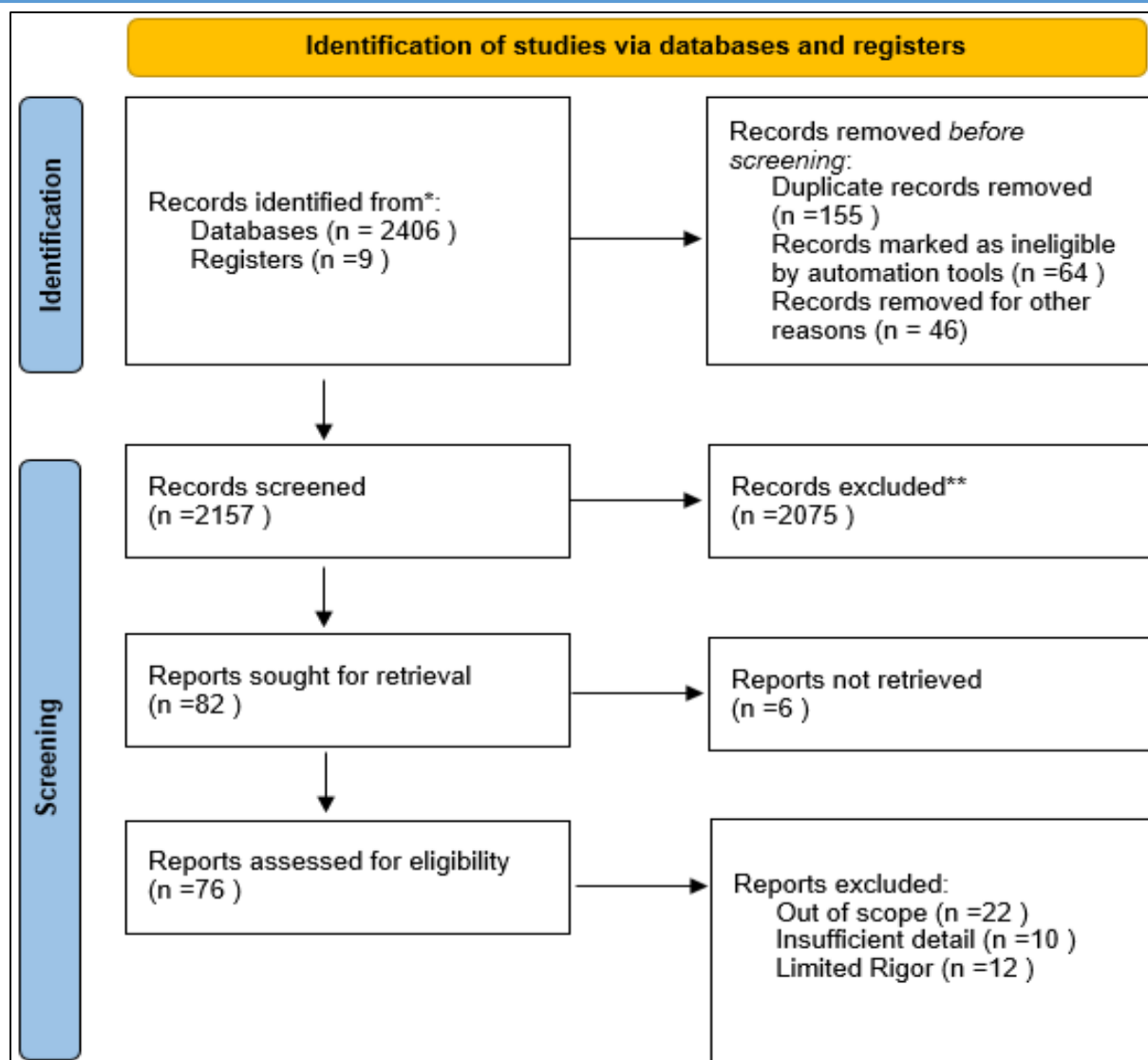
Figure 2: Systematic Search Strategy

Figure 3. PRISMA flow diagram

The figure above is the PRISMA flow diagram indicating how the identification of studies via databases and registers was done.

3.0 Results

Impact of Programs on Employee Engagement

Holistic wellness efforts encompassing physical, mental, and social well-being emerged as effective in improving employee engagement and motivation (Boccoli et al., 2023). These initiatives adopted a comprehensive approach, addressing multiple dimensions of employee well-being, and successfully created a supportive and satisfying work environment. Additionally, integrative initiatives positively impact employee engagement and motivation by addressing key factors such as physical health, mental health, work-life balance, and social connections (Boccoli et al., 2023).

Initiatives solely focused on physical health and safety had mixed impacts on employee engagement and motivation (Yadav et al., 2022). Hence, a multidimensional approach to employee well-being, encompassing physical, mental, and social aspects, is necessary to maximize engagement and motivation (Yadav et al., 2022). Depending on elements including age, gender, job type, and corporate culture, as Yadav et al. (2022) explain, employee engagement and motivation may differ. To successfully meet the individual needs of workers and connect with their motivations, it is vital to consider these variables when developing and executing well-being initiatives (Alameeri et al., 2021).

Impact of Programs on Employee Productivity

Well-planned and skilfully executed efforts to enhance workplace safety, health, and well-being favourably influenced employee productivity, as Jeha et al. (2022) note. Programs for work-life balance in the office have also been recommended (Yadav et al., 2022), to increase employee productivity. These programs include a wide variety of efforts to encourage a seamless union between workers' personal and professional lives (Yadav et al., 2022) such as flexible work schedules, telecommuting possibilities, and family-friendly policies (Mazzetti et al., 2021). These programs enable individuals to successfully combine their personal and professional obligations by allowing them to control their work hours and duties (Saks et al., 2022). Workers may adjust their work hours to fit personal commitments like childcare, schooling, or caregiving duties when they have flexible working arrangements like flexitime or compressed workweeks (Alameeri et al., 2021). Because they may better balance work and life, these programs reduce job-related stress for employees, improving concentration on the job and ultimately increasing their output. Typically, work-life balance improves job satisfaction because employees are satisfied privately and professionally (Saks et al., 2022).

Implementation of Strategies for Employee Motivation, Engagement, and Productivity

Leadership support and commitment to health and well-being programs are required to play a pivotal role in creating a supportive culture and ensuring the successful integration of well-being programs into the organizational structure (Paul & Singh, 2023).

There is a need for employee participation and involvement to increase their feeling of ownership and dedication in developing the programs (Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2020). Managers should seek employee input, solicit feedback, and involve them in decision-making processes (Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2020), to foster empowerment, motivation, and engagement (Boccoli et al., 2023). Employers should offer flexible options that accommodate different work schedules, providing choices that align with employees' specific well-being needs, and accounting for cultural and demographic factors (Gupta & Sharma, .2019). By personalizing the programs enhances their relevance and effectiveness, increasing employee engagement, motivation, and productivity (Mazzetti et al., 2021)

Best Practices for Implementing and Sustaining Programs

The inclusion of workers in the design, carrying out, and evaluation initiatives is one of the best practices. Programs that allow employee input, feedback, and active engagement have a higher likelihood of success (Jeha et al., 2022). Participation improves program efficacy while also empowering staff and encouraging a feeling of ownership and responsibility for their well-being and security.

Integrating well-being, workplace safety, and health programs into existing administrative processes and structures is vital for their sustainability. When embedded into daily operations, programs become a natural part of the corporate culture, increasing their chances of long-term success (Chawla et al.: Yadav et al., 2022).

Additionally, effective communication is crucial for promoting employee engagement and participation in well-being and safety programs (Paul & Singh, 2023). There is a need for constant and clear communication about the goals, advantages, and resources made accessible by the programs. Meetings, emails, newsletters, intranets, and other forms of communication may all be used to keep staff members informed and interested in discussions (Jeha et al., 2022).

Moreover, there is a need to offer training and skill development in well-being, occupational safety, and health (Jeha et al., 2022). Corporations enable workers to actively participate in preserving their safety and well-being by providing them with essential information and skills (Mazzetti et al., 2021).

Effectiveness and Efficiency of Programs

Work-life balance, stress management courses, and psychological assistance had a beneficial effect on the health of staff members as they were linked to lower degrees of stress, better psychological wellness, more work satisfaction, and greater happiness (Gupta & Sharma, 2019).

Workplace safety activities, such as safety training, hazard identification, and accident prevention programs, successfully lowered occupational accidents and injuries, supporting the findings by (Boccoli et al., 2023). These initiatives improved workers' awareness of safety procedures, promoted risk-reducing actions, and developed a safety culture throughout the company (Mazzetti et al., 2021).

It is important to determine the return on investment of well-being, workplace security, and health (Knight et al., 2019). Firms experience cost benefits due to lower healthcare expenses, turnover rates, and employee retention.

Successful Implementation and Sustenance of Programs

Leadership commitment and support are critical factors for successfully implementing and maintaining workplace programs (Paul & Singh, 2023). Leadership involvement includes allocating resources, promoting a culture of wellness and safety, and actively participating in program initiatives. Organizations with strong leadership commitment demonstrated higher program engagement, employee participation, and sustained program success (Paul & Singh, 2023).

Tailoring workplace programs to address specific employee needs and organizational contexts is another important factor. One-size-fits-all approaches may not be effective in engaging employees and achieving desired outcomes. Customizing programs based on employee demographics, job roles, and work environments ensured that interventions were relevant and resonated with employees (Saks et al., 2022).

There is a need for continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms to assess program effectiveness and make necessary improvements. Regular data collection, such as employee surveys, focus groups, and program metrics, allowed organizations to gauge program outcomes, identify areas for improvement, and monitor employee satisfaction and engagement (Burnett & Lisk, 2021). Feedback loops enable organizations to adjust program components, address emerging challenges, and ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness (Burnett & Lisk, 2021).

When wellness, health, and safety initiatives were aligned with existing policies, procedures, and performance management systems, they became an integral part of the organizational culture (Chawla et al., 2022). Integration included incorporating wellness goals into performance evaluations, providing resources for program implementation, and fostering collaboration across departments to support program sustainability.

Adequate resource allocation was crucial for successfully implementing and maintaining workplace safety, health, and wellness programs. This includes allocating financial resources, staff time, and technological support to ensure the availability and accessibility of program initiatives. Organizations prioritizing resource allocation demonstrated a commitment to employee well-being and recognized the value of investing in programs that enhance productivity and engagement (Chawla et al., 2022).

4.0 Discussion

Positive Impact of Programs

The beneficial effects of employee engagement, productivity, and incentive programs on well-being, workplace safety, and health included various efforts specially created to address different facets of workers' well-being and foster a positive work environment (Boccoli et al., 2023). These programs helped workers balance their career and personal duties better by providing flexible work schedules, time-off rules, and assistance in managing personal obligations (Yadav et al., 2022).

The programs also strongly emphasized stress management strategies and interventions to deal with the mounting demands and difficulties associated with the workplace (Yadav et al., 2022). Businesses may empower their staff to manage stress and improve their well-being by offering employee support programs, mindfulness training, and stress reduction courses. Another important issue that these programs focused on was skill development (Voordt & Jensen, 2023). They allowed workers to expand their knowledge, learn new skills, and advance their careers. Through seminars, training sessions, and mentorship programs, staff members learned to carry out their tasks well and maintain motivation.

Organizations have understood how vital employee well-being is to their work performance and enjoyment (Yadav et al., 2022). Consequently, they implement programs like health exams, wellness plans, gyms, and access to mental health services. These help workers preserve their physical and emotional well-being, encourage healthy lifestyles, and avoid health problems (Choudhury & Mohanty, 2019). Improvements in employee engagement, productivity, and motivation were precise results of these initiatives for well-being, workplace safety, and health.

Significance of Leadership Support and Commitment

 Leadership support and commitment play a pivotal role in the success of well-being, workplace safety, and health programs (Saks et al., 2022). The study underscored the significance of substantial leadership involvement, as organizations with robust support from their leaders exhibited higher levels of employee engagement and achieved superior program outcomes.
When leaders prioritize and actively participate in implementing well-being initiatives, employees are more inclined to engage with the programs and experience positive effects (Knight et al., 2019). Leadership support sets the tone and creates a culture that values employee well-being. Employees perceive the programs as genuine and meaningful when they observe their leaders demonstrating commitment and actively participating in the initiatives. This sends a powerful message that well-being is a priority within the organization (Dundon et al., 2022). Moreover, leadership support fosters an environment of trust and open communication. When leaders endorse well-being programs, employees feel comfortable seeking help and participating in the initiatives without fear of judgment or negative consequences (Mazzetti et al., 2021). Leaders who actively champion well-being initiatives also serve as role models for employees. Their visible involvement and commitment inspire and motivate employees to prioritize their well-being. When leaders demonstrate that they value and invest in employee well-being, it creates a sense of psychological safety. It empowers the workforce to prioritise self-care and engage in activities that promote their well-being.

Furthermore, leadership support positively influences program outcomes. Leaders actively engaged in the implementation process can provide valuable insights, resources, and necessary support to ensure the success of the programs. They can allocate appropriate budgets and dedicated staff and integrate well-being initiatives into the broader organizational strategy (Chawla et al., 2022). This level of involvement and commitment from leadership enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of the programs.

Improved physical and mental health among employees, which results in better productivity and engagement, is one benefit of well-being programs. Employees are more inclined to give their best work when they feel appreciated and supported. Programs that promote health, safety, and well-being at work benefit people, businesses, and society in various ways.

Regular Evaluation

The review identified regular evaluation and continuous improvement as essential factors for sustaining the impact of well-being programs. Monitoring program outcomes, collecting employee

feedback, and conducting periodic assessments allowed organizations to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments. By continuously evaluating program effectiveness and adapting interventions accordingly, organizations can ensure that their well-being initiatives remain relevant, impactful, and responsive to the evolving needs of their employees.

Tailoring Programs to Employee Needs and Preferences

Customization of programs involves offering flexible options that accommodate different work schedules, considering cultural and demographic factors, and addressing individual employee requirements.

Interpretation of Results

The study results provide important new information on how well-being, workplace safety, and health initiatives affect employee motivation, engagement, and productivity (Litmanen, 2021). Employee engagement, productivity, and motivation are positively impacted by well-being, workplace safety, and health programs (Chawla et al., 2022). This finding directly addresses research question one, which examined the effects of various program types on employee satisfaction and output. Work-life balance, stress reduction, personal development, and physical and mental health improve employees' happiness and well-being.

Research question two examined how different program types impact employee productivity. Effective programs enhance productivity. Specifically, programs promoting work-life balance allow employees to effectively manage their personal and professional responsibilities, reducing absenteeism and increasing job performance (Mazzetti et al., 2021). Stress management programs help employees better cope with work-related pressures, improving productivity. Skill development programs equip employees with the necessary knowledge and capabilities to perform their tasks efficiently and safely, enhancing their productivity and output. Moreover, the review highlights the importance of tailoring interventions to meet employees' unique needs and considers contextual factors influencing program effectiveness (Mazzetti et al., 2021).

Research question three, explored strategies for effectively implementing well-being, workplace safety, and health programs to increase employee motivation, engagement, and productivity. Leadership support and commitment play a crucial role in setting the tone for the organization and creating an environment where employee well-being is prioritized (Mazzetti et al., 2021). Organizations with solid leadership involvement demonstrate higher employee engagement and better program outcomes. Organizations empower employees and create a sense of ownership and commitment by providing opportunities for employee input, feedback, and ownership of the programs.

Relevance to Key Groups of People

The results are relevant to organizations, workers, policymakers, and health experts. Their actions, tactics, and choices about well-being, workplace safety, and health programs may be informed and guided by the revelations drawn from this assessment. Businesses are essential in fostering a work environment that promotes employee productivity and well-being (Mazzetti et al., 2021).

Employers may use the results to create and practice efficient programs that support well-being, workplace safety, and health. Employers may maximize the effects of these programs on their workforce by using the best practices and tactics (Saks et al., 2022). They may create programs that cater to specific needs and problems inside the company. Employers may also use the data to promote a supportive workplace environment that prioritizes workers' well-being, improving job satisfaction and retention. Governmental organizations and legislators have a stake in fostering employee well-being and better work conditions. Policymakers may use the evidence to comprehend how well-being, workplace safety, and health initiatives affect employee motivation, engagement, and productivity. They may create rules for the execution of successful programs and provide incentives for businesses to emphasize employee well-being (Paez, 2017). Policymakers may support the creation of healthy workplaces and the promotion of sustainable economic development by adjusting policies following the conclusions of the scoping review (Gupta & Sharma, 2016).

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study examined how well-being, workplace safety, and health initiatives impact employee engagement, productivity, and motivation. Results demonstrated the positive impact of well-being, workplace safety, and health programs on employee engagement, productivity, and motivation. The findings underscored the significance of leadership support, employee participation, tailored approaches, and continuous evaluation to optimize program effectiveness. Organizations can enhance employee well-being, engagement, and productivity by implementing evidence-based programs and incorporating these key findings.

Recommendations

The research recommends future studies to emphasise the mental health of employees concerning their engagement and productivity. Although mental health is gradually becoming a topic of discussion, there is still a lot to work on in terms of designing adequate mental health support systems in the workplace that meet various mental health needs of employees. This can be done through programs such as one-on-one counseling services, mindfulness courses, resilience training as well as applications developed to help employees' mental health.
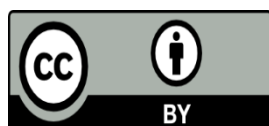
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