



Interdisciplinary Journal of Information, Knowledge, and Management

An Official Publication
of the Informing Science Institute
InformingScience.org

Vol. : 20, Issue 1 Jan 2025

ISSN: (E) 1555-1237

Advancement in Psychology of HR through IT and Social Awareness

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Abstract

This study explores how social awareness and information technology (IT) are transforming human resource (HR) practices to enhance corporate effectiveness and employee well-being. The study focuses on two primary objectives: (1) identifying programs and resources that support employee mental health, including Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and mental health days; and (2) examining strategies that foster candid communication, frequent feedback, and ongoing employee training. Using a conceptual framework, the study highlights the interplay between organizational culture, mental health awareness, and technological advancements in shaping HR practices. Initiatives such as wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and continuous feedback systems promote a positive work environment that enhances mental well-being, reduces stress, and increases job satisfaction. Additionally, the study emphasizes the role of leadership in cultivating a culture of open communication by leveraging training and feedback mechanisms to boost engagement and trust. The findings underscore the importance of integrating technology and social awareness to design HR practices that prioritize both organizational success and employee welfare. This paper provides actionable insights for HR professionals aiming to create productive, healthy, and communicative workplaces.

Keywords: *Employee Mental Health, IT in HR, Social Awareness, Employee Assistance Programs, Feedback and Training, Organizational Culture*

I. Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Accordingly, a healthy workplace is one that promotes employees’ physical, mental, and social well-being. Employee health is influenced by personal, physiological, psychological, and organizational factors, alongside pressures from both personal and professional environments (Clements-Croome, 2018).



Recent decades have seen increased recognition of the impact of the physical workplace environment on health and well-being. There has been a shift from a cost-centric approach to a holistic, value-based perspective that balances the costs and benefits of interventions in buildings, facilities, and services (Jensen & Van der Voordt, 2017). Employees are increasingly aware of how workplace health affects overall quality of life and reduces the risk of illness, burnout, and other health problems (Appel-Meulenbroek et al., 2020).

Research using literature reviews (Forooraghi et al., 2020; Van der Voordt, 2021), surveys (Cordero et al., 2020), case studies (Bauer, 2020), and mobile technology experiments (Nelson & Holzer, 2017) has examined the relationship between workplace characteristics and employee health. Findings suggest that distractions, noise, and poor indoor air quality negatively impact well-being, while natural light, access to outdoor spaces, and nature-inspired designs improve workplace health. A survey by the British Council for Offices (2018) highlighted employees' preference for outdoor areas, natural light, and supportive work environments, while identifying common irritants such as noise, lack of greenery, inadequate privacy, and inflexible workspaces.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become integral to personal and professional life (Diaz et al., 2012), with their importance amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which emphasized remote work and virtual collaboration (Wang et al., 2021; Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). ICTs enhance workplace flexibility, productivity, and efficiency, though their effects on health and well-being require careful consideration (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garces, 2020; Nagel, 2020).

This study investigates the interplay between workplace settings, ICTs, and employee health, with a particular focus on strategies that improve productivity and well-being in dynamic professional environments.

II. Literature Review

Employee motivation is a critical factor influencing the quality and effectiveness of healthcare services. Rosak-Szyrocka (2015) asserts that motivating healthcare professionals strengthens their commitment to the organization and their roles, improving the quality of care provided by both administrative and medical staff. This increased motivation also enhances patient satisfaction and fosters positive interpersonal relationships with healthcare personnel, including doctors, nurses, and administrative staff.

Research by Babic et al. (2014) and Alhassan et al. (2013) confirms that healthcare personnel motivation significantly affects treatment quality. Alhassan et al. note that unsafe healthcare practices often arise from administrators' lack of motivation. Hotchkiss et al. (2015) examined both internal and external motivators, revealing that while external factors (e.g., financial incentives, work conditions, collegial relationships) were critical in environments like Ethiopia, internal factors (e.g., self-efficacy and self-esteem) were also significant contributors.

A. Remote Working and Its Impact on Employee Well-being

The adoption of remote work has increased globally, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing employees to work outside traditional office settings (Gómez et al., 2020; Raišienė et al., 2020). Remote work helps employees balance personal and professional obligations (Prasad et al., 2020). Advances in telecommunications have enabled “e-working,” moving work to employees rather than requiring them to be physically present in offices (Grant et al., 2013; Nilles, 2007).

However, remote work can blur boundaries between work and personal life. Employees, particularly working parents, faced challenges during the pandemic, balancing childcare with professional responsibilities (Staglin, 2020). Employee well-being, encompassing psychological, physical, and emotional health, is affected by this stress (Pradhan & Hati, 2019; Juniper et al., 2011). While some studies indicate that remote work can provide physiological benefits such as reduced blood pressure (Maruyama et al., 2009; Golden et al., 2006), others highlight the psychological challenges of detaching from work, which can increase stress and reduce well-being (Palm et al., 2020; Sonnentag, 2018; Prasad et al., 2020).

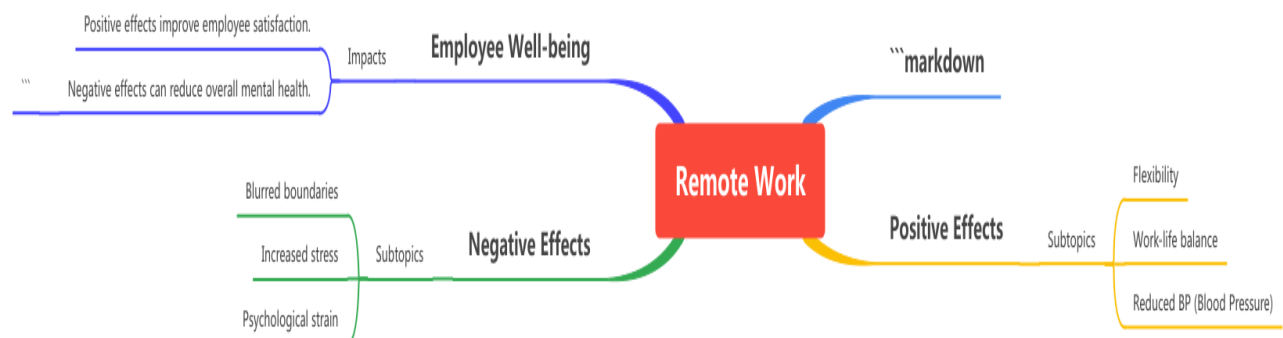


Figure 1: Remote Work Impact on Employee Well-being

Source : Authors Own

B. Organizational Culture and Performance

Organizational culture significantly influences employee motivation and performance. Schein (1990) defines culture as shared assumptions developed through problem-solving and transmitted to new members as a framework for understanding and addressing challenges. Daft (2000) emphasizes that organizational performance depends on the effective and efficient use of resources to achieve objectives.

Table 1: Summary of Key Studies and Findings

Author(s)	Focus Area	Key Findings	Implications
Rosak-Szyrocka (2015)	Motivation in healthcare	Enhances commitment and service quality, improving patient satisfaction	Effective motivation strategies improve healthcare delivery and patient relationships
Alhassan et al. (2013)	Motivation and safety	Lack of motivation leads to unsafe healthcare practices	Administrative support is essential to improve worker performance
Hotchkiss et al. (2015)	Incentives for health workers	Internal (self-efficacy) and external (financial, work conditions) factors drive motivation	Customized incentive systems enhance employee satisfaction and effectiveness
Gómez et al. (2020); Raišienė et al. (2020)	Remote working trends	Remote work offers flexibility and work-life balance	Adoption of remote work strategies strengthens organizational resilience
Prasad et al. (2020)	Employee well-being	Remote work offers flexibility but blurs boundaries, affecting well-being	Organizations should support psychological detachment to mitigate stress
Palm et al. (2020); Sonnentag (2018)	Psychological detachment	Difficulty disconnecting from work increases stress	Policies for psychological recovery post-work are crucial
Schein (1990)	Organizational culture	Shared assumptions drive problem-solving and cohesion	Strong culture enhances employee integration and performance
Daft (2000)	Organizational performance	Efficient resource utilization is key to achieving objectives	Aligning culture with performance metrics ensures long-term success

This review highlights that improving service quality and organizational performance requires motivating employees and promoting well-being. While remote work offers flexibility, it also introduces psychological challenges that require intervention. Furthermore, a strong organizational culture underpins long-term motivation and performance. Future research should explore integrated strategies combining culture, motivation, and well-being.

III. Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) to examine the evolution of employee engagement (EE) and its relationship with HR practices. The SLR enables a structured synthesis of interdisciplinary research, providing insights into established and emerging topics.



A. Research Design

- Following Torraco (2005), an integrative and multidisciplinary literature review was conducted to explore both existing and emerging aspects of EE. The review served two purposes: developing new frameworks and evaluating existing knowledge.
- Established EE literature was reviewed to identify intersections with employee management and organizational culture.
- Emerging topics, including organizational communication strategies and the integration of EE with mental health, were examined to conceptualize new frameworks addressing modern workplace dynamics.

B. Research Questions

RQ1: What resources and initiatives promote employee mental health, including EAPs and mental health days?

RQ2: What strategies encourage open and honest communication, alongside regular feedback and training for employees?

C. Conceptual Framework

The framework identifies employee mental health services (EAPs, mental health days) and communication strategies (training, feedback) as key factors influencing EE. It addresses gaps in existing literature and extends prior EE theories.

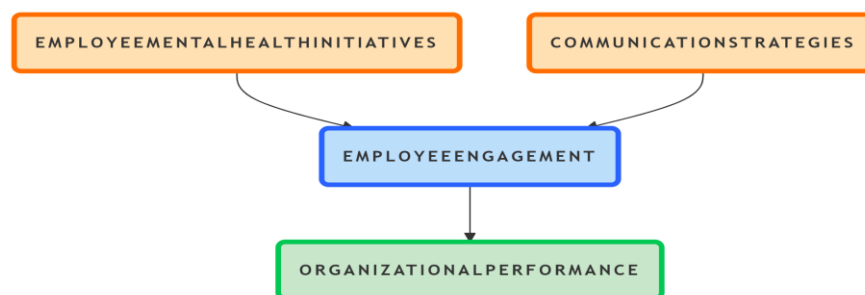


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework Linking HR Initiatives, Communication Strategies, and Employee Engagement

Source : Authors Own



D. Methodological Justification

The SLR approach provides a comprehensive overview of EE while offering practical insights. It balances academic rigor with organizational relevance.

IV. Findings and Discussion

A. Resources and Initiatives for Employee Mental Health

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

EAPs provide voluntary, confidential support to employees facing personal or professional challenges. Services include wellness coaching, financial planning, legal aid, and counseling. Confidentiality fosters trust and autonomy, reducing burnout, absenteeism, and turnover. Ethical standards and labor regulations ensure equity and inclusion.

Mental Health Days

Paid mental health days allow employees time for self-care and mental renewal. On-site counseling, wellness training, support groups, wellness challenges, and flexible work arrangements enhance well-being and work-life balance.

Additional Initiatives

- Prevent overwork through effective workload management.
- Implement remote, flexible, or hybrid work arrangements.
- Offer wellness programs covering stress management, physical activity, and mental health.
- Provide stress-reduction activities like yoga, guided meditation, or walking meetings.
- Foster a positive work environment emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Encourage open discussions to de-stigmatize mental health.
- Provide healthy food options and regularly monitor wellness program effectiveness.

B. Strategies to Encourage Open and Honest Communication

Effective communication fosters trust, transparency, and collaboration. Key strategies include:

- Feedback Culture: Open communication channels and active listening enable employees to share ideas without fear of retaliation.
- Leadership by Example: Leaders model transparency by admitting mistakes, sharing opinions, and seeking feedback.
- Collaborative Meetings: Regular team meetings encourage candid discussions and collective problem-solving.
- Digital Tools: Collaboration platforms and project management software ensure inclusivity and timely information sharing.

- **Regular Feedback:** Structured feedback channels and anonymous surveys monitor employee sentiment.
- **Training Programs:** Active listening, conflict resolution, and constructive feedback enhance professional communication.
- **Conflict Management:** Address disagreements empathetically, focusing on solutions rather than blame.

Combined, these strategies foster an environment of openness, respect, and continuous development, enhancing engagement, motivation, and satisfaction.

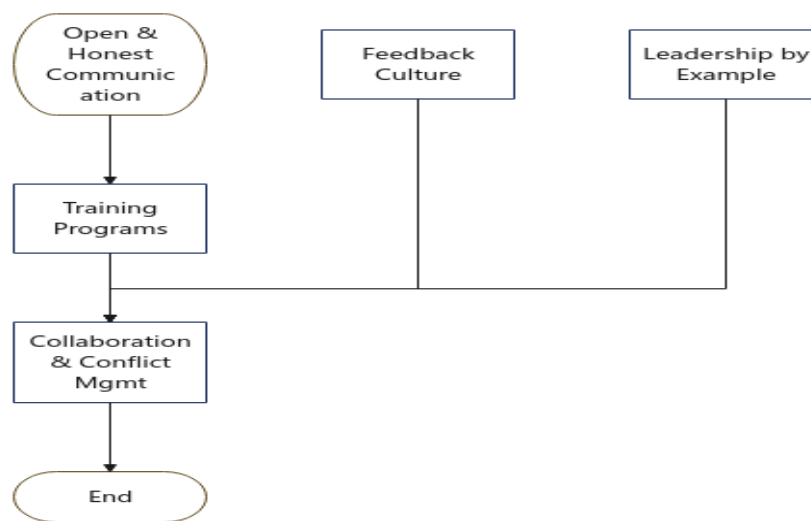


Figure 3: Key Strategies to Promote Open and Honest Communication

Source : Authors Own

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study highlights the transformative role of information technology (IT) and social awareness in shaping modern human resource practices. By integrating initiatives such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), mental health days, flexible work arrangements, and structured communication strategies, organizations can foster a supportive environment that enhances employee well-being, engagement, and overall productivity.

The findings emphasize that employee motivation, psychological safety, and organizational culture are critical drivers of performance. While remote work offers flexibility and efficiency, it also introduces challenges related to work-life balance and psychological detachment, requiring deliberate strategies to mitigate stress. Leadership plays a central role in cultivating transparency, trust, and open communication, ensuring that employees feel valued, heard, and empowered to contribute effectively.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of a holistic, technology-enabled, and socially aware approach to HR management. By prioritizing employee mental health and fostering an inclusive culture, organizations can achieve sustainable performance, higher job satisfaction, and long-term organizational resilience. These insights provide HR professionals and organizational leaders with actionable strategies to design workplaces that are both productive and psychologically healthy

Unveiling the Pathways to Organizational Success



Figure 4: Integrated HR Interventions Enhancing Employee Well-being, Engagement, and Performance

Source : Authors Own

Recommendations for HR Professionals:

- Implement comprehensive EAPs and mental health days to support well-being.
- Introduce flexible and hybrid work arrangements to enhance work-life balance.
- Promote a strong organizational culture aligned with performance objectives.
- Establish feedback-driven, transparent communication practices.
- Conduct regular training to develop interpersonal and professional communication skills.
- Foster an inclusive environment that reduces stigma around mental health issues.
- By adopting these strategies, organizations can create productive, healthy, and communicative workplaces, ultimately enhancing both employee welfare and organizational success.



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An Official Publication
of the Informing Science Institute
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ISSN: (E) 1555-1237

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