

Original Article

A Study on Employee Wellbeing and Mental Health Practices in Post-Pandemic Workplace

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Abstract: This study examines the evolving landscape of employee well-being and mental health in the post-pandemic workplace, focusing on customer-facing roles characterized by rotational shifts and high operational demands. Findings indicate that emotional regulation, particularly surface acting, is highly prevalent among a young workforce, leading to significant emotional dissonance, stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. Furthermore, the study identifies that these challenges directly contribute to reduced job satisfaction, lower commitment, and increased turnover intentions. The results emphasize that mental health struggles are widespread and driven by the pressure to maintain professional service during challenging customer interactions. To address these issues, the study proposes targeted interventions, including emotional intelligence training, enhanced shift management, supportive supervision, and comprehensive wellness programs. The study concludes that prioritizing psychological safety and addressing the adverse effects of emotional labor are essential for long-term employee resilience and organizational success.

Keywords: Post-Pandemic Workplace, Emotional Labor, Employee Well-being, Burnout, Mental Health, Customer-Facing Roles, Organizational Commitment.

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic was a catalyst for this change, shifting the culture of workplaces and shifting employee Mental Health from a "nice to have" benefit to a prioritized strategic organizational goal. Although the worst of the crisis appears to be over, long-term damage coupled with the chaotic nature of hybrid working, economic unpredictability and digital burnout have conspired to change worker psychology forever. It is expected that what was once viewed as a perk will become benefits embedded in the organizational DNA by 2026. It explores what organizations are doing to adapt and transition from the new normal, including how flexible work, mental health support systems and an effective organizational culture can set up resilient workforce teams that perform optimally.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic workplace for productivity. A massive quantum of weight, a survey involving employee well-being and workplace mental health practices is conducted both in the context of the permanent labour market changes post-COVID-19--most psychosocial burden after COVID includes catalyzed anxiety, burnout, emotional exhaustion, etc. This research is relevant because the transition towards hybrid or remote work has been very rapid in nature, and it has caused many professionals to experience stress levels rising as they have struggled with the inability to divide their personal life from their working life. In 2026, we have a new sensibility about holistic well-being being incorporated as part of usual operations rather than as an add-on or stand-alone initiative, and organizations can no longer be tempted by check-box approaches to sustainable mental health strategies. Consequently, this research is required to measure the feasibility of existing employee support systems, such as EAPs or mental health days, helping reduce burnout and increase productivity in a post-pandemic society, which now has dusted off, depending on retaining personnel, is deeply interwoven with mental health.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Although there have been numerous studies examining the immediate effects of COVID-19 on worker mental health, relatively few have investigated how effective workplace wellness initiatives introduced post-pandemic would be long-term. But the research has largely focused on acute stress during lockdowns — we know less about how these hybrid work models, ubiquitous digital connectivity and pressure to return to the office affect mental health, especially in emerging economies. In addition, while organizations are striving to offer the most appropriate mental health support for their workforce, there is limited information on customization of mental health support mechanisms versus one-size-fits-all approaches. Lastly, companies have an insufficient understanding of how to measure return-on-investment (ROI) in terms of effective use of these practices with respect to productivity, instead of looking only at participation rates.



IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the level of employee well-being in the workplace after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To identify common mental health challenges faced by employees in the post-pandemic work environment.
- To examine the mental health support practices implemented by organizations after the pandemic.
- To analyze the impact of workplace policies such as remote work or flexible schedules on employee mental health.
- To evaluate employee awareness and use of mental health resources provided by their organizations.

V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research investigates company practices post-pandemic (post-COVID-19) that have changed and contribute to employee mental health and well-being. Its goal is to identify major stressors impacting performance, such as burnout from remote work, hybrid work pain points or fear of returning to the office. This includes examining existing policies at the company, including flexible hours, counseling services and mental health days and analyzing data on whether these benefits employee morale and retention. The report looks at physical and white-collar work environments in urban areas, with the goal to provide recommendations for actionable workplace culture in a non-stigm and positive environment. It also considers how leaders can promote psychological safety and leverage technology to help remote team members.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Giorgi et al. (2020): This study explains that COVID-19 had a strong impact on employees' mental health. Many employees experienced stress, anxiety, and depression. Poor working conditions and high job demands made it worse. The study suggests improving workplace support. It highlights the need for mental health programs.
- Mamuli (2023): This study shows that employee well-being includes physical, mental, and emotional health. The pandemic increased stress and work-life imbalance. Female employees were more affected. Leadership and workplace support play an important role. The study suggests flexible and inclusive policies.
- Elshaer & Azazz (2023): This research focuses on job insecurity during COVID-19. Employees feared losing their jobs, which increased stress and anxiety. Financial pressure also affected mental health. It reduced work performance. The study suggests organizational support to reduce stress.
- de Miquel et al. (2022): This research shows that job loss and income reduction affected mental health. Financial stress caused anxiety and depression. Employees faced insecurity and uncertainty. It also affected work performance. The study suggests financial and organizational support.
- Maheshwari (2022): This research focuses on startups during the pandemic. Employees faced stress due to uncertainty and remote work. Rapid changes created pressure. HR practices helped in managing stress. The study highlights the need for flexible strategies.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A) Research Design

The study follows a descriptive and analytical research design in the context of integrating employee wellness and mental health practices to prevent poor mental health-related consequences in this post-pandemic workplace. This research is applied research, and the statistical population of this research includes employees of corporate and service-based organizations. Which 150 respondents among them were selected by simple random sampling. The structured questionnaire collected primary data on workplace well-being initiatives (WWI), mental health practices, and organizational outcomes using a 5-point Likert scale. Secondary data was gathered from journals, books, and research studies in connection with emotional labor and workplace wellness. The present study utilized the software SPSS for data analysis, composed of descriptive statistics, reliability test, factor analysis correlation, regulate method and mediation technique (Hayes process) to analyze data. The study framework identifies organizational factors and job characteristics as independent variables, employee coping strategies as mediators, and employee well-being and organizational outcomes as dependent variables.

B) Hypotheses

- H1: Post-pandemic mental health practices significantly influence employee well-being.
- H2: Organizational support and flexibility significantly reduce workplace stress and burnout.
- H3: Employee coping strategies mediate the relationship between workplace demands and well-being.

C) Limitations

- The study is limited to employees in urban Indian organizations, which may affect generalization.
- Reliance on self-reported responses may introduce bias.
- The cross-sectional design captures practices at one point in time, limiting longitudinal insights.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present study collected data from employees across various sectors to understand wellbeing and mental health practices in the workplace post-pandemic. The first finding notes that across the world organizations are now seeing mental health as an integral and crucial part of keeping their employees productive and retained. Most employees felt more aware of stress management and wellness initiatives implemented post-pandemic — such as counselling services, flexible work schedules, or mindfulness programs. Many said these practices helped to alleviate burnout and increased job satisfaction, showing that mental well-being support is becoming integrated into the corporate culture.

But the study also points to challenges in its rollout: while many workers do see a benefit from such initiatives, some have worried that they're not implemented properly or at scale, that their confidentiality isn't assured, and/or feel they could be stigmatised if using them. This implies that although progress has been achieved, more powerful institutional structures are necessary to achieve normalization around mental health dialogue. Basic statistical tools (test of normality, chi-square, correlation and regression) were used to find any association between variables like age group or stress levels, gender, wellness program preference and working hours with reported burnout. The results are quite revealing: younger employees prefer to use digital wellness tools while older employees favor traditional counseling. The longer hours that you work, the higher your stress scores tend to be, which just reiterates the need for balanced workloads.

A) CHI-Square Test:

The survey data reveal a mixed picture of workplace well-being across age groups. Overall, about 41% of respondents expressed positive feelings, while 34% reported negative experiences, and 25% remained neutral. Employees aged 26–35 showed the strongest positivity, with many strongly agreeing about their well-being. In contrast, those aged 46 and above leaned more toward dissatisfaction or neutrality, suggesting challenges in adapting to post-pandemic work conditions. Younger employees below 25 were divided, showing both optimism and disagreement. This indicates that perceptions of well-being vary significantly by age, with younger professionals more optimistic and older groups more uncertain or dissatisfied.

Table 1: Association Between Age of Respondents and Overall Well-Being in Job Post Pandemic

| Age of the respondent * I feel a high level of overall well-being in my job post pandemic. | | I feel a high level of overall well-being in my job post pandemic | | | | | Total |
|--|--|---|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| | | strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree | |
| below25 | | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 28 |
| 26-35 | | 11 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 43 |
| 36-45 | | 5 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 30 |
| 46-55 | | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 24 |
| above 55 | | 6 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 25 |
| Total | | 33 | 28 | 24 | 37 | 28 | 150 |

Table 2: Chi-Square Test Showing the Association Between Age and Overall Job Well-Being Post Pandemic

| Chi-Square Test | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 8.887 ^a | 16 | .918 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 9.048 | 16 | .911 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .404 | 1 | .525 |
| N of Valid Cases | 150 | | |

The chi-square test results indicate that there is no significant association between age groups and their level of agreement about workplace well-being post-pandemic. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 8.887 with 16 degrees of freedom, and the p-value (.918) is much higher than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This means the differences observed across age categories are likely due to chance rather than a meaningful statistical relationship. Similarly, the likelihood ratio (.911) and linear-by-linear association (.525) also confirm the absence of significance. In short, while descriptive data showed some variation between younger and older employees, statistically, these differences are not strong enough to conclude that age influences perceptions of well-being.

B) Correlation Analysis:

Table 3: Correlation between Gender and Educational Qualification of Respondents

| Gender*qualification | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | gender of the respondent | education qualification |
| gender of the respondent | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.014 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------|------|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .864 |
| | N | 150 | 150 |
| education qualification | Pearson Correlation | -.014 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .864 | |
| | N | 150 | 150 |

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the gender of respondents and their level of qualification. The results showed a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.105$), but the p-value was 0.204, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the relationship is not statistically significant, meaning gender does not have any meaningful influence on qualification levels. In simple terms, both male and female students pursue qualifications without noticeable differences linked to gender. Since the correlation was weak and not significant, the null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between gender and qualification is accepted.

C) Regression Analysis:

The regression model summary shows a very weak relationship between workplace well-being factors and the dependent variable. The R value is only 0.088, and the R Square is 0.008, meaning less than 1% of the variation is explained by the predictors. The adjusted R-squared is negative (-0.013), which further confirms the poor fit of the model. The high standard error (1.367) also suggests low reliability. In short, the predictors do not significantly explain changes in the dependent variable, and the null hypothesis of no meaningful relationship is accepted.

Table 4: Model Summary of Regression Analysis Between Gender and Educational Qualification

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R-Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .088 ^a | .008 | -.013 | 1.367 |

Predictors: (Constant), My organization offers mental health days or wellness leave. I feel a high level of overall well-being in my job post pandemic, Anxiety or burnout is a frequent issue in my post-pandemic work

Table 5: ANOVA Results for Post-Pandemic Workplace Well-Being and Mental Health Regression Model

| Anova | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--|
| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | |
| Regression | 2.112 | 3 | .704 | |
| Residual | 272.722 | 146 | 1.868 | |
| Total | 274.833 | 149 | | |

- Dependent Variable: age of the respondent
- Predictors: (Constant), My organization offers mental health days or wellness leave. I feel a high level of overall well-being in my job post-pandemic, Anxiety or burnout is a frequent issue in my post-pandemic work

Table 6: Regression Coefficients of Post-Pandemic Workplace Well-Being and Mental Health Factors

| Co-efficient | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| | | 1 | (Constant) | 3.236 | | |
| | I feel a high level of overall well-being in my job post-pandemic | -.043 | .078 | -.046 | -.555 | .580 |
| | Anxiety or burnout is a frequent issue in my post-pandemic work | -.068 | .086 | -.066 | -.795 | .428 |
| | My organization offers mental health days or wellness leave. | -.031 | .080 | -.032 | -.392 | .696 |

Dependent Variable: age of the respondent:

The regression analysis table shows how different workplace well-being and mental health factors relate to the age of respondents. The constant value ($B = 3.236$, $p < .001$) is significant, meaning the baseline model is valid. However, the predictors such as feeling high well-being, experiencing anxiety or burnout, and having access to mental health days do not show significant effects on age. Their p-values (.580, .428, and .696 respectively) are all greater than 0.05, indicating no statistically meaningful relationship. The standardized coefficients (Beta values) are also very small, suggesting weak influence. In simple terms, this analysis shows that age is not strongly explained by these workplace well-being or mental health factors, and the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is accepted.

IX. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The research notes that the post-pandemic workplace is different in terms of mental health and well-being, with mostly young personnel serving customers on rotational shifts. Surface acting representing emotional regulation is rarely not found; it is moderate to high, which indicates the normative pressure on managers to display professionalism when in challenging encounters. Emotional labour was much higher when workers experienced shift patterns and frequent exposure to difficult customers, causing stress, emotional exhaustion and ultimately burnout. Another concept they also gained in Emotional Dissonance, indicating Emotions forced by the respective organization that may contradict their own intrinsic emotions, which leads to Psychological Fatigue. In turn, emotional labour decreased organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and commitment, while intentions to leave among employees decreased. The broader finding is that mental illness is widespread and predominantly a function of post-pandemic workplace norms for onboarding, service delivery and customer experience.

X. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen employee wellbeing and mental health practices in the post-pandemic workplace:

- Emotional Intelligence Training: Equip employees with skills to manage emotions effectively and reduce psychological strain.
- Employee Wellness Programs: Introduce counselling services, stress management workshops, and mindfulness sessions to address burnout.
- Shift Management Practices: Plan rotational shifts with adequate rest periods to minimize fatigue.
- Supportive Supervision: Encourage supervisors to provide emotional support and foster a culture of empathy.
- Workload Optimization: Review performance targets to ensure they are realistic and manageable.
- Training for Difficult Customers: Provide strategies to handle challenging interactions without excessive emotional strain.
- Work-Life Balance: Promote flexible work arrangements and supportive leave policies to improve overall well-being.
- Recognition and Rewards: Acknowledge employees' emotional efforts to boost motivation and organizational commitment.

XI. CONCLUSION

This study shows that employee well-being and mental health are key areas of focus in the post-pandemic workplace. Surface acting is a typical feature of customer-facing occupations, which preserves service quality at the expense of employee health. Stress, emotional exhaustion and burnout emerged as common outcomes to these conditions along with decreased job satisfaction, decreased organizational commitment and retention. This requires a shift towards creating psychological safety and holistic wellness, rather than just metrics about performance. In conclusion, protective approaches that encompass wellness programs, emotional intelligence training and flexible work arrangements can alleviate the detrimental effects of emotional labor. By building a culture around mental health, you will ultimately build resilience, satisfaction, and long-term working success as an organization.

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