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Impact of Technological Advancements on Employee's Well-being and Happiness

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Abstract:

Employee's well-being is one of the critical components for a healthy working environment and growth of the organization. It has been noticed that due to the fast-changing technology, the context of well-being has been re-defined as well as its impact on job performance need to be reviewed in the context of present technological era. This study aims to investigate the influence of technological advancements on well-being and happiness of employees. Method: The qualitative methods of analysis were used in the present study and it adopts the methodology of systematic reviews. The research was conducted systematically to be reliably indicative of the impact of technological advancement on the well-being of employees. The results show that there is a substantial impact on well-being of employees due to advancement of technology at workplace and beyond working hours. The systematic review highlight that there is an adverse impact on the well-being of employees who were not able to adapt to the technological advancements as per the demand of their high technical oriented jobs. However, the employees appreciated the positive impact on their well-being as the re-organization of their complex jobs into simpler ones with the help of technology was done.

Keywords: Technology, employee well-being, productivity, happiness

Introduction:

The level of competitiveness has greatly increased recently. The business climate has adopted a competitive mindset. Organizations must concentrate on ongoing performance improvement if they want to survive competition and achieve sustainable growth & development in the present competitive environment. It's necessary for every organization to strengthen their resources to achieve continual performance improvement. Employee Well-being, one of which is human resources, is one of the critical components for a healthy working environment and growth of the organization apart from healthy development of the employees themselves. Employee satisfaction is

generally correlated with their work-life balance including their job, expectations from the role, interpersonal relationship with colleagues and organization culture.

Dates back, movement on the human relation has hypothesized that measure of job satisfaction associated with higher morale was considered as higher employee's well-being, which lead to the higher productivity (Strauss, 1968). Postulates of "Emotion Theory" states that emotional state of the employee can affect and drive their performance (Staw et al, 1994). Several methods through which it can take place, like "mood" or positive affect, may motivate, and results in better job outcomes (Isen and Baron, 1991). Further, other channel is changes in attitude or behavior through stimulating positive thoughts, arousal either directly or indirectly (Baumeister et al, 2007).

Employees must feel physically and mentally safe & secure in order to be productive. Employee performance improves when employee well-being improves, and vice versa is also true - unhappy employees are unproductive employees. So, when employee well-being suffers, productivity and performance suffer as well; in this way, employee well-being and performance are linked. (Samul Holeston, 2020).

Employee well-being further boosts the economic performance of an organization in long run. It also promotes the environment exciting, enjoyable, motivating and rewarding workplaces (Bakke, 2005). Employees tend to perform better when they feel well and motivated. This will help employee to develop good habits like healthy and consistent work life balance and also the productivity of the organization improves. Studies have shown that workers are 13% more productive when they are happy. These habits also ensure business continuity. Organizations who take care of employees' mental health improve the culture and environment of the organization, well-being of employees around, also benefit the family life of every employee involved. An effective well-being programme begins with excellent communication. Technology has advanced many folds and touched people's lives in numerous ways, one of which is to keep them happy in various ways, resulting in a sustainable work-life balance with improved performance.

2. Objectives:

To investigate the influence of technological advancements on well-being and happiness of employees.

3. Methodology:

The qualitative methods of analysis were used in the present study and it adopts the methodology of systematic reviews. The research was conducted systematically to be reliably indicative of the impact of technological advancement on the well-being of employees.

4. Literature Review:

4.1 Employee Well being:

The literature shows "for Organizations to be able to remain sustainable it is inevitable that

promoting the well-being of its employees is necessary to enhance performance and thereby survival and further development of the organization” (Currie, 2001). And the concept of the employee well-being is exemplified as healthy workforce of the company (Cooper and Robertson, 2001). i.e The employee well-being (EWB) feature lists various areas that affect the standard of living for employees. Employees’ well-being though no clear definition has been derived yet, broadly can be defined as the overall quality of an employees’ experience both at work as well as outside of work. Employee well-being encompasses physical refers to bodily well-being and performance, psychological (which encompasses mental and emotional) refers to subjective experience that are personal, and social refers to interpersonal interactions/ relational and functioning

4.2 Happiness:

It is a positive emotional state, how each person perceives that positive emotional state will vary. Culture, values, and personality traits, among other things, can all interact to influence when and why someone feels happy (Huta et al., 2016). Happiness can be defined in many ways. Two popular conceptions of happiness are there in psychology: one is hedonic and another is eudaimonic. Eudaimonic and Hedonic happiness contribute significantly to holistic well-being of a person. The eudaimonic happiness is attained through experiences of meaning and purpose and hedonic happiness can be attained through pleasure and enjoyment. The concept of happiness is employed to describe the entire synthesis of life satisfaction. In other words, according to Diener et al. (1985), happiness is a person's assessment of the entire quality of their existence. As a result, each person's definition of happiness will be unique, and it will be related to ideas of wellbeing and quality of life.

Research was carried out on the impact of technology in particular situations. The findings make it clear that although technology often has a good / positive influence on people's subjective well-being, it can sometimes produce negative effects also. It is important to remember that technology often provides tools, and how these tools are used will decide their impact on happiness.

4.3: Impact of Technology:

Technological advancements have created an impact on every field of operation right from farming to launching of rockets in to the orbits and every walk of life. And human beings are very quick to grab / grasp and accommodate the advancements in technology (Jawad Abbas, et al: 2014). There is evidence indicating the adverse effects of technology, even though certain types of technology might have improved the world. (Rafnsdottir, et al, 2004) and its overuse, as well. Technology has provided some form of advantages while leaving many negative impacts on employees’ overall well-being. Technology has impacted employees both ways as positive and negative regardless of place and field of operation. Positive impacts have left employees experience pleasure and help in performing better. Whereas negatively impacted employees have suffered with mental disorders, like anxiety, depression due to various issues interlinked with technology. The

technological advancements have led to mixed reactions from the employees. The advancement of technology and availability of high-tech gadgets has reinforced employee's belief that easy access to technology will make their work easy at the same time intrusive technology is affecting their well-being and work-life balance.

The use of technology in work area as part of automation as a substitution to work force has globally viewed positively to reduce the employee stress, and create more freedom to move up for higher skilled tasks. According to research by Georgia Tech University and analysis of data from the General Social Survey from 2002 to 2018 that included a section on worker well-being, employees whose jobs were affected by automation appear to experience less stress at work, as well as worsening health and job satisfaction. This suggests that there is no sense of job security due to automation, regular employee monitoring, and (Gaskell, 2011).

In the present scenario, esp, during pandemic, organizations have taken various measures for safety and well-being of employees' by changing the work culture, viz work from home (WFH). Using the advancements of technology like mobile technology/ availability of high-speed internet facilities online working and online monitoring has been developed. Employees who were not well versed with the latest technologies could not cope up with others and employees stayed in poor network areas underwent lot of stress. Research elucidates that as time progresses WFH has impacted employees so much that the work life balance has changed to work life merger to describe the dissolving boundaries of work and home (Duxbury, 2011; Golden, 2007). Many employees suffered with psychological issues like severe depression, stress, anxiety.

More than 42% of people, according to Harvard Business Review, experienced a decline in mental health throughout the pandemic period. This had an impact on employees' personal lives as well as their physical health, leading to conditions including obesity and sleep difficulties, among others (Zachariah, 2022). Employees' work lives will be significantly impacted by such consequences on their physical and mental health in the form of absenteeism, low productivity, and retention. It was found that employees tend to perform better when they are healthy and happy which in turn increases the productivity. Experience of pleasure & enjoyment makes a person happy. There is no hard and fast rule that technology can make employee happier (Surowiecki, 2005). The positive impact of technology on happiness are like: connecting people: Networks, IoT, AI etc, everything is available at a click of the button. On the other hand, people cognitive capabilities are decreasing day by day, digital addictions, rise in stress, anxiety, depression, inactivity and sleeplessness due to loss of trust as less face-to-face contacts. (Mochón, 2018).

Employees' everyday work lives have been significantly changed by technology in two key ways: first, increasing flexibility in the work schedule and location (such as telecommuting), and second, the extension of the workday due to expectations of constant connectedness (Nixon et al,

2014). The negative effects such as stress & anxiety due to the use of technological developments caused people to experience anxiety and depression. These outcomes and consequences are directly affecting the employees' well-being in both social and psychological ways. The following are the few impacts of technology development on employee well-being.

a) Constant availability of technology:

Being approachable and available at all times is beneficial, but it also means that one is available for job related matters outside of regular business schedules. This might be anything from like making a late video call to reply to a client's text. For many employees, this sort of accessibility may be unpleasant because it abstains them from fully unwinding.

b) Inability to wind down:

When using technology, mind does not turn off and persists in search for new texts and emails even after leaving the office. Employees find it challenging to unwind and stop obsessing about the work till the following day. It affects the brain's melatonin production, which prevents a restful night's sleep. One's mental health can be substantially impacted by this. Even in jobs where technology is not used, stress related to the job can exist; however, in environments where technology is used frequently, this stress may be increased. Remote workers experience communication breakdowns and lack of social support, and they are more prone to experience mental health problems. (2022) (Volyntseva).

c) Too much of screen time:

Extended periods of time in gazing at gadgets like laptop or mobile screen may cause eye fatigue and strain. The exhausted employees struggle to concentrate, which affects their ability to complete tasks effectively. The effects of excessive screen time can be perceived both physically and mentally. (Like RSI, which occurs when the same motion is repeated multiple times and causes discomfort in the muscles, nerves, and tendons.

d) Unrealistic deadlines:

Following the pandemic, advancements in communication technology have made a wide variety of work styles possible, allowing employees to work at all hours and from their preferred locations. The Job demands including deadline pressure, workloads, and environmental factors have clear negative effects on employees in the form of stress, disengagement and eventual burnout.

e) Social Isolation:

Constant usage of technology (gadgets) creates a sense of isolation, reduced human touch, and made it difficult to connect face-to -face interactions with each other. Long working and unexpected presence at any given point of time lead to negative psychological well-being (Sagar Pandey, 2022).

f) Sedentary lifestyle:

Technology promotes sedentary life style in the complete digital world.

g) Constant source of distraction:

Technology developments, like digital world is a continuous source of distraction.

h) Bad Posture:

Continuous sitting in front of monitor / working with laptop etc., creates a bad posture, back pain, wrist pain and develops neck pain. These physical health issues gradually leads to mental health issues.

j) Superficial exchange of communication:

When gadgets are utilised in team meetings, there may be a lack of effective questioning, tone, body language, and dialogue, which results in a superficial exchange and lower employee engagement. Using technology to communicate can only harm the relationship. One of the many detrimental effects of technology that should not be disregarded is this (Lebeau, 2022).

k) Technostress:

A psychological response caused by inability to cope-up with introduction of emerging digital technologies. The possibility of employees experiencing technostress may be a negative impacts of digitalization. Biological stress reactions are linked to technostress, eg research shows that computer breakdown can cause elevated cortisol levels.

Study by (Pena-Casas *et al.*, 2018) indicated that around 66% of surveyed workers reported an intensification of work and an increase in the pace of work due to digitalization. Heavy workloads can lead to psychological symptoms including sadness, stress, anxiety, and sleep deprivation, thereby a negative influence might have been possible. Digital technology also enables employers to keep an eye on their workers' activities, which may make them feel more regulated and under pressure to accomplish work-related objectives. This could eventually result in a decline in psychological well-being.

5. Results & Discussion:

The digital technology / development in technology has blurred the lines between work and family life, as now people are more connected from home, employees' ability is limited to unwind and relax after the work, reducing the amount of time people spend with their family and friends. This has a negative impact on employee mental health, and also on the mental health of their loved ones. Employee attitudes, interpersonal skills, and productivity are influenced by physical, social, and psychological well-being.

6. Conclusion:

In the present scenario the technological innovation is critical for development, societal advancement and mankind development. This research study provides evidence of negative impacts of technological advancements. It's time to focus and pay special attention to regulation and put it in

proper usage to reap the benefits of the technology adva

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