Antecedents of Employee Well-Being: Review of Organizations in Pakistan

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Abstract

Objective: The aim of the current study is to highlight the role of well-being factors affecting employees’ job outcomes in Pakistani context. The current study explores nature of well-being as a psychological construct in recent studies conducted.

Methodology: Systematic review of 20 studies is included. This review analyzed how the construct of well-being is measured, which research designs are used and what major outcomes can be drawn based on these studies in organizations of Pakistan.

Findings: It revealed that quantitative research designs are used in studies so far. Two third of studies took the construct as employee well-being and studied it as dependent variable.

How to cite:
Discussion: The study indicates that many factors play a role in development and decline of well-being in Pakistani organizations. Employee attitudes, interpersonal relations, job performance and outcomes impact well-being behaviors. Narcissistic supervision, emotional exhaustion and workplace bullying are dominant factors lowering well-being of employees.

Practical implications: This research is helpful to understand the antecedents of well-being in organizations and provide insights for establishing healthy work environment.

Keywords: Employee well-being; Organizations; Systematic review; Employee attitudes; Pakistan

JEL Codes: J81; M1
Antecedentes del bienestar de los empleados: revisión de organizaciones en Pakistán

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Resumen

Objetivo: El objetivo del estudio actual es resaltar el papel de los factores de bienestar que afectan los resultados laborales de los empleados en el contexto pakistání. El estudio actual explora la naturaleza del bienestar como una construcción psicológica en estudios recientes realizados.

Metodología: Se incluye la revisión sistemática de veinte estudios. Esta revisión analizó cómo se mide el constructo de bienestar, qué diseños de investigación se emplean y qué principales resultados se pueden extraer de estos estudios en organizaciones de Pakistán.

Hallazgos: Reveló que los diseños de investigación cuantitativa se utilizan en los estudios hasta el momento. Dos tercios de los estudios tomaron el constructo bienestar del empleado y lo estudiaron como variable dependiente.

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Discusión: El estudio indica que muchos factores juegan un papel en el desarrollo y la disminución del bienestar en las organizaciones paquistaníes. Las actitudes de los empleados, las relaciones interpersonales, el desempeño laboral y los resultados impactan en los comportamientos de bienestar. La supervisión narcisista, el agotamiento emocional y el acoso laboral son factores dominantes que reducen el bienestar de los empleados.

Implicaciones prácticas: esta investigación es útil para comprender los antecedentes del bienestar en las organizaciones y proporciona información para establecer un entorno de trabajo saludable.

Palabras clave: Bienestar de los empleados; Organizaciones; Revisión sistemática; Actitudes de los empleados; Pakistán

Códigos JEL: J81; M1
员工幸福感的来源： 巴基斯坦文章调查

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文章摘要

研究目标：本研究的目的是了解幸福感因素对巴基斯坦员工工作成果的影响。此调查探讨了近期研究中作为员工心理结构的幸福感的性质。

分析方法：本调查对 20 项报告进行了系统回顾。该综述分析了如何衡量幸福感这一概念，使用了哪些研究设计，以及根据这些研究可以得出巴基斯坦各机构的哪些主要成果。

调查结果：此调查显示，迄今为止的调查都采用了定量研究设计。有三分之二的报告将员工福利作为变量进行研究。

文章讨论：此研究表明，许多因素对巴基斯坦机构中员工幸福感的加强和下降起着作用。员工的态度、人际关系、工作表现和结果都会对幸福感行为产生影响。自恋型监督、情绪衰竭和工作场所欺凌是降低员工幸福感的主要因素。

实际应用：这项研究有助于了解机构中员工幸福感的来源，并为建立有利员工的工作环境提供启示。

关键词：员工福利；机构；系统回顾；员工态度；巴基斯坦

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1. Introduction

In growing competitive environment, organizations are in need of time. The employees working there face challenges at different levels. Well-being of employees must be ensured for routine tasks, better working relations and to make things effective (Koch, 2023). Positive psychological states vary widely. In research of organizational psychology, well-being has association with work engagement. In task behaviors, it relates oneself physically, cognitively and emotionally (Kahn, 1992; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Abugre, 2017). Organizational work engagement policies contributed as enhancement in general Well-being of people, (Boccoli et al., 2023).

Well-being refers to positive feelings and indicators like satisfaction, social interaction and job engagement (Mäkikangas et al., 2016). Employee Well-being refers to investment of high level of energy and willingness to work with full efforts. This way individuals are ready to face difficulties and work with devotion. If they have positive attachments with the organization, they complete the work tasks happily (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Employee well-being represents pleasurable and enjoyable moments and positive emotions that an employee receives from job circumstances (Locke, 1969). Individuals’ performance and outcomes are associated with well-being behaviors (Boccoli et al., 2023).

Job well-being is linked with job engagement, satisfaction, and extra performance activities (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job well-being behaviors of employees rely on the balanced approach in which employees can achieve equilibrium between resource gain and resource investment (Duan et al., 2019). Employees performance and interest has been associated with sustainable workplace well-being (Siddiqui & Ijaz, 2022).

Well-being behaviors of employees are affected by many factors, which are related to employees, attitudes, and overall environment of organizations (Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022). These factors affect motivation, commitment, performance, skills, training, adaptability, and psychological empowerment of employees. Job-related factors included job communication, job autonomy and work environment. Moreover, environment-related factors include leadership style, management support, organizational culture, and training facilities (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Well-being behaviors are associated with positive voice, environmental and occupational hazards, safety, socioeconomic, demographic, and workplace factors (Morrison, 2023).

Many work environments (unsupportive relations, low quality of leadership), interpersonal characteristics (low self-esteem, high sensitive personality), inference of work-home balance (pressure of house affairs), and job dissatisfaction (low job satisfaction) are certain factors that contributed to the environment of decreased well-being behaviors (Azeem et al., 2020). Worse tactics of socialization decline job satisfaction (higher number of resignations and increased turnover) with the passage of time. These tactics might be contextual (bad orientation), social (lack of social support), and content based tactics (low training and development opportunities) (Wang et al., 2018). Different behaviors like effectiveness, performance, team spirit, and
adoption of work are strongly affected by insecure job environment. Insecure employees not just physically make a worse performance but also psychologically withdraw attention from ongoing assignments (Reisel et al., 2005; Botha & Steyn, 2023).

**Problem Statement**

Maintenance of employee well-being is considered important for enhancing organizational output and meeting competitiveness. Employees working in modern organizations handle too many organizational factors including complex tasks, stressful working environments, lack of employability, and job security. Due to continuous incompatible interactions, they may perceive higher level of anxiety, stress, negative emotions, which eventually results in rising level of low engagement and performance (Ren & Kim, 2023). Social environment and context may contribute to the effective well-being environment in organization (Boccoli et al., 2023). Workplace spirituality, mindfulness and innovative workplace behaviors may contribute to effective job well-being (Sulphey, 2023; Salem et al., 2023). Understanding of emotions set the mechanism of employees well-being (Abid et al., 2020).

Objectives of current study are to explore the nature of well-being as a psychological construct, how the construct is measured in recent studies conducted in Pakistan and what major outcomes can be drawn based on these studies. Previously no such comprehensive study based on systematic review has been done. So this study will contribute to analyze the concept of well-being in organizational settings. Study of population across multiple professions is analyzed. Research designs and nature of the studies is determined as well.

2. **Method**

This chapter employs systematic review as research method to study well-being of employees working in Pakistani organizations. The scholarly research was extracted from Google Scholar, PsycINFO and Web of Science. Particularly detailed analysis of all the research done on well-being of Pakistani employees in different settings over last ten years is given. Roughly 754 research papers were collected in the initial stage. Then based on qualitative analysis by experts considering objectives of current study 20 papers were selected for review.

2.1 **Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria**

To be included in the review, the current study has adopted specific criteria to select the relevant studies on specific variable i.e. well-being at workplace.
Secondly, this paper has examined the antecedents of well-being such as supervision style, workplace environment, workplace bullying, stress, etc. as factors that are reasoned to reduce well-being. Thirdly, present paper has also identified the factors which have enhanced the well-being. Fourthly, the inclusion criteria contain only research studies related to Pakistani organizations in which well-being has been shown as the basic variable to organizational performance. Fifthly, recent studies on well-being from 2018 to 2023 have been included for review of well-being in Pakistani organizations.

2.2. Systematic review

Systematic reviews answer research questions using reproducible and explicit methods to organize, critically analyze and give combined results of primary research studies on a specified topic (Pollock & Berge, 2018). Systematic literature review offers a way to check the quality and magnitude of evidences existing on a topic or question of interest. It provides a more accurate and broader level of understanding than a traditional literature review (Pati & Lorusso, 2018).

2.3. Assessment of study quality

To see and check the quality of the review studies, a checklist developed in order to evaluate the relevant studies of meta-analysis and systematic review on well-being was included (fig.1).

Figure 1. Flowchart of systematic review on employee well-being
3. Findings

In Pakistani culture, working population has increased largely over different domains. Keeping work life balance is mandatory for well-being of employees. Here is a brief reference to the recent trends and determinants of well-being in Pakistani employees. Findings from studies selected for systematic review are given below in tabular form followed by discussion on it with focus on multiple aspects. Studies are arranged chronologically being most recent at top.

One of the objective of the current study was to explore the nature of well-being as a psychological construct and how the construct is measured in recent studies conducted in Pakistan. Employee well-being was measured in most of the studies. So it is established that researchers took the construct and defined as employee well-being. One study by Farid et al. (2021) found psychological, social and physical well-being in nurses. Other three studies defined as psychological well-being (Suleman et al., 2018), job well-being behavior (Khan et al., 2022), and mental well-being (Guoyan et al., 2021). Further nature of construct in studies was identified based on the role of variable in multiple studies. Again two thirds of the studies (15 out of 20) explored employee well-being as dependent variable. Whereas rest of the studies checked the role of well-being as mediator (4) and moderator (1).

Study population across multiple profession is given in table above. It found that academic work setting, banking and telecom sector, hotels and medical professionals were analyzed in recent studies conducted in Pakistan. Research designs and nature of the studies is determined as well. Findings reveal that quantitative research designs are used in studies so far.

4. Discussion

Findings of research are discussed here in detail. Further research gives an account of major outcomes which can be drawn based on studies included for systematic analysis. Positive and negative factors play a role to influence employee well-being.

4.1. Factors That Enhance Well-Being

Employee well-being increases by many aspects. Various studies have described the factors that enhance well-being at workplace. Motivated employees work beyond their task (El-Naggar et al., 2023). A study conducted during Covid-19 found that supportive leadership has impact on well-being of nurses. Psychological capital also affects the change in employee well-being through the role of leaders.
Table 1. Studies on employee well-being in Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Author (Year)</th>
<th>Population (Sample Size)</th>
<th>Dimensions (Construct) of well-being</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Salem et al. (2023)</td>
<td>Banking sector (538)</td>
<td>Job well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Innovative work behaviors have positive impact on job well-being behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>AlZgool et al. (2023)</td>
<td>Employees in hospitals (250)</td>
<td>Well-being (mediating variable)</td>
<td>Mediating role of job well-being has decline the effect of abusive supervision on performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Saeed et al. (2023)</td>
<td>Public sector (306)</td>
<td>Work well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Job insecurity has declined the work well-being behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ejaz et al. (2022)</td>
<td>Public sector organizations (381)</td>
<td>Work well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Impact of ethical leadership is positive on employee well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ilyas et al. (2022)</td>
<td>Banking sector (405)</td>
<td>Work well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Perceived organizational support has positive affect on professional commitment and job well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Khan et al. (2022)</td>
<td>Telecom sector (395)</td>
<td>Job well-being behavior (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Job well-being behaviors can be determined through relation of perceived narcissistic supervision and workplace bullying where emotional exhaustions plays role of mediator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gulzar et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Manufacturing organizations (208)</td>
<td>Work well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Abusive supervision has negatively correlated with work well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hayat and Afshari (2021)</td>
<td>Hotel sector (360)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Workplace bullying predicts employee well-being where burnout plays a role of mediator while perceived organizational support moderates this relation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Farid et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Nurses (412)</td>
<td>Psychological, social and physical well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Supportive leadership impacts overall well-being of nurses where psychological capital mediates the relation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr.No.</td>
<td>Author (Year)</td>
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<td>Key Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hasan and Kashif (2021)</td>
<td>Banking sector front line employees (456)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Psychological safety, empowerment and meaningfulness influences employee well-being. Promotive voice plays the role of mediator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Guoyan et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Private university teachers (316 Pakistani, 311 Malaysian)</td>
<td>Mental well-being (moderator)</td>
<td>Educational quality and assurance has no role in Pakistani context. Whereas responsiveness of instructors and information quality has no role in Malaysian context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Abdullah et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Nurses from private sector health care (412)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (mediator)</td>
<td>Internal service quality boosts job satisfaction, commitment and performance of nurses and employee well-being plays mediator role in this relation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ahmad et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Employee in academic work setting (330)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>Workplace bullying plays the role of mediator between ethical leadership, and employee well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ahmed et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Employees working in guest-service hotels (509)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (mediator)</td>
<td>Corporate social responsibility and environment affects employee behavior where employee well-being is mediator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sarwar et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Employes working in Italian and Pakistani hospitality industry (697)</td>
<td>Employee well-being (Dependent Variable)</td>
<td>Ethical leadership, work engagement, employees well-being, and performance: a cross-cultural comparison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Suleman et al. (2018)</td>
<td>Secondary school heads (402)</td>
<td>Psychological well-being (dependent variable)</td>
<td>All the subscales of occupational stress except low status are significant predictors having negative impact on psychological well-being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recent researches stated that meaningfulness, psychological safety and empowerment may boost employee well-being (Hasan & Kashif, 2021; Karani et al., 2022).

Supervision style and organizational citizenship behaviors are really matters for setting of employee well-being (Aizgool et al., 2023). Work alienation and well-being are associated with supervision style (Sarwar et al., 2022). By the same token the study of Ejaz et al. (2022) described the positive impact of ethical leadership on employees well-being in Pakistani organizations. Perceived organizational support psychological capital have declined the negative emotions and enhanced the well-being behaviors (Yasmeen et al., 2022; Ilyas et al., 2022).

An empirical evidence based study from Pakistan found that psychological climate, psychological ownership and self-efficacy influences employee well-being and employee performance (Yan et al., 2020). Similarly, impact of corporate social responsibility and environmental triggers predict employee green behavior. Employee well-being influences the link as mediator in study (Ahmed et al., 2020). A comparative study of Malaysia and Pakistan was done during COVID-19 pandemic to see how learning management system works based on self-efficacy, mental well-being and continuance commitment of teachers (Guoyan et al., 2021). Another study elaborates that mindfulness and resilience are predictors of subjective well-being (Zubair et al., 2018). Internal service quality boosts job satisfaction, commitment and performance of nurses and employee well-being plays mediator role in this relation (Abdullah et al., 2021).

Previous studies suggested that job well-being has been fostered by workplace attachment. Poor working conditions, e.g. workplace bullying, has weaken the engagement level with workplace attachment (Hamel et al., 2023). Stressful work environment demonstrate employees to work with low engagement (Danauskė et al., 2023). Another study determined cross cultural comparison with reference to work engagement and ethical leadership where performance and well-being of employees improve if work engagement is ensured under great leaders (Sarwar et al., 2020).

The discussion above reveals that there are more studies done on Pakistani population determining and explaining interlink of positive factors affecting well-being of employees than negative. It is a positive sign that organizations are striving to inculcate methods for boosting well-being of their employees. Employees themselves are seeking ways to make the working environment healthy.

### 4.2. Factors That Decline Well-Being

Employees have more sensitivity to negative events than positive, therefore negative work atmosphere has higher impact on individuals’ behaviors (Tekleab et al., 2020). Non fulfillment of psychological contracts makes it hard to cope with well-being behaviors (De Clercq & Pereira, 2023). Workplace spirituality, mindfulness and self-compassion are antecedents of employees well-being (Sulphey, 2023). The study
of Saeed et al. (2023) reveals that job insecurity has negatively affected well-being behaviors in the organizations. Another study examines the factors that decline the well-being, i.e. workplace loneliness (Basit & Nauman, 2022). Employee well-being has been negatively correlated with abusive supervision (Gulzar et al., 2021).

Supervisor roles exist in many forms in the organization such as positive and negative. Negative role of supervision has several faces which are associated to employee performance and well-being (Emmerling et al., 2023). Perception of organizational politics declines well-being of employees. Trust and interpersonal conflicts plays mediating role (Ullah et al., 2019). If individuals perceive supervisor narcissism with respect to social interactions, they desire to work with less energy (El-Naggar et al., 2023). Supervisor’s narcissistic personality decreases job satisfaction, greater workplace stress, lower performance and well-being (Greenbaum et al., 2017). Supervisor dark personality traits affects employee attitude and organizational performance (El-Naggar et al., 2023). Dark triad of supervisor, e.g. narcissism, has destructive effect on well-being within organization and harm the interpersonal relation (Diller et al., 2023).

A study on telecom sector of Pakistan revealed that job well-being behaviors can be determined through relation of perceived narcissistic supervision and workplace bullying where emotional exhaustion plays role of mediator (Khan et al., 2022). Supervisor narcissism is key personality dimension that impact organizational justice, employees’ behaviors and well-being. Incompetent supervisor cannot deal with organizational matters (Faghekarimi et al., 2023). Job satisfaction, engagement, and counterproductive work behaviors are consistently affected by the perception of narcissistic supervision. The study has revealed that dispositional aggression is high between positive relation of narcissistic attitude and counterproductive work behaviors (Michel & Bowling, 2013). Affective commitment of employees to work and supervisor has negative relation with power distance and self-oriented behaviors between supervisors and subordinates moderate this relation (Mao et al., 2019).

Workplace bullying has been recently the topic of several researches as a social phenomenon. It has resulted to more stressful events and hypertension risk, as well as anxiety, depression in the workplace environment can lead to disengagement and low well-being, (Chowdhury et al., 2023). Workplace bullying is a potential threat to well-being of both bystanders and targets (Glambek et al., 2023). It can be distressing for employee well-being. Recent researches found that employees face risk in developing well-being if bullied at workplace (Farley et al., 2023). A study in hotel employees of Pakistan described that workplace bullying predicts employee well-being where burnout plays a role of mediator while perceived organizational support moderates this relation (Hayat & Afshari, 2021). Another study in an academic work setting of Pakistan explored that workplace bullying plays a role of mediator between ethical leadership and employee well-being (Ahmad et al., 2021). Karatunna (2020) analyzed workplace bullying by performance orientation, assertiveness, power distance, cultural dimensions, and group collectiveness. The risk of workplace bullying disables individuals for coping of problem-solving strategies, creates misperceptions in group relations, imbalance power, and decreases work well-being
Moreover, Mardanov and Cherry (2018) explored that job dissatisfaction; intention to resign, poor performance, absenteeism, and stress are outcome of workplace bullying. These behaviors not only influence work at individual level. Group characteristics, overall organizational environment and interpersonal relations are also affected by this situation (Weiss & Zacher, 2022). Subsequently Reisel et al. (2005) reported four types of well-being behaviors: effectiveness, performance, team espirit de corps, and adopt of work. These behaviors affected insecure job environment. Employees worsen their performance and psychologically withdraw attention in case of a decline of these types of behaviors at the workplace.

5. Conclusion

Maintenance of employees well-being is considered important for meeting competitiveness and enhancing organizational performance. Pakistani working population face hurdles affecting psychological well-being. Objectives of the current study are to explore nature of well-being as a psychological construct, how the construct is measured in recent studies, which research designs are employed and what major outcomes can be drawn based on these studies in organizations of Pakistan. Systematic review of twenty studied is included. Findings reveal that most of the studies took the construct as employee well-being and studied it as dependent variable. Quantitative research designs are used in studies so far. It further indicates that many factors play role in development and decline of well-being in Pakistani organizations. Employee attitudes, interpersonal relations, job performance and outcomes impact well-being behaviors. Narcissistic supervision, emotional exhaustion and workplace bullying are dominant factors lowering mental well-being of employees. Positive relation between supervisor and coworkers enables the environment to achieve organizational targets. On the other hand, cynical behaviors and intention to leave are developed in result of negative well-being behaviors (Abougre, 2017). Organizations ought to develop framework of setting work environment to minimize the workplace bullying and focus on increasing well-being (Farley et al., 2023). Organizations need to set the physical aspects of workplace environment such as interactions behaviors and ways of communication to improve the performance (Hamel et al., 2023). The current study would be a great addition in terms of determining psychological aspects of well-being at workplace. Employees may be directed to have plans and consultation for improving their mental health.

6. Limitations & Future Direction

Based on selected literature, the current study has some limitations, which are needed to be addressed in future researches. Present study has included studies
which have seen the factors and antecedents related to job well-being in Pakistani organizations. Future researches can apply this on other South Asian countries of this region like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, or Sri Lanka in order to see the generalizability of the findings. Researchers have analyzed the antecedents of well-being by considering well-being as output variable. Future studies can assess the effects of well-being on other variables, e.g. employees attitudes, job satisfaction and organizational commitments. Another limitation is that using only three databases may limit the number of papers, excluding some important ones. Future studies might include other databases as well. Due to language barriers and proficiency of authors articles published in English are used which limits exposure to some researches. Multilingual people may take in future studies. Further, research was carried out based on the most recent articles. Researches in future may include wider timeframe.

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