

Chapter 3

Organizational Well-Being: A New Theoretical Model and Recommendations for Future Research

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is two aspects: to provide an overview of organizational wellbeing (OW) research; to present a new model of OW focusing on successful outcomes and its operationalization of the construct and the recommendations for future. A summary literature review of the OW literature, focusing on organizational well-being and its possible consequences. The literature is used to develop and propose a new model of OW and its success indicators. Testable relationships are proposed between these indicators. The research model has not been tested empirically. It is an external representation, is a new and untested concept in the OW literature. The paper provides a model that leaders, managers and newcomers may find useful to successfully establish the OW process. The model proposed is novel and raises the important issue of appropriate OW success indicators. New propositions are made regarding relationships between antecedents and output variables.

INTRODUCTION

Well-being plays an important role in a variety of ways. It impacts an employer's approach to traditional benefits and HR policies. But just as important, making employee well-being a priority will have a positive return on the organization's workforce availability and performance, labor-related costs, and output — including innovation, customer service, and quality of products and services. Research undertaken in various social science disciplines supports the adoption of well-being — in all its many dimensions — as a concrete, achievable employer goal. Creating a future-ready approach to employee well-being requires a vision of the end-state and a strategy. It should start with an analysis of the employer's expectations and needs and objectives to identify areas of greatest need and the corresponding effort required for success. Using an opportunity analysis enables an employer to prioritize and plan actions that will produce the

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-2405-6.ch003

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best return on investment by using all parameters of wellbeing. To implement wellbeing in the workplace, employers must first understand the nature and process of well-being. First, an individual's experience at work obviously affects the person while she or he is in the workplace. In addition, these experiences also "spill over" into non-work domains. Workers almost spend one-third of their waking hours at work, they don't necessarily leave the job behind when they leave the work site. Indeed, the overlap between non-work and work leads to the observation that a person's work and personal lives are interrelated and intertwined. Second, there is a growing awareness that certain elements in the workplace pose risks for workers. Unsafe work practices, sexual harassment, disturbing supervisor-subordinate relationship, and uncontrolled aggression are such potential threats. Third, health problems adversely affect outcomes. Workers experiencing poor health may be less productive, make lower quality decisions, exhibit higher absenteeism and make consistently diminishing overall contributions to the organization. The need for regulating new business growth is usually prompted by social and psychological perception of the employees. We need to understand the key predictors and the process of well-being.

Now there is a greater awareness on the role of employee's wellbeing in the business organization. But there is less attention has been paid to its ramifications for employee wellbeing. Current research is now demonstrating the benefits of organizational wellbeing which is a strong criterion for business success.

The pursuit of wellbeing is an important goal for many organizations. Few scientific researches have focused on the question of how wellbeing can be increased and then sustained. In the pursuit of happiness, empirical evidence suggests that the ability to be happy and contented with life is a central criterion of adaptation and positive mental health. Lyubomirsky and her colleagues recently compiled evidence showing that happiness has numerous positive byproducts that appear to benefit individuals, families, and communities (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2004; Fredrickson, 2001). Furthermore, Lyubomirsky et al.' analysis revealed that happy people gain tangible benefits in many different life domains from their positive state of mind, including larger social rewards (higher odds of marriage and lower odds of divorce, more friends, stronger social support, and richer social interaction; e.g., Harker & Keltner, 2001; Marks & Fleming, 1999; Okun, Stock, Haring, & Witter, 1984), superior work outcomes (greater creativity, increased productivity, higher quality of work, and higher income, e.g., Estrada, Isen, & Young, 1984; Staw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1995) and more activity, energy, and flow (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi & Wong, 1991).

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With the growth of companies, in terms of employee numbers, and in terms of service quality and complexity, they provide the human factor which has become a prime competitive advantage on the market. Organizational wellbeing is a holistic concept. It can be operationalized from multiple variables. It requires the congruence between the needs and values of employees and the organization and enabling conditions include providing a safe and supportive environment for shared meaning-making effective boundary management, and engaging, invigorating and inspiring employees.

A study run by Gallup on 5000 employees proves that individual wellbeing now produces long-term effects on the organization, in year 1 and 2 after the investments, in terms of enhanced engagement at the workplace. These individuals tend to see their workplace as positive, productive and engaging. Moreover, managers will collect the results stemmed from investments in wellbeing in terms of an open

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