

A Study on Employee Mental Health Initiatives in Corporate and Their Perception and Impact on The Employees

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Peer Review Information	Abstract
Type: Article Received: 28 March 2026 Revised: 26 April 2026 Accepted: 11 May 2026 Published: 02 June 2026	Employee mental well-being has gained significant attention among organizations due to rising workplace stress, evolving job roles, and dynamic work environments. This research focuses on analysing corporate mental health initiatives and evaluating employee awareness, accessibility, perception, and their influence on overall well-being and job performance. The study is based on primary data collected from 126 employees and 6 HR professionals in Pune. A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining structured questionnaires with semi-structured interviews. Data analysis was carried out using percentage and correlation techniques. Findings indicate that although organizations have introduced various mental health programs, employee awareness and participation remain at a moderate level. Several employees are either unaware or hesitant to engage due to limited communication, time constraints, and social stigma. Additionally, accessibility and managerial support differ across organizations. The results suggest that these initiatives contribute positively to stress reduction, productivity, and work-life balance, but the impact is not very strong. Weak relationships were observed between awareness, participation, and outcomes, indicating that mere availability of programs is insufficient. The study recommends improving communication, minimizing stigma, ensuring easier access, and strengthening leadership involvement to enhance effectiveness. A supportive organizational culture can significantly improve employee well-being and performance. Keywords: Employee Mental Health; Workplace Well-being; Employee Assistance Programs (EAP); Organizational Support; Employee Perception.

How to Cite This Article

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Introduction

In the modern corporate environment, employee mental well-being has emerged as a critical component of human resource practices. Earlier, organizations mainly focused on physical health through medical check-ups and insurance. However, with rising competition, heavy workloads, and rapid technological advancements, mental health has become just as important as physical health for both employees and organizations.

Mental health initiatives refer to the programs and policies introduced by companies to support the emotional and psychological well-being of employees. These initiatives include counselling services, employee assistance programs (EAPs), stress management workshops, flexible working options, and wellness activities. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce stress, improve work-life balance, and create a healthy work environment.

At the global level, mental health has become a serious concern. Mental health issues like depression and anxiety are some of the main reasons for disability worldwide. These problems also affect organizations financially because they reduce employee productivity. In recent years, many multinational companies have started giving more importance to employee well-being by introducing different mental health initiatives. They believe that when employees are mentally healthy, they perform better, think more creatively, and are more likely to stay with the company.

Even though these programs are available, many studies indicate that employee participation remains low. A key reason for this is poor awareness and communication within organizations. Many employees do not have complete information about the services offered. Additionally, the stigma around mental health stops people from seeking help. Employees may worry about being judged by others or being seen as weak if they use these services.

In India, the situation is even more difficult. High work pressure, long working hours, and an imbalance between work and personal life have led to increased stress among employees. Research shows that many employees, especially younger groups like Gen Z and millennials, face significant workplace stress. The COVID-19 pandemic made the situation worse, as factors like isolation, fear of job loss, and remote working conditions negatively affected mental health.

To deal with these challenges, many companies in India have begun introducing mental health initiatives like counselling support, wellness programs, and flexible work arrangements. However, the success of these initiatives largely depends on how effectively they are communicated and implemented within the organization. In many organizations, there is still a gap between the policies created and how much employees actually use them.

Employee mental health plays an important role in overall organizational performance. When mental health is poor, it can result in higher absenteeism, lack of motivation, lower productivity, and increased employee turnover. In contrast, organizations that focus on employee well-being tend to see better engagement, improved efficiency, and stronger overall performance.

Although many companies have introduced mental health programs, there is still a lack of clear understanding about how employees view these initiatives and whether they truly benefit from them. There is also a noticeable gap between what organizations offer and what employees actually experience.

This study, therefore, aims to explore mental health initiatives in corporate organizations and examine employee awareness, accessibility, and perception of these programs. It also seeks to evaluate how these initiatives affect employee well-being, productivity, and job satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine whether organizations have mental health initiatives in place
- To understand employee awareness and accessibility of these initiatives
- To identify the gap between policy and actual implementation

Literature Review

Recent studies indicate that employee mental health has become a key area of focus for organizations. Researchers have examined how mental health initiatives influence factors such as employee well-being, productivity, and overall workplace culture.

A study by Sveyat et al. (2025) analysed employee preferences for workplace mental health programs. The findings revealed that preferences differ based on age groups, with younger employees showing greater interest in digital platforms, while older employees preferred traditional counselling methods. The study concluded that organizations should offer multiple options to meet diverse employee needs.

Similarly, Ruttapriya (2025) conducted a qualitative study to understand employee perceptions of mental health initiatives. The results showed that employees highly value long-term and continuous programs instead of one-time activities. Leadership support and transparent communication were also identified as important factors that help improve participation and build trust among employees.

Another study by Ballard et al. (2025) introduced a structured framework for workplace mental health. The framework included elements such as counselling services, managerial support, and well-defined organizational policies. The study emphasized that continuous evaluation and strong leadership commitment are necessary to achieve long-term success.

The work of Ahmed et al. (2025) focused on awareness and accessibility of mental health programs. Their findings suggested that although organizations provide such services, many employees are either unaware of them or do not actively use them. The study also highlighted that effective programs can improve employee satisfaction and productivity, especially when awareness is increased.

In addition, Singh and Joshi (2025) examined mental health initiatives in Indian organizations. Their study identified stigma and lack of awareness as major barriers to employee participation. It also found that large organizations tend to implement structured mental health programs more effectively than smaller firms.

A regional study by Ghodke and Bagalore (2025) showed that regular participation in wellness activities leads to improved employee well-being. The research further highlighted that continuous engagement and proper communication are essential for achieving positive outcomes from such initiatives.

Moving to recent global perspectives, Henghoriboon (2024) emphasized the importance of confidentiality in mental health programs. The study found that employees are more likely to use these services when they feel assured about privacy and data protection, which improves trust and participation.

Another study by Poddar et al. (2024) explored the reasons why employees hesitate to seek mental health support. The findings indicated that fear of discrimination, negative workplace culture, and lack of confidentiality are key concerns. The study suggested that organizations should focus on creating a supportive environment and increasing awareness.

Further research by Pruthviraj (2023) showed that combining different wellness programs, including physical and emotional health initiatives, leads to better outcomes compared to single interventions. However, smaller organizations may face challenges due to limited resources.

Research by Long et al. (2022) compared different employee assistance programs (EAPs). Although many organizations offer such programs, only a few measure their effectiveness. The study emphasized the importance of regular evaluation to ensure better results.

Similarly, Wu et al. (2021) identified best practices for implementing mental health initiatives, including flexible work arrangements, anti-stigma campaigns, and peer support systems. Organizations adopting these practices reported higher employee satisfaction and lower turnover.

A study by Daniels et al. (2021) found that employees who actively participate in mental health initiatives experience better focus and improved teamwork. It also highlighted that simple and consistent programs are more effective than complex or irregular ones.

Earlier research by Katherine Baicker and colleagues (2019) examined large-scale wellness programs and found moderate improvements in employee health and productivity. However, participation levels remained low due to factors such as lack of time and motivation, highlighting the importance of management support and employee engagement.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, as it helps in understanding the current situation of mental health initiatives in organizations and how they are perceived by employees. The design is suitable for examining patterns, opinions, and experiences related to workplace mental health. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding, a mixed-method approach was used in this study. Quantitative data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees, while qualitative data was gathered through interviews conducted with HR professionals. The combination of these two methods enabled the collection of both numerical data for analysis and detailed insights for deeper understanding.

Research Approach

The study is primarily based on primary data collection, meaning that the data was collected directly from respondents rather than relying on previously available sources. Quantitative information was obtained from employees working in different industries, while qualitative

inputs were collected from HR professionals to understand organizational practices and policies. This approach helped in comparing employee experiences with management perspectives, thereby providing a more balanced view of the subject.

Variables of the Study

The study focuses on two key variables, namely independent and dependent variables. The independent variable includes corporate mental health initiatives such as counselling services, employee assistance programs, workshops, and flexible work policies. The dependent variable consists of employee-related outcomes, including perception, stress levels, job satisfaction, productivity, and overall well-being. These variables were selected to examine the relationship between organizational efforts and employee responses.

Population and Sample

The study was conducted among employees and HR professionals working in organizations located in Pune. The employee group consisted of 126 respondents representing various industries such as IT, banking, education, manufacturing, and services. In addition, 6 HR professionals, including managers and representatives, were included in the study to provide organizational insights. A non-probability sampling method was adopted, specifically convenience and snowball sampling techniques, based on the availability of respondents and referrals. Efforts were made to ensure diversity in terms of age, gender, and work experience so that the sample could reasonably represent the larger population.

Data Collection Methods

Two main tools were used for data collection in this study. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data from employees. It included questions related to awareness, accessibility, participation, and perception of mental health initiatives. The questionnaire was distributed through online platforms, and a pilot test was conducted with a small group to ensure clarity and reliability. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with HR professionals to gather qualitative insights. These interviews focused on organizational policies, types of initiatives implemented, and challenges faced during execution. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes and was conducted through telephonic communication.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected through questionnaires and interviews was analyzed using basic statistical methods. Frequency and percentage analysis were used to understand response patterns, while tables and charts were used for clear presentation of findings. Correlation analysis was also applied to examine relationships between variables such as awareness and accessibility, as well as participation and perceived impact. These techniques helped in identifying patterns and drawing meaningful conclusions from the data.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed appropriate ethical guidelines throughout the research process. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before providing their responses. Confidentiality and privacy were maintained, and the information collected was used strictly for academic purposes.

Limitations of the Study

Despite careful planning, the study has certain limitations. The sample is limited to respondents from Pune, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions. The sample size is relatively small, and the study relies on self-reported data, which may not always be completely accurate. Additionally, the research was conducted within a limited time frame, which may have restricted the depth of analysis.

Analysis

Demographic Analysis

The respondents included employees from different age groups, genders, and experience levels.

Most respondents belonged to the 18–25 age group, indicating early-career employees. Gender distribution was almost equal, ensuring balanced perspectives. Employees with both short and long work experience were included. This diversity helps in capturing a wide range of opinions.

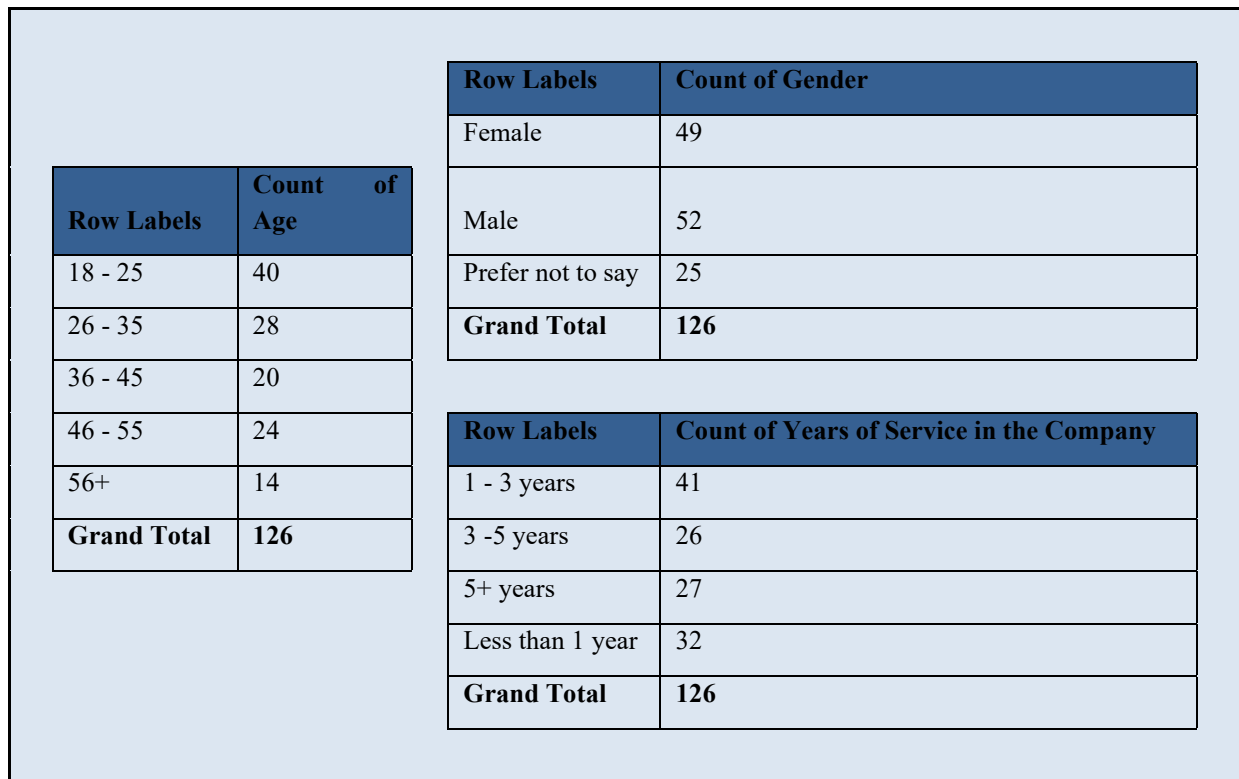


Fig. 1. Distribution of Respondents by Age Group, Gender, and Length of Service

Awareness of the Mental Health initiatives

Table 1: Respondents' Awareness of Workplace Mental Health Programs

Awareness	Frequency
Yes	71
No	55

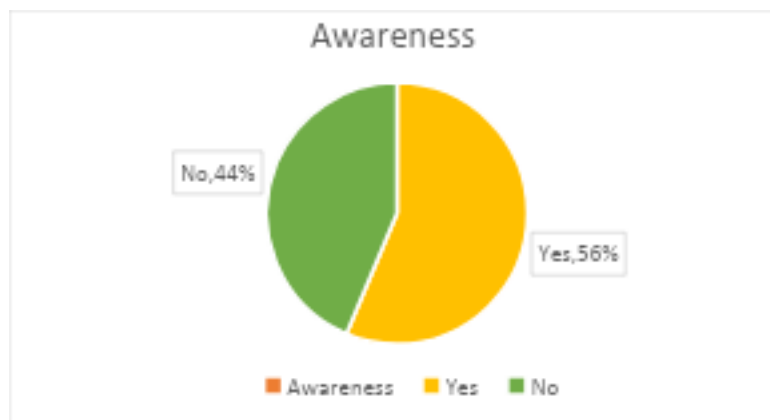


Fig.2. Awareness

- 56% of employees are aware of mental health initiatives
- 44% are not aware

This shows that a significant number of employees are still unaware of available programs, indicating a communication gap.

Types of Initiatives Available

Organizations provide various initiatives such as:

Table 2: Types of Employee Mental Health Initiatives Available in Organizations (N = 126)

Mental Health initiatives	Frequency
Counselling or Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)	23
Stress management workshops/seminars	17
Meditation, yoga, or mindfulness sessions	27
Flexible working hours / work-from-home options	28
Paid mental health or wellness leave	17
Wellness apps / helplines / digital platforms	20
Awareness campaigns and webinars	22
Recreational or team-building activities	27
Health insurance with mental health coverage	26

However, general wellness activities are more common than professional counselling services, indicating a gap in support systems.

Communication Effectiveness



Fig. 3. Employees' Perception of Clear Communication Regarding Mental Health Initiatives

Majority of employees learned about initiatives through HR communication

- Some learned through managers, colleagues, or portals
- A notable number were not informed at all
- Only 38% believe communication is clear, while others feel it is unclear or inconsistent.

Participation Levels

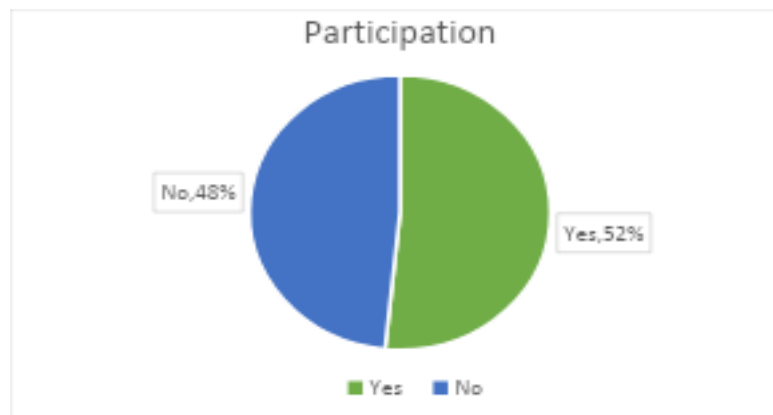


Fig. 4. Employee Participation in Mental Health Initiatives 52% of employees have participated

- 48% have not participated

- Participation is moderate, suggesting that availability of programs does not guarantee usage.

Accessibility of Initiatives

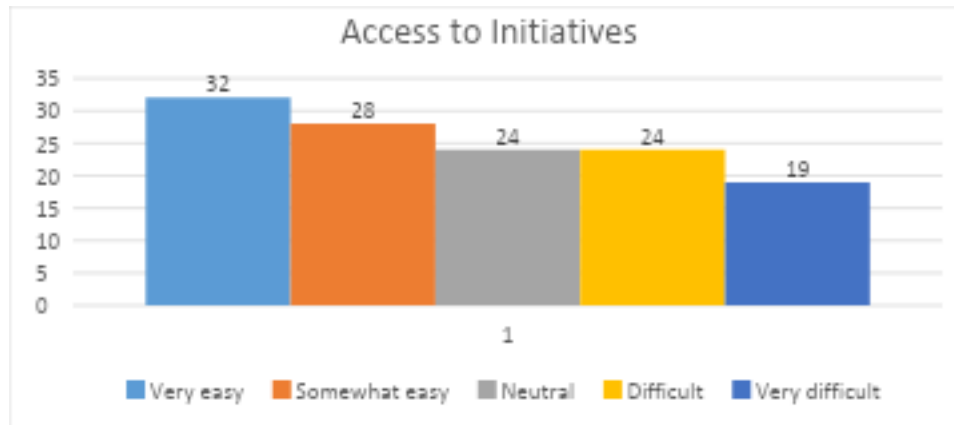


Fig. 5. *Employees' Perceived Ease of Access to Mental Health Initiatives*

Around 47% find initiatives easy to access

Around 34% find them difficult or are unsure

This indicates that accessibility is not uniform across organizations.

Comfort and Stigma

- 41% feel comfortable seeking help
- 32% feel uncomfortable
- Remaining are neutral
- Regarding stigma:
- 45% believe stigma does not exist
- 31% believe it still exists

This shows that stigma remains a barrier for many employees.

Managerial Support

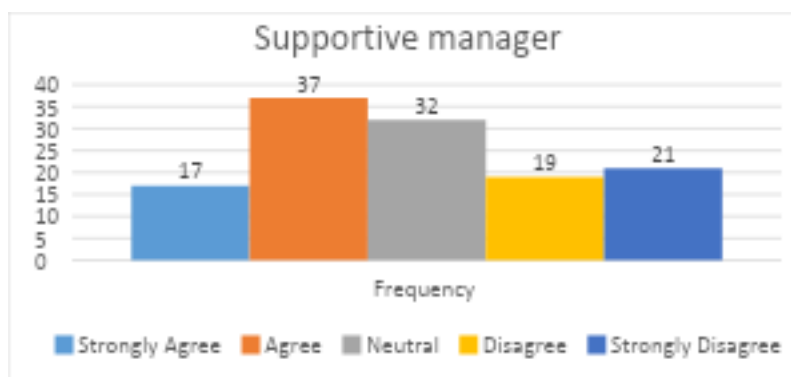


Fig. 6. *Employees' Perception of Managerial Support for Mental Health and Well-being*

- Around 43% feel supported by managers
- Others are neutral or feel unsupported

This suggests inconsistency in managerial approach towards mental health.

Impact of Mental Health Initiatives

Stress Reduction

- About 44% agree initiatives reduce stress

- Others are neutral or disagree

Work-Life Balance

- Around 43% report improvement
- Productivity and Focus
- About 46% notice improvement

Job Satisfaction

- Responses are divided, showing mixed impact

Overall Well-being

- Around 46% report positive impact, while many remain neutral

Overall, the impact is moderate but not consistent.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation Test (Awareness × Accessibility)

Table 3: Relationship Between Awareness of Mental Health Initiatives and Ease of Access (N = 124)

Count of Name	Column Labels			
Row Labels	No	Yes	(blank)	Grand Total
Difficult	10	14		24
Neutral	7	16		23
Somewhat easy	16	11		27
Very difficult	12	7		19
Very easy	10	21		31
Grand Total	55	69		124

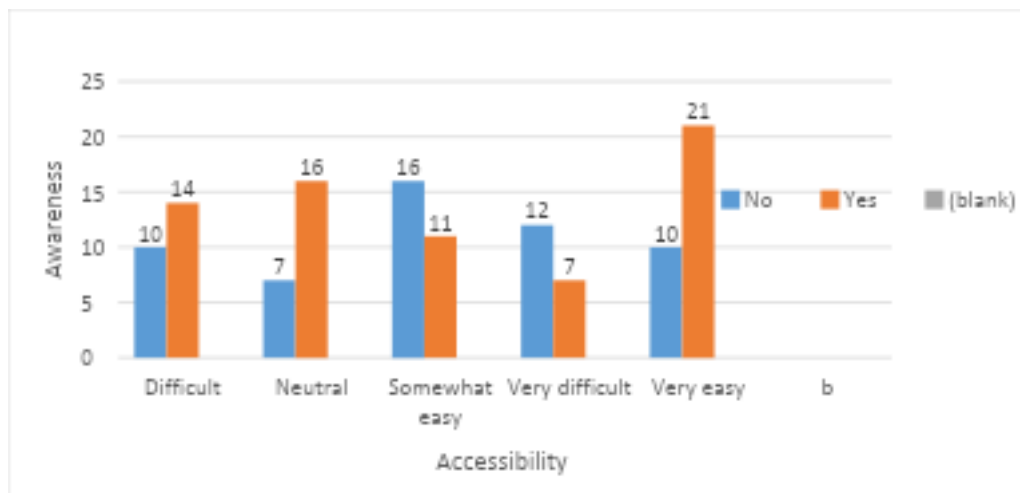


Fig. 7. Relationship Between Awareness of Mental Health Initiatives and Accessibility of Support Programs

- Correlation Coefficient (r): 0.1171
- Type: Positive correlation
- Strength: Very weak
- Direction: As awareness increases, accessibility slightly increases — but the relationship is very weak.

Correlation Test (Participation $\times$ Impact)

Table 4: Relationship Between Participation in Mental Health Initiatives and Perception of Managerial Support (N = 124)

Count of Name	Column Labels		
Row Labels	No	Yes	Grand Total
Agree	22	20	42
Disagree	2	3	5
Neutral	27	30	57
Strongly Agree	8	7	15
Strongly Disagree	2	3	5
Grand Total	61	63	124

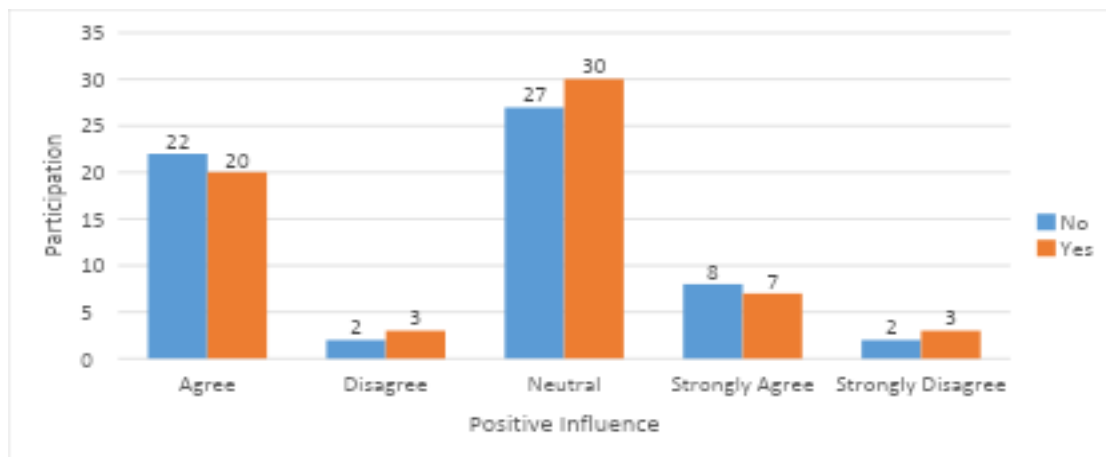


Fig. 8. Relationship Between Participation in Mental Health Initiatives and Perceived Managerial Support

- Correlation Coefficient (r): -0.06944
- Type: Negative correlation
- Strength: Very weak
- Direction: As participation increases, perceived impact slightly decreases — but the relationship is almost negligible.

Awareness and participation show a very weak positive relationship

Awareness and accessibility also show a weak relationship

Participation and impact show a very weak negative relationship

This indicates that awareness and participation alone are not enough to ensure effectiveness.

Results

Based on the analysis, the following key results were identified:

1. Moderate Awareness
 - More than half of the employees are aware of mental health initiatives However, a significant portion still lacks awareness
2. Limited Communication Effectiveness
 - Communication about initiatives is not clear or consistent
 - Many employees depend on informal sources or remain uninformed
3. Moderate Participation
 - Employee participation is nearly equal between participants and non-participants

- Indicates presence of barriers such as time constraints and stigma

4. Accessibility Issues

- While some employees find initiatives easy to access, many face difficulties
- Accessibility is not uniform across organizations

5. Presence of Stigma

- A considerable number of employees still feel uncomfortable seeking help
- Fear of judgment continues to exist

6. Inconsistent Managerial Support

- Support from managers varies across organizations
- Lack of active involvement reduces effectiveness of initiatives

7. Moderate Positive Impact

- Initiatives have a positive effect on stress, productivity, and well-being
- However, the impact is not strong or consistent for all employees

8. Weak Relationships Between Variables

- Awareness does not strongly influence participation
- Participation does not strongly affect perceived impact

Discussion

The study shows that employee awareness of mental health initiatives is moderate, but a significant number of employees remain unaware, which aligns with Abdul Aziz et al. (2025). Communication was found to be ineffective, supporting Chen (2021), as many employees do not receive clear or complete information about available programs. Participation levels are also moderate, with many employees not engaging in initiatives, similar to findings by Katherine Baicker et al. (2019), indicating issues like lack of time and motivation. Accessibility is inconsistent, as highlighted by Long et al. (2022), making it difficult for some employees to use these services.

Stigma continues to be a major barrier, with employees hesitant to seek help due to fear of judgment, consistent with Poddar et al. (2024). Managerial support is uneven, supporting Wu et al. (2021), which shows that leadership plays a key role in encouraging mental well-being. Although mental health initiatives have a moderate positive impact on stress, productivity, and work-life balance (Daniels et al., 2021), the benefits are not consistent for all employees, as noted by Rattray (2025). Weak correlations between awareness, participation, and impact suggest that quality, trust, and organizational culture are more important, as emphasized by Ballard et al. (2025).

Overall, while organizations are taking steps toward improving mental health, challenges like low awareness, poor communication, accessibility issues, and stigma still limit their effectiveness.

Recommendations

- **Improve Awareness & Communication:** Conduct regular workshops and use emails, intranet, and apps to share continuous and clear information about mental health initiatives.
- **Ensure Easy & Confidential Access:** Provide 24×7 counselling, digital platforms, and simple booking systems while maintaining complete privacy.
- **Reduce Stigma:** Promote open discussions, run awareness campaigns, and encourage leaders to normalize seeking help.
- **Strengthen Managerial Support:** Train managers to handle employee stress with empathy and make well-being a leadership priority.
- **Increase Participation:** Offer flexible timings, integrate wellness into daily work, and provide incentives to encourage involvement.
- **Monitor & Evaluate Programs:** Use surveys, feedback, and performance metrics to assess and improve effectiveness.
- **Integrate into Organizational Culture:** Include mental health in company policies, onboarding, and long-term strategy.
- **Encourage Peer Support:** Build support groups, mentoring systems, and team activities to create a sense of belonging.

Conclusion

The study shows that organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of employee mental health and have introduced various initiatives. However, challenges such as low awareness, moderate participation, limited accessibility, and stigma still affect their effectiveness.

Managerial support is inconsistent, which impacts employee trust and willingness to seek help. While these initiatives have a positive impact on stress, productivity, and work-life balance, the benefits are not uniform for all employees.

The findings also indicate that awareness and participation alone are not enough; factors like quality, accessibility, and trust play a crucial role. Overall, the success of mental health initiatives depends on effective implementation, strong communication, and a supportive organizational culture.

In conclusion, prioritizing employee mental health is both a social responsibility and a strategic advantage, leading to better engagement, productivity, and long-term organizational success.

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