

Multicultural Education

Research Article

Homepage: www.MC-caddogap.com**AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE****Amin Ullah Khan***M.Phil Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan.***Syed Salman Ali Shah***Department of Management Sciences, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan.***Hashmat Ullah Khan***Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, Northwest University, Xi'an 710069, China.***ABSTRACT**

A work environment refers to the physical and social surroundings in which an individual carries out their professional activities. The quality of this work environment has a direct correlation with the performance and productivity of the employees in an organization or company. It is observed that if the work environment is good, the performance and productivity of the employees will also be good, but if the work environment is not good, the performance and productivity of the employees will also not be good. Here, a question arises that how the work environment effects the performance of the employees in an organization or company? The primary objective of the present research is to investigate the influence of the work environment on employee performance and productivity. Physical, social and behavioural environments positively affect employee's health, mental satisfaction, increase cooperation among employees, enhance self-esteem and motivate employees, which positively affects employee performance and productivity in an organization or company. In order to optimize employee potential and productivity, organizations and companies need to transcend their conventional roles and provide a good work environment that facilitates the full utilization of the capabilities of employees.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The work environment has considerable significance in the lives of workers, given the substantial amount of time they dedicate to their job and in many ways in which it impacts them (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). The impact of the work environment on worker productivity, safety, and the overall quality of life at work has been explored by Wahyudi, Panjaitan, and Junaedi (2023). The term "social and professional environment" refers to the context in which an individual is expected to engage with a diverse group of others. The term "work environment" refers to the many procedures, systems, structures, tools, or situations inside an employment place that may positively or negatively affect an employee's performance. The place of employment encompasses several elements, such as rules, regulations, culture, finances, working relationships, work place, and external and internal environmental variables. These aspects together impact the manner in which workers carry out their job responsibilities (Ollukkaran & Gunaseelan, 2012). While employee performance is the feature of an employee helping in carrying out the responsibilities assigned to it in terms of quantity and quality as well as effectiveness. The ambiance of a work environment often impacts an employee's cognitive condition and professional development. Employees who are performing their duties in a favourable work environment are likely to have increased motivation to provide work of high quality continuously. A pleasant working environment refers to the conducive climate that a place of work cultivates, which directly impacts its

employees' professional development, attitudes, and mindsets. The presence of a pleasant work environment has the potential to contribute to employee satisfaction inside an organisation. Organisations may cultivate a favourable work environment by establishing and maintaining a robust corporate culture. This may include fostering employee development, facilitating productive interaction, and fostering a sense of security and well-being among workers inside the work environment. The degree of attachment individuals have with the organisation where it is working significantly influences their conduct within the organisational context, including aspects such as motivation, inventive conduct, absences, interpersonal interactions, and job retention. There is a growing concern over worker productivity, which is influenced by several aspects of the working environment (Mwendwa et al., 2017). In a conventional work environment, key elements include both physical as well as behavioural features. The term "physical environment" refers to the elements that are linked to an employee's ability to connect with their workplace physically. Several behavioural and environmental components influence the interconnections between officeholder etiquettes (Hafeez et al., 2019). The office atmosphere has a favourable impact on the conduct of individual workers. Therefore, the quality of the work environment has a crucial role in influencing the degree of inspiration, efficiency, and productivity shown by employees and workers (Sharma, Dhar & Tyagi, 2016). The impact of existing physical circumstances in the workplace may determine whether it plays a good or negative function. In the context of developing nations, it is observed that a significant proportion of the occupational settings within industrial sectors exhibit characteristics of insecurity and potential injury. The promotion of a safe and healthy workplace is crucial in enhancing productivity. Unluckily, many businesses see it as an additional expense and allocate limited resources towards maintaining a pleasant working environment (Thobaben & Woodward, 1996). According to Eberendu et al. (2018), several factors may influence employee productivity, including the design of furniture, ventilation, levels of noise, lighting conditions, supervisor assistance, workplace layout, interpersonal interaction, and fire safety precautions.

Most earlier studies examining the impact of the work environment have primarily focused on indicators and elements while neglecting to study the effects of the work environment on the performance of employees. The present study aims to address this gap by seeking to evaluate the impacts of the work environment on the employee's performance in the specified context. The primary aims of the proposed research are as follows: to investigate the constituent elements of the internal and external elements of the workplace and its associated Behavioural components; to investigate the impact of both behavioural and physical factors within the place of employment on employee well-being; to establish the correlation between the outcomes of the work environment and the performance of workers and to establish an assessment scale for evaluating the effects of the relationship between working environment and performance of the employees working there.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this study is specifically developed to address the defined study questions and goals and generate and test hypotheses. The method of inquiry used in the present study aligns with its objective of elucidating the causal link between variables via testing of hypotheses. Specifically, this research utilises an explorative and analytical approach characterised by an explanation-based research design. An explanatory method is used to elucidate the causal association between variables in research by means of hypothesis testing (Hair et al., 2014). The use of this approach is anticipated to uncover and address all the elements included inside the issue identification. The current inquiry employs a qualitative analysis methodology, using analytical tools to conduct factor evaluation on the variables. This enables the examination of both direct and indirect relationships between the dependent and the independent variables.

2.1 Data Analysis Technique

The analysis is based on the contentment analysis technique. Content analysis is a methodological approach used in research to determine the existence of specific variables, topics, or ideas within qualitative evidence, particularly textual information. Through the use of content analysis, academics are able to quantitatively assess and examine the occurrence, interpretations, and interconnections of certain terms, topics, or ideas. This method is a type of qualitative data analysis that involves a systematic examination of a variable in order to find and evaluate certain aspects or trends. This method is a widely used approach for qualitative data analysis due to its efficiency and accessibility since it can be performed by those possessing a comprehensive comprehension of the data.

3. EFFECTS OF GOOD WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

The consideration of employee performance is crucial for attaining organisational success (Mubarak & Suparmi, 2023). The performance of workers is strongly influenced by the workplace condition due to the interaction between worker performance and the working environment (Naharuddin & Sadegi, 2013). The work environment has great importance in the lives of workers, since they dedicate a substantial portion of their waking hours to work and are inevitably influenced by it in many ways. According to Kamarulzaman et al. (2011), the satisfaction of employees with their work environment has the potential to contribute favourably to job outcomes. The productivity of employees is an aspect that has the potential to influence the overall success of an organisation (Durgadevi & Vasantha, 2017). The accomplishments and growth of an organisation are contingent upon the efficacy and efficiency of its workers' performance (Tannady & Budi, 2023). The primary objective of employee performance evaluation is to guarantee the impartiality of worker development via the use of accomplishment structures and career structures. The assessment of employee performance is conducted by considering performance planning at both the individual and organizational levels, with a focus on objectives, accomplishments, outcomes, and attained advantages.

Employees play a crucial role as foundational components inside an organisation or corporation, thereby rendering their performance important to the overall success and profitability of such entity. According to Haynes (2008), the enhancement of organisational productivity can potentially be achieved with a 5% to 10% improvement in the physical architecture of the work environment. This rise in organisational performance can be attributed to the subsequent improvement in personnel performance. The presence of an appealing work environment and an encouraging environment contributes to the conditions in which workers are able to utilise their expertise, competencies, and knowledge to perform optimally. It is recommended that organisations allocate more resources towards enhancing the provision of high-quality services to their clients (Mbembati et al., 2008). Inspiring people to engage in setting objectives is a crucial instrument in the workplace (Goerg, 2015). The inspiration of workers is an essential factor that significantly contributes to their performance as a whole. Motivation is a critical determinant that stimulates an individual to engage in a certain activity, thus rendering it often seen as a pivotal catalyst for achieving optimal performance. The aforementioned phenomenon is a state that has an impact on the stimulation, guidance, and sustenance of behaviours pertaining to the occupational milieu (Wahyudi, Panjaitan & Junaedi, 2023). The enhancement of employee motivation ultimately leads to improved performance and increased productivity inside businesses. Hafeez et al. (2019) assert that setting of goals serves two main objectives: firstly, to enhance an individual's behaviour, and secondly, to inspire them to achieve at the highest possible level, hence increasing their productivity and efficiency. The efficacy of particular objectives surpasses that of generalised goals. Moreover, the attainment of outstanding results is facilitated by the pursuit of demanding objectives in contrast to those that are easily achievable.

Many empirical studies conducted have also verified that work environment has good impacts on the employee's performance. In a survey-based research study conducted by Shahzad, Iqbal, and Gulzar (2013), the authors examined the impact of corporate culture on workers' job performance. The research was done on several software businesses located in Pakistan. The researchers conducted their study by gathering primary data on organisational culture, using five dimensions of organisational culture, namely: innovation and risk-taking, customer service, incentive systems, communication systems, and employee engagement. The data was examined via the use of correlation and regression analysis techniques. The data evaluation was conducted using the SPSS program, with a sample size of 110. The research findings indicate a good correlation between the employee performance and organisational culture, as well as a positive association between work efficiency and working conditions. The study also shown that employee engagement and involvement are positively correlated with improved organisational success.

The degree of motivation of employee and subsequent performance is mostly influenced by the condition of the working environment. The extent to which individuals actively participate in the organisation, particularly within their immediate surroundings, significantly affects various outcomes such as mistake rate, level of innovation, cooperation with colleagues, and absenteeism. Moreover, these factors have a substantial impact on individuals' ability to effectively carry out assigned tasks. Furthermore, it is essential to consider the duration of their tenure in the position.

A good working environment has five main impacts on employees.

3.1 Enhances Efficiency of Employees and Productivity

A supportive work environment consistently serves as a source of motivation for workers (Earle, 2003).

When employed by an organisation that cultivates a positive work environment, employees will likely experience increased encouragement and motivation, leading to enhanced productivity and task completion. This could facilitate the completion of a more significant number of tasks throughout the course of the day of work, potentially engendering an increased level of confidence from the administration and subsequently resulting in the delegation of more responsibilities. In addition, individuals will exhibit an enhanced level of productivity due to a heightened sense of readiness and efficiency in completing their tasks, producing superior quality work. The presence of an open work environment fosters enhanced team engagement via increased flexibility facilitated by easy communication and interpersonal task collaboration, in contrast to the more enclosed and restricted nature of closed workplaces. The provision of well illuminated and aesthetically pleasing workspaces has been shown to facilitate effective cooperation among employees and contribute to improved levels of performance within organisations. Additionally, such settings have been associated with enhanced positive attitudes towards work as well as higher levels of job satisfaction (Ilozor, Love & Treloar, 2002). Engagement in the company's processes of decision-making has been observed to enhance employee performance. Various development and training programs also help employees generate novel and original ideas, therefore engaging them in the exploration of new methodologies. According to Ollukkaran and Gunaseelan (2012), the productivity of employees may be enhanced by reimbursing them based on their level of skill and experience.

3.2 Enhancing the Employee Mental Satisfaction

An organisational culture that promotes a conducive work environment has the potential to foster a development attitude among personnel. This refers to the process in which people prioritise the enhancement of their abilities in order to foster personal and organisational growth. Organisations that provide a healthy work environment may motivate their workers to enhance their skill sets, hence facilitating their professional development and progression. In addition, organisations may provide their workers various resources to support their professional growth, such as mentoring programmes and educational seminars.

3.3 Increase Cooperation among Employees

A favourable work environment often facilitates cooperation and teamwork among workers. This may assist staff members in establishing social connections, cultivating professional partnerships, and expanding their professional circle. Enhanced cooperation among workers can facilitate mutual support, hence contributing to attaining individual objectives. Different factors play role to create a positive work environment. For example, according to Hedge (1982), the presence of an open work environment fosters increased team engagement by offering a greater degree of flexibility via improved interaction and accessibility to interpersonal task sharing, in contrast to closed and secluded office spaces. The provision of well-illuminated workspaces has been shown to facilitate effective cooperation among employees and enhance overall productivity within organisations. Additionally, such environments have been associated with higher levels of job fulfilment and a greater sense of optimism towards work (Ilozor, Love & Treloar, 2002).

A conducive work atmosphere, management assistance, and effective interaction among workers and supervisors positively impact performance outcomes and increase employee retention. According to Kundu and Gahlawat (2016), the involvement of workers in important decision-making processes, the implementation of competitive remuneration strategies, fostering positive relationships between employees and managers, promoting opportunities for career advancement, and empowering employees are factors that contribute to improved employee performance. Workers' performance is favourably influenced by effective management of leadership and collaboration with workers. There exists a robust and statistically significant relationship between different leadership styles and the achievement of employees. The study conducted by Kumar and Bhatti (2020) investigated the impact of leadership effectiveness on employee performance in micro, small, and medium-sized firms (MSMEs) in Australia. The findings of the study indicated that there is a positive relationship between leadership effectiveness and employee performance, suggesting that better leadership leads to improved employee performance. The leadership style within an organisation has a notable amount of impact on work satisfaction, yielding favourable outcomes. One effective leadership style, as identified by Fadhli, Komardi and Putra (2022) and Ngatno, Junaedi and Komardi (2022), is the ability to inspire individuals within an organisational group to engage in continuous learning and skill development. This leadership approach not only facilitates the integration of individuals into the organisation, fostering a sense of unity but also enhances work enthusiasm among organisational members.

3.4 Enhance Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the subjective experience of contentment and fulfilment that an individual has while doing their work-related tasks. This statement pertains to the assessment of an employee's level of job satisfaction within an organisational setting. A significant correlation exists between work happiness and job performance. When an individual experiences happiness in their work environment, they are more likely to exhibit enhanced performance. This is due to job satisfaction's notable beneficial impact on an individual's overall job performance. Therefore, it can be inferred that a positive and statistically significant relationship exists between work satisfaction and job performance. Basically, Job satisfaction is a subjective phenomenon that arises from evaluating the alignment between employees' job-specific experiences and their expectations, desires, and perceived entitlements. This evaluation involves comparing what people get in their jobs to what they anticipate, want, and consider proper. Job satisfaction is a comprehensive perception of an individual's job, characterised by the disparity between the quantity of accolades earned by employees and their perceived entitlement to such recognition (Wibowo, 2014). In other words, job satisfaction is influenced by an individual's work-related attitudes and the many other aspects that include their personal and professional life. Therefore, job satisfaction significantly correlates with job performance (Kosec et al., 2022).

A favourable association has been noted between job satisfaction and employee performance. An employee who experiences satisfaction is more likely to exert more effort in order to offer high-quality work, hence demonstrating increased levels of productivity and performance. Therefore, it is essential for every organisation to strive towards cultivating a contented workforce in order to effectively promote the overall prosperity of the organisation. In the event that an employee fails to effectively mobilise its job performance, it becomes necessary to provide a stimulation that motivates them to use their whole potential. The phenomenon referred to as job motivation is responsible for enhancing employee performance. Employees may attain optimal performance when they possess a strong accomplishment motivation. The cultivation of the accomplishment incentive among workers should originate from intrinsic sources rather than being only influenced by the work environment. This is due to cultivating an intrinsic accomplishment incentive, which fosters personal resilience. When coupled with a supportive work environment, this led to enhanced performance. Job satisfaction has significant significance for both people and organisations. Low levels of employee work satisfaction are associated with decreased employee performance. On the contrary, when employee work satisfaction is elevated, there is a corresponding increase in production achievement, so enabling the organisation to function effectively and ultimately attain its objectives.

Luthans (2011) suggested that work satisfaction is influenced by five aspects. First, in regards to the job itself, workers often exhibit a preference for occupations that provide prospects for using their strengths and skills, as well as granting them autonomy and providing constructive feedback. Second, workers express a desire for a remuneration structure and promotion protocols that are equal, beyond doubt, and aligned with their anticipated outcomes. Third, promotion opportunities are essential for an organisation to use the strengths and experience of its employees fully. Fourth, supervision plays a crucial function inside an organisation since it directly pertains to workers and significantly impacts their performance in carrying out their duties. Fifth, engaging in pleasant social interaction with colleagues has the potential to enhance job satisfaction.

3.5 Enhances Employee Morale

Employee morale refers to the collective attitude and mentality shown by workers throughout the course of their employment. The work environment of a firm has a significant impact on the morale of its employees. In the event that a corporation cultivates a favourable work environment, it is plausible that workers may experience an elevation in their overall morale. This phenomenon has the potential to result in increased levels of satisfaction and a heightened state of motivation. Lower work satisfaction has the potential to result in diminished employee performance. On the contrary, when employee work satisfaction is elevated, there is a corresponding increase in productivity performance, so enabling the organisation to function effectively and ultimately attain its objectives. Employee morale can also be enhanced through different types of motivations like rewards. Motivating employees within an organisation may be achieved via several means, aiming to optimise output and efficiency. Such incentives can be categorised as either internal or external rewards. Internal rewards often refer to the incentives received upon successfully completing demanding tasks, whereas external rewards include commendable acknowledgement or substantial money (Chandrasekar, 2011). The act of improving employee morale is considered a social transformation. Social interaction refers to the reciprocal relationship that exists between an organisation and its workers, whereby the organisation recognises and appreciates the contributions made by employees. The company also ensures that employees get enough support

and attention, therefore striving to attain their happiness (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990).

4. IMPACTS OF DEPRAVED WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

A place of work that is characterised by poor health or deprivation is one in which employees have difficulties in meeting their job obligations and advancing in their professional trajectories as a result of factors such as their colleagues, supervisors, or the prevailing organisational culture. The presence of a toxic environment at one's job potentially leads to adverse effects on an individual's mental well-being, physical health, and emotional state. Workers are operating in an atmosphere that lacks security and poses health risks, leading to the development of occupational diseases. This is mostly attributed to the detrimental impact of the environment on their job performance, thus affecting the company's overall productivity (Chandrasekar, 2011).

In order to enhance employee performance and foster greater engagement and outcomes, it is essential to ensure the provision of sufficient facilities to staff. The detrimental physical environment and insufficient equipment in the workplace have been found to have significant repercussions on worker dedication and long-term retention within the organisation. These factors have been shown to negatively impact job satisfaction and the impression of fairness regarding wages and benefits. There is a prevailing belief that the design of workspaces, creativity and innovations significantly impact the development of companies and organisations.

5. HOW CAN BUILD A GOOD WORK ENVIRONMENT?

As we came to know that a good work has positive effects on the employee performance; here a question may arise that how a good work environment can be built in an organization. Different organizations follow different techniques and practices to build a good work environment. Establishing an optimal work environment is vital for fostering employee contentment, involvement, efficiency, and the overall prosperity of the institution. Below are many essential measures that can be used to cultivate a constructive and flourishing work environment. These procedures include instances of effective team-building tactics and strategies that have yielded excellent outcomes. Mostly companies are using the following means which can help to build a good work environment for employees.

First, a work environment based on teamwork fosters a culture of collaboration inside the company. Numerous professional settings use a collaborative approach by organising their assignments and projects to include cooperation. As an example, management has the capacity to establish diverse teams in order to collaboratively complete tasks, as opposed to individual workers working on projects alone. In this particular environment, several individuals within the team collectively assume various duties, fostering the development of interpersonal connections and enhancing their aptitude for collaborative work.

Second, a work environment that promotes independence fosters a culture where individuals are encouraged to carry out their tasks and responsibilities alone, without relying much on collaboration with their peers. This may enable individuals to select an approach to work that aligns most effectively with their own preferences, instead of having to synchronise their working method with that of other members of the team. Individuals employed within this particular setting may have an enhanced sense of autonomy with regard to the output of their job, therefore, it fostering the opportunity for personal skill development. Organisations often use a hybrid approach in their project assignments, whereby workers are assigned some tasks to be completed alone. In contrast, others are assigned to be completed collaboratively in a team setting. This strategic allocation of projects allows employees to get advantageous outcomes from both individual and team-based work environments.

Third, the establishment of a conducive work environment characterised by a tranquil mood has been shown to enhance production levels significantly. The ability to work with minimum interruptions has been shown to enhance task focus and increase productivity in the completion of daily obligations. Additionally, it signifies the capacity to operate within an environment devoid of stress, which fosters optimal cognitive functioning and physical health. According to Shahzad (2014), the organisational culture influences workers' job performance in a firm. The study revealed a favourable correlation between employee performance, the overall corporate culture, and the specific organisational environment. Employee engagement and dedication are crucial factors that contribute significantly to improving a positive working environment.

Fourth, it is important for a productive workplace to foster effective and transparent communication among diverse individuals within an organisation. This encompasses the exchange of information and ideas among

personnel at different hierarchical levels within an organisation, as well as the interaction and collaboration among colleagues. The provision of opportunities for questioning and feedback may contribute to an enhanced sense of worth experienced by individuals inside the workplace. Furthermore, it facilitates personal growth via the reception of honest and constructive comments. For instance, in the context of an employee engaged in a novel project necessitating the brainstorming process, it is possible to get ideas from one's coworkers. Having the ability to inquire and get truthful feedback from others may contribute to the development of professional relationships and enhance the overall standard of work.

Fifth, the concept of organisational justice has significant importance in the establishment of a positive work environment. Equal distribution of incentives and sharing of expenses among members of the team are essential aspects of fairness, as highlighted by Chotikamankong (2019) and Vimalanathan and Babu (2013). Involvement in organisational processes of decision-making has been noted to enhance employee performance. Various training and development program also assist employees in generating novel and inventive ideas. Therefore, engaging them in exploring new experimental approaches is necessary. Employee performance enhancement can be achieved by remunerating individuals based on their level of skill and experience. To enhance performance management, management should engage in consultation with workers prior to making decisions to obtain their views. To address this issue, it is important for management to foster an environment that promotes employee experimentation with novel approaches and encourages the exploration of innovative ideas. Such efforts are likely to provide a favourable influence on employee performance.

The implementation of additional training and development initiatives by management is necessary to enhance employee performance. Given the prevalent dissatisfaction among the majority of workers over their financial compensation, it is imperative for the management to acknowledge this matter as a significant concern and make concerted efforts to provide commensurate salary increments based on years of expertise.

6. CONCLUSION

The performance of employees plays a decisive role in an organisation or company's overall success from the beginning. Therefore, it always remained in the focus of researcher to understand, explore and analyse the underlying issues and challenges, and come up with new understandings to improve the employee performance. Work environment plays an increasing significant role in the employee performance. There is a significant positive correlation between work environment and employee performance. The work environment is a crucial factor that significantly impacts employee performance in industry, office, organisation and business. Most of the organizations, companies and industries have not good work environment due to multiple reasons which negatively affect the performance of employees. In the contemporary landscape of competitive business, it is widely acknowledged that economic advantages alone are insufficient to drive workers towards achieving better levels of performance. Nevertheless, using both financial and non-financial incentives are more productive in attaining elevated levels of employee performance which facilitates the realisation of organisational objectives. When the work environment of an organization is characterised by friendliness, safety, and trustworthiness, it has a good effect on employee performance. This positive effect is reflected in their performance, creativity, productivity and dedication which in return contribute to the overall growth and development of the business or organization. Furthermore, the present research has also found that factors such as a secure working environment, competitive salary, incentives, provision of training opportunities, acknowledgement of achievements, and employment stability positively impact employee performance.

In the contemporary world of highly competitive and complex business environments, a good working environment is crucial for the better performance of the employees. This study has explored a positive relationship between good work environment and employee performance. Work environment affects health, emotions, behaviour the dedication of employee which in return led towards the productivity of the company through the good performance of the employees. The degree of motivation of employee and subsequent performance is mostly influenced by the condition of the working environment. The extent to which individuals actively participate in the organisation, particularly within their immediate surroundings, significantly affects various outcomes such as mistake rate, level of innovation, cooperation with colleagues, and absenteeism. Moreover, these factors have a substantial impact on individuals' ability to effectively carry out assigned tasks.

So, keeping in view its importance, organisations are required to maintain a more conducive atmosphere to improve employee productivity, since there exists a clear and positive correlation between employee performance and the working environment. Furthermore, the productivity of employees is interconnected with their physical and behavioural setting. To optimise employee performance, it is essential to maintain a good

work environment. The physical and behavioural aspects of the work environment are interconnected via employees' health and satisfaction.

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