

WELL-BEING AT WORK: A LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE COMPLEX FRAMEWORK

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Abstract. The aim of the article is to perform a detailed literature review of the most significant research in the context of well-being and business in order to identify the main elements and dimensions in the business environment, offering it as a potentially effective management tool for the company's productivity. The main research method is the literature review using the comparative research method. There are identified emerging new concepts like technological and digital well-being at work, as the most current factors influencing productivity. Further research of well-being will include more highlight on digitalization and distance work circumstances.

Keywords: well-being, well-being at work, digital well-being, technological well-being, business environment.

JEL Classification: I31, M10, M19.

Introduction

Due to the Sustainable Development Goals and being an essential part of successful business development, it is important to study the nature of well-being at work, the previous and last research in this area.

Employee productivity is affected by many factors, such as the company's internal and external environment, which is related to all aspects of the work environment starting from the quality and safety of the physical environment to the employee's emotional and psychological attitude towards work, work environment, work climate, and work organization which is more broadly referred to as well-being at work.

Most countries in the world have ratified the International Labour Organization [ILO] conventions (ILO, n.d.), the main task of which is to formulate international labour standards in the form of conventions and recommendations covering the physical safety of the working environment and the implementation of general health measures for workers. However, the number of incapacity certificates issued to the labour force in the Baltic States continue to increase every year reflecting the existing problems regarding the insufficiently performed measures in the work environment in the context of employee well-being. The

latest health statistic reports shows that in many EU countries, also in the Baltic States remain longstanding health system challenges, such as low uptake of health promotion measures, which may be integrated into the work environment (OECD, 2021a). Another OECD report also examines the role that well-being evidence can play in supporting governments' pandemic recovery efforts (OECD, 2021b). It argues that a well-being lens can prompt policy-makers to refocus on the outcomes that matter the most to people, to redesign policy content from a more multidimensional perspective, to realign policy practice across government silos, and to reconnect people with the public institutions that serve them. Failure to take preventive measures to ensure the well-being of employees reduces labour productivity and causes significant losses to the company and the economy as a whole. The aim of the article is to summarize the explanations of the concepts and the models of well-being in order to understand the elements that form the general health of the individual, which is necessary for ensuring productive work. Different authors use various concepts of well-being, evaluation criteria and principles differ as well, but they have a common goal – to provide a quality work environment that contributes to productive and sustainable development of the organization.

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This article explores the concepts of well-being and their diversity in a work environment. In order to identify the factors influencing productivity, the dimensions of well-being have been considered to highlight its benefits and to promote understanding at the management level. At the end of the study, conclusions and proposals are offered for the introduction of well-being in a company environment as a tool to increase productivity in the company and to continue research on digital well-being.

1. Complexity of explanation of the well-being

The concept of well-being is a complex and special set of services, including the physical and mental well-being of the individual; it is related to the interaction between the individual and the environment, determined by the individual's personal circumstances, worldview and motivation. Well-being is explained not only as an abstract state, but also as a means to achieve goals, a tool, a resource that allows the individual to express himself or herself in many ways in all areas of human life.

1.1. Well being

Since ancient times, well-being has been a major unresolved issue among thinkers, as evidenced by most Greek philosophical writings. The concept of modern well-being was created in the USA in the 1950s, and its scientific basis was developed by the health theorist and statistician Dunn. The concept is based on the English words 'well' and 'being', fitness ('physical well-being') and happiness (Dunn, 1959, p. 786). Dunn was not the only last century theorist who emphasized the importance of well-being. Theorists such as Alfred Adler, Abraham Maslow, and Karl Jung recognized the interplay between the individual's productivity and well-being (Myers & Sweeney, 2004, p. 234). The concept of well-being is defined as an integrated method, an activity aimed at maximum implementation of the individual's potential, meaning that the individual maintains a continuous balance and a purposeful direction in action within the framework of his or her life environment (Keyes, 2006, p. 2; Fisher, 2010, p. 385).

The wellness definition means the results from healthy behaviours, rather than the healthy behaviours constituting wellness. Wellness is a part of health, which is a very broad general concept. Wellness classify physical, social, intellectual, emotional (mental), and spiritual as the personal subdimensions of wellness. Well-being is also described as a multidimensional state of health of the individual, which includes characteristics such as quality of life, ability to act effectively and feel welfare, as well as preventive health improvement measures, changes in thinking and attitudes. Well-being is described as a subpart of general human health (Corbin & Pangrazi, 2001, p. 3).

The authors Myers and Sweeney (2004, p. 7) well-being has been defined as a health care, paradigm for

counselling and development, paradigm for physical health professions. The most recent reflective correlates of psychological well-being identified through the positive psychology movement.

The authors Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith describe well-being as the interaction between psychological factors and living conditions (Diener et al., 1999). The well-being of the individual is described as follows: a happy person with a positive temperament, looking on the bright side, not overthinking about bad events, living in an economically developed society, having social support and enough resources to pursue valuable goals (Diener et al., 1999, p. 277; Wickramaratne et al., 2020, p. 195).

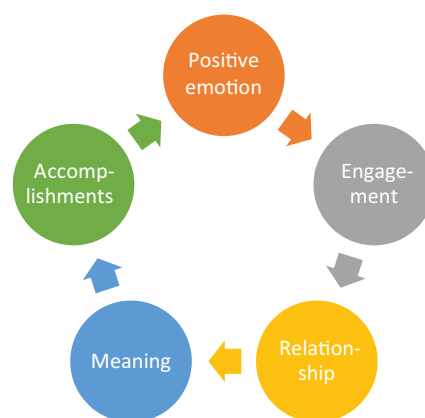


Figure 1. Five well-being dimensions (Author's creation, based on Seligman (2012, p. 368))

According to some authors, the well-being model is based on a multidimensional approach. American psychologist Martin Seligman has developed a 5-dimensional well-being model – the PERMA model. The PERMA model is an acronym for the 5 dimensions of the model: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement (Figure 1).

Positive emotions: Seligman believes that the positive emotions are the basis of a person's goal, however, satisfaction with life and happiness is no longer the centre of positive psychology, but elements of well-being focusing on new positive psychology.

Engagement: a full commitment to any situation, task, or project makes it more likely to experience the feeling of welfare (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-a).

Relationships: developing positive relationships with other people, the ability to share experiences with others contributes to social and internal life, which promotes well-being (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-b).

Achievement: achieving goals and being able to feel it motivates people to follow the execution of work (Seligman, 2012, p. 368).

Margaret Swarbrick describes the well-being model on the basis of 8 dimensions: physical, work-related, intellectual, social, spiritual, environmental, emotional and financial dimension (see Figure 2). The dimensions of well-being exist in close interaction with each other (Swarbric, 2010, p. 5).



Figure 2. Eight well-being dimensions
(Author's creation, based on Swarbric (2012, p. 31))

1. The physical dimension is related to physical health and factors influencing its physiological function: health-promoting physical activity, healthy and balanced diet, avoidance of using medicinal substances, drugs, avoidance of harmful habits (alcohol, smoking, overeating, etc.), and maintenance of immunity, sexual behaviour, annual medical examination, and dental health.

2. The intellectual dimension refers to the functioning of the mind. Intellectual growth is associated not only with formal education, but also with lifelong learning, the development of a thought process, a critical, and creative mind open to new ideas. The mind cannot work separately from the physical body, so the intellectual dimension also affects physical health.

3. The emotional dimension is related to the ability to laugh, enjoy life, adapt to change, overcome stress and maintain intimate relationships. Its characteristics are understanding (understanding one's own and others' emotions), acceptance (accepting others' emotions, assessing one's abilities and limitations) and management (ability to control or overcome personal feelings, stress management). Emotion management is closely linked to physical health.

4. The social dimension is related to the ability to socialize, gain and benefit in mutual relationships in family, with friends and interest groups. A socially active person lives longer than a closed-off one, he or she is at greater health risk.

5. The spiritual dimension is related to the setting of the goals of the individual, the search for the meaning and fulfilment of life, it is based on the values and beliefs of the individual, which give meaning and desire to live.

6. The environmental dimension is linked to the protection and conservation of natural resources, as man is a biological being in need of clean air, water and food.

7. The dimension of work includes satisfaction with the work of the individual, the choice of work is in accordance with personal abilities and values. It also refers to the balance between work and leisure. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work affects all other dimensions of well-being.

8. The financial dimension refers to the subjective and objective status of the individual's financial situation.

Objective indicators include the individual's income, knowledge of financial instruments and budget planning, while subjective indicators are the individual's satisfaction with the current financial situation. In addition to the 8 dimensions, well-being is facilitated by factors such as information, evaluation, knowledge, skills and their use, self-regulation, motivation, support and opportunities, and responsibility (Swarbric, 2010, p. 42).

To summarize, the concept of well-being refers not only to the general state of human health, but also to a change in thinking and attitude. Well-being is not only the well-being of the senses, but also an activity aimed at improving one's wellness, which is closely linked to the quality of life determined not only by the external environment, but also by one's ability to take action to promote good health.

2. Well-being at work

The component of well-being in combination with the work environment forms the concept of well-being at work, however, there are different designations and explanations of the concepts in the scientific literature. Although the number of studies on well-being at work has increased in recent decades, there are still various explanations of the concepts used by management scientists, lecturers, practitioners, etc.

Several terms can be found and are used in the scientific literature in English (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-b, n.d.-a): well-being at work, welfare, happiness at work, digital wellness, etc.

The International Labour Organization (ILO, n.d.) describes well-being at work as covering all aspects of working life, including physical safety and the psychological and emotional health of workers in the work environment, the climate at work and work organization. Well-being measures aim to complement physical occupational safety and health protection measures in the work environment to ensure the safety and health of workers while being satisfied with the organization of work.

Given that the term well-being is multidimensional, which makes it difficult to define, a number of definitions and models have been developed to understand well-being processes in the workplace, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the Adler Well-Being Model, Invisible Self-Model (ISM), National Wellness Institute Model (NWIM), The Wheel of Wellness (WOW), Transtheoretical Model (TM) (Kowalski et al. 2014; Myers & Sweeney, 2004, p. 236; Diener et al., 1999, p. 284; Dodge et al., 2012, p. 228).

Well-being at work can be seen through the prism of Maslow's pyramid of needs, which reflects the needs of every individual, from the primary necessities of survival to the spiritual and self-realization needs that are closely linked to the work environment. Abraham Harold Maslov's model of well-being at work is made up of 3 dimensions: physical, material and social (Simonton, 2009, p. 39).

The founder of the well-being of Holism Alfred Adler relied on two basic principles of the individual's well-being, namely, innate aspirations for superiority or success at work, and a social interest in the development of well-being. In order to ensure optimal well-being at work, it is necessary to ensure the regularity of productive work and rest of employees, friendliness, love for work and work environment, as well as independence of personality.

Based on conclusions about the basic elements of well-being that theorists have come to during several decades, the Wheel of Wellness (WOW) model is widely used to determine the well-being of the work environment (Figure 3); some sources use the term 'Workplace of Well-being'. The literature survey on wellness dimension models provided a lot of valuable information on this topic and so this research on wellness was conceptualized based on wellness dimensions. In wellness models found, six dimensions are emphasized, specifically Social Wellness, Spiritual Wellness, Physical Wellness, Emotional Wellness, Intellectual Wellness and Occupational Wellness. The model is based on the principles of the theory of the complex adaptive system of well-being which studies 7 interrelated dimensions of the individual in the work environment (Myers & Sweeney, 2007, p. 2).

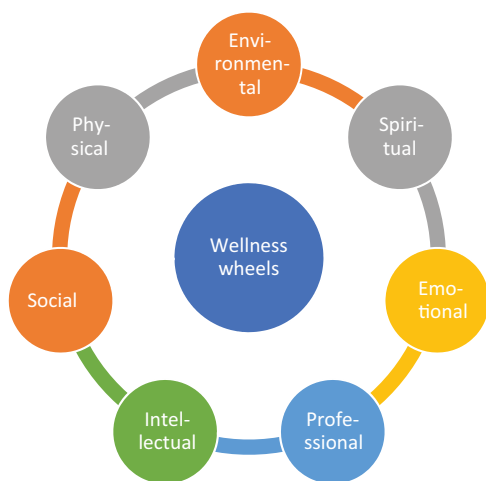


Figure 3. Seven well-being dimensions (Author's creation, based on Myers et al. (2000, p. 237))

Physical well-being – this dimension of wellbeing focuses on practicing healthy daily habits. It is important to building strength, flexibility, and endurance.

Environmental well-being – having good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.

Spiritual well-being – it refers to the human need for meaning, purpose and connection to something greater than ourselves.

Emotional well-being – the ability to produce positive emotions, moods, thoughts, and feelings, and adapt when confronted with adversity and stressful situations.

Professional well-being – the focus on individual mental health, well-being, and both personal and

professional success involves further developing positive coping.

Intellectual well-being means striving toward good mental health, continued intellectual growth, and creativity in life.

Social well-being can be defined as the sharing, developing, and sustaining of meaningful relationships with others.

In order to identify the level of well-being at work, it is necessary to determine the company's ability to cope with changing requirements, evaluate the company's physical environment, feedback measures, staff behaviour in the work environment, staff interaction between quality and quantity, research existing opportunities in the context of well-being, as well as identify staff views, priorities and values (Myers et al., 2000, p. 238).

The well-being of employees and their satisfaction with their work and workplace affect citizenship at work, turnover rates, and performance ratings. Many researchers have conceived employee well-being broadly and often not in a way that is intuitively actionable for managers and employees (Harter et al., 2003, p. 3).

Wellbeing is positively associated with job autonomy, job satisfaction, job performance, prosocial behaviour, social support, popularity, and income, they receive more positive supervisor evaluations and are less likely to withdraw from work by becoming habitually absent or burning out.

Well-being positively affect employees, they are satisfied with their jobs, acquire higher status, perform well, be productive, receive social support, be evaluated positively, engage in fewer withdrawal behaviours (Walsh et al., 2018, p. 19).

Over the last two decades, the provision of well-being at work has become increasingly important and relevant, as several studies show a direct link between the company's level of productivity and employee well-being. Based on research and practice, senior management is increasingly seeing the provision of well-being at work as one of the key drivers of productivity in the company, leading to sustainable growth of the economy and future societal well-being. Companies with above-average employee well-being assessment indicators result in higher financial indicators and customer satisfaction, which indicates a causal relationship, namely, that it is beneficial for companies to create and maintain an environment that is in line with the basic principles of well-being (Walsh et al., 2018, p. 60).

3. Latest issues and context

The problems with employee's wellbeing may influence productivity through greater absenteeism. Alternatively, employees may choose to attend work when ill, but experience reductions in their performance and productivity on the job due to their health condition. It may influence productivity through greater 'presenteeism' – a phenomenon in which people are present at work but operating at less than their full capacity (Isham et al., 2020, p. 10).

Today's employees are spending their workday on the digital workplace, a platform that facilitates employee collaboration and communication. A complete digital workplace merges the traditional corporate intranet with a collaboration platform. This ensures that employees can be as productive at home as in the office. With the move to remote and hybrid work, more and more organizations are investing in a digital workplace. For companies with a long-standing corporate intranet, employees are using it more than ever. While this technology undoubtedly helps employees get their work done, without best practices it can contribute to digital overwhelm. (Harris, 2020).

More recently, many technology companies have begun to introduce digital wellbeing (Marsden, 2020) features, such as for managing time spent and for encouraging breaks in use. These are in the context of, and likely in response to, renewed concerns in the media about technology dependency and even addiction. However, there is a lack of research on the digital wellbeing in work environment, which shows the shortcomings of the above dimensions that the technological well-being component of today's work environment is missing to ensure employee productivity (Cecchinato et al., 2019, p. 2).

Digital well-being is explained as an individual capacity to look after personal health, safety, relationships and work-life balance in digital settings; to use digital tools in pursuit of personal goals (e.g. health and fitness) and to participate in social and community activities; to act safely and responsibly in digital environments; to negotiate and resolve conflict; to manage digital workload, overload and distraction; to act with concern for the human and natural environment when using digital tools. An understanding of the benefits and risks of digital participation in relation to health and wellbeing outcomes. (Shah, 2019).

The author Vanden Abeele (2021, p. 234) actualize the enhancement and improvement of human well-being, in the intermediate and long term, through the use of digital media. The digital media use and wellbeing conceptual models appear inadequate to capture the complexity of the relationships that individuals have with digital media.

There are several dimensions of well-being, but with the development of technology, various authors emphasize the need for digital well-being, which is understood as improving and promoting the well-being of the individual in the medium and long term through digital media, however, there is a lack of a theoretical basis for understanding digital well-being at work.

To sum up, well-being at work is understood as a positive component of an employee's health; well-being is an integrated and dynamic level of human functioning, which is focused on the individual's responsibility to reach their maximum potential at work. Well-being is based on several dimensions, however, the existing models are not adapted to today's work environment, which includes remote or hybrid work.

Conclusions

The concept of modern well-being was developed in the United States in the middle of the last century, and the scientific basis was developed by health theorist and statistician Dunn. In later explanations, the concept of well-being is interpreted as an integrated method, an action aimed at maximum use of the individual's potential. Several approaches to the well-being dimensions have been identified, but with the development of technology, the authors of recent studies emphasize the relevance and need for digital well-being, meaning the improvement and promotion of the individual's well-being in the medium and long term through digital media. However, all this is on an intuitive level, and thus lacks a theoretical basis for understanding digital well-being at work (Vanden Abeele, 2021, p. 234).

Therefore, further research must definitely include digital well-being as one of the well-being dimensions of the modern work environment, creating a new model of well-being dimensions, especially emphasizing and taking into account the growing demand for remote and hybrid work.

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Contribution

Authors have been involved in writing a manuscript – Zane Gusta as doctoral student and Maira Lescevic as supervisor. The results and main conclusions come from a detailed review of the literature and will be part of doctoral thesis. Detailed Literature review is added in separate attachment Appendix 1.

Disclosure statement

Author's statement is at the end of article to declare that there is no any competing financial, professional, or personal interests from other parties.

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