



MENTAL HEALTH AT WORKPLACE AMONG DIFFERENTLY ABLED EMPLOYEES

KEYWORDS

Mental health, work place, differently abled

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ABSTRACT *"Health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity but a positive state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. A healthy working environment is one in which there is not only an absence of harmful conditions but an abundance of health-promoting ones." – World Health Organization* Mental health at workplace can be affected in different ways. It depends on demands of the job, working condition and their individual ability to perform. Mental health being very essential factor of human life it is very important to achieve it among the employees of an organisation. Differently abled people are more likely to experience a lot, or a great deal of mental health problems in their work place than those who are not differently abled. Mental ill-health or distress is a major cause of sickness absence from work, reduced productivity and staff turnover. Mental ill-health is the root cause for anxiety and depression. Identification and effective help in the early stages can help to prevent problems among individuals and organizations. Proper intervention among differently abled employees to promote mental health can be best way to make them to work like normal individuals with good mental health. The study will aim to find the level of mental health at work place among differently abled employees, factors that contribute for stress at work place. That can help the organizations to create a psychologically healthy work environment, where the effects of stress are minimized and managed, and the employees are supported in using and developing their abilities and potential.

INTRODUCTION

Disability may be generally defined as a condition which may restrict a person's mental, sensory, or mobility functions to undertake or perform a task in the same way as a person who does not have a disability. It does not mean that a person with a disability is unable to perform all the important requirements of a job and exceed the expectations of their employer. Disabilities affect people in different ways. Many people associate the 'disabled' with someone who is in a wheelchair, or who is blind or deaf. They have the attitude that people with a disability are totally different and therefore need to be treated differently. Unfortunately, this kind of stereotyping is in itself a form of discrimination.

People with a disability come in a variety of shapes, sizes, colors, sex and cultures - just as we all do. The only thing that separates a person with a disability is that, for one reason or another, they are unable to do certain things in the same way as the mainstream of society. They may require some form of adaptation or alteration to assist them to overcome the effect of their disability. People with disability purchase consumer goods, have jobs, go on holidays, access information and do all of the things that people without disability do. The only difference is that often people with disability come up against significant barriers while trying to do certain things.

As a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, health is influenced by many interconnecting factors. Mental health is an essential component of health and is a resource to help us deal with the stresses and challenges of everyday life. Good mental health contributes to the quality of our lives as individuals, as communities, and as a society in general. Mental health is created by interactions with the world around human beings, and is determined by sense of control in dealing with circumstances and by the support people have to help others to cope. An individual who has good mental health is able to realize his or her own abilities, cope with the stress of everyday life, work productively, and contribute to the

community. Good mental health protects people and helps them to avoid risk- taking behaviours that contribute to poor mental health.

Mental wellbeing is not just about the absence of mental illness. Mental wellbeing relates to our ability to positively experience life, effectively manage challenges, realize our potential and make a meaningful contribution within our community. With good mental wellbeing, we are able to deal with challenges, solve problems and achieve our goals. Maintaining good mental wellbeing also reduces our vulnerability to mental health difficulties. Thus it is right of every employee to have an environment that can provide him with good mental health and it is duty of every employer to provide such environment. The same applies for disabled employees also all disabled employees must be provided with necessary support which will lead a health working condition. A qualified individual with a disability who is an employee or applicant must not be treated unfavorably because of disability. It is illegal to harass an applicant or employee because he has a disability or had a disability in the past.

Review of literature:

(Colella, 2001). Individuals without disabilities may fear that some disabilities are contagious (even when they are not). People without disabilities may also feel resentment regarding accommodations and special treatment received by PWDs (Livermore, 2000) Low employment rate of PWDs is that they are not as productive as people without disabilities, and furthermore, they cost more to hire and maintain than people without disabilities. Labor economists propose that in deciding on the types and amount of labor to use for producing a given level of output, firms will consider the contribution, or productivity of each input relative to its cost (Yelin & Trupin, 2000) PWDs have equal or lower levels of absenteeism than people without disabilities, and that PWDs stay with jobs they occupy

Research methodology:

Persons with disability are more prone to mental health problems than people without disability. The presence of one stressor makes people more vulnerable to the effects of other stressors. When coping with disability people face stress which affects the mental health. The major aim of the study was to understand personal profile of differently abled employees and to find relationship between the personal variables and level of mental well being among them. In this research study the researcher has used Descriptive research design. The universe of the research was differently abled employees working in Coimbatore city. Sample size of the study is 60. The researcher has adopted interview and questionnaire method of sampling for the study.

Analysis and interpretation:

ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AMONG DIFFERENTLY ABLED EMPLOYEES AT WORK PLACE					
S. No.	EDUCATIONAL STATUS	LEVEL OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AMONG DIFFERENTLY ABLED EMPLOYEES			Statistical Inference
		LOW	Moderate	High	
1.	Up to X Standard	2	8	4	$X^2=17.904$ $Df=8$ $P>0.022$
2.	Higher Secondary	0	3	7	
3.	UNDER GRADUATION	5	7	1	
4.	POST GRADUATION	2	4	3	
5.	MPHIL AND PHD	6	7	1	

Chi square was calculated to test the above hypothesis. The calculated value is 17.904 is higher than table value 15.507 which implies that there is significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees at work place.

Salient Findings:

- About 43.3% of the respondents are in the age group in between 31-40.
- Most of the respondents (66.7%) are male.
- Majority of the respondents (76.7%) are married.
- It is interesting that (23.3%) of the respondents educated

- 10and below
- Most of the respondents (53.3%) are belongs to good designation.
- About (55%) of the respondents are earning 5000-15000.
- Most of the respondents (48.3%) are have medium level mental health at workplace.
- There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees.
- There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees.
- There is no significant association between marital status of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees.
- There is significance association between educational qualification of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees
- There is no significant association between designation of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees.
- There is no significant association between monthly income of the respondents and the mental health among differently abled employees.

Suggestion:

As the study states the relationship between education and mental health of employees, Radical changes are required in education systems, and in the values and principles of the people involved in delivering education by putting inclusive values into action and valuing every life equally. Reducing in exclusion, discrimination and barriers to learning and participation and an employer is expected to take proactive steps to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. Where a disabled employee faces substantial disadvantages in the workplace, the employer will need to make changes to the extent that it is reasonable which would help a disabled person to overcome the substantial disadvantage

Conclusion:

Tackling attitudinal barriers, creating a better workplace for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions and to follow uniform recruitment and in promotion opportunities. Addressing inflexibility in work patterns and increase support at line management level – key in ensuring workloads and tasks are managed effectively, and in fostering an environment where the disabled employee’s needs can be identified and communicated. Disability awareness training for all staff – particularly those involved in recruitment and selection – would be valuable for improving the mental health at workplace of disabled employees.

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