

The Role of Mental Health Support in Employee Retention: A Post-Pandemic Quantitative Study

Mrs. Riya Mathur ¹, Dr. Neha Soni ²

¹Research Scholar, University of Technology

²Associate Professor, University of Technology

Abstract- The COVID-19 pandemic has suggestively altered organizational priorities, bringing employee mental health to the forefront as a vital area of focus for businesses across the globe. Although aspects such as salary, job satisfaction, and opportunities for advancement have traditionally influenced employee retention, the role of mental health care and emotional security in this context remains relatively under-researched, especially in the post-pandemic environment. This study seeks to examine the connection between workplace mental health initiatives, employees' emotional well-being, and their intention to stay with their current employer.

A quantitative methodology was employed for this study, utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to employees from various industries. The survey assessed the presence of mental health resources, employees' perceptions of psychological safety, their emotional well-being, and their inclination to remain with the organization. Data analysis was carried out using correlation analysis, descriptive statistics and regression methods.

The results revealed a clear positive association between mental health support within organizations and employees' intention to stay. Those who experienced greater psychological safety and emotional well-being were more likely to express a desire to continue working with their employer. These findings highlight the importance of implementing comprehensive mental health initiatives and fostering emotionally supportive workplaces as effective employee retention strategies.

This research fills an important gap in existing studies and provides actionable insights for HR professionals to strengthen retention efforts by focusing on mental health support within the organization.

Index Terms- Employee Retention, Mental Health Support, Emotional Well-being, Psychological Safety, Post-Pandemic Workforce

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Retaining employees has consistently been a major concern for organizations aiming to sustain a competent, experienced, and motivated workforce. Traditionally, factors such as attractive remuneration packages, opportunities for career advancement, and a optimistic organizational culture have been seen as primary influences on retention. However, the COVID-19

pandemic has restructured these dynamics considerably. Beyond disrupting routine operations, the pandemic has deeply affected employees' psychological health and emotional well-being, pushing workplace mental health to the top of organizational agendas.

The widespread adoption of remote work, along with job insecurity, the blurring of boundaries between personal and professional life and social isolation, has led to increased stress, anxiety, and burnout among employees. These challenges have fueled a global rise in employee turnover, often described as "The Great Resignation." Consequently, organizations are beginning to realize that retaining talent now requires more than just competitive salaries and growth opportunities; it also demands meaningful support for employees' mental and emotional well-being.

Although there is growing acknowledgment of the importance of psychological health in the workplace, research exploring the direct relation between retaining employees and mental health support, particularly in post-pandemic era, remains limited. This study fills that gap by examining how organizational mental health programs, psychological safety, and emotional well-being influence employees' decisions to stay, providing important insights for both academic research and practical organizational strategies.

Problem Statement

In the aftermath of the pandemic, retaining employees has become a more intricate challenge for organizations. Although conventional approaches such as competitive pay, job satisfaction, and opportunities for career growth continue to play a role, they often fail to address the increasing importance of psychological support and emotional health. The COVID-19 crisis intensified experiences of stress, anxiety, and burnout among employees, leading to a shift in expectations regarding organizational support mechanisms.

While numerous organizations have introduced mental health programs, there is still a lack of concrete evidence assessing whether these initiatives effectively enhance employee retention. The connection between mental

health support, psychological safety, emotional well-being, and employees' intentions to remain with their employer remains insufficiently studied, especially in the Indian context, where mental health is only beginning to emerge as an organizational priority, and societal stigma around the issue still exists.

This study helps to bridge this information gap by exploring how the presence and perceived effectiveness of mental health support within organizations influence employees' decisions to stay. In the absence of a clear understanding of this relationship, organizations may find it difficult to develop retention strategies that reflect employees' changing expectations. The research intends to generate evidence-based insights to help organizations align their mental health initiatives with retention efforts, contributing to both academic understanding and practical human resource practices.

Research Objective

The specific objectives of this research are:

1. To assess the availability and effectiveness of mental health support provided by organizations.
2. To examine the relationship between employee emotional well-being and retention intention.
3. To analyze the role of psychological safety in influencing employee retention.
4. To investigate whether employees who perceive higher mental health support are more likely to stay with their organization.
5. To provide recommendations for enhancing employee retention through improved mental health support and emotional well-being initiatives.

Research Questions

The study answers the following research questions:

1. To what extent does organizational mental health support influence employee retention?
2. How does emotional well-being affect employees' intentions to stay within the organization?
3. What is the role of psychological safety in determining employee retention?
4. Are employees who perceive higher levels of mental health support and psychological safety more likely to remain with their organization?
5. What specific mental health initiatives do employees perceive as most effective in promoting retention?

Significance of the Study

This research carries both academic significance and practical relevance as it explores a relatively new but increasingly important dimension of employee retention—the influence of mental health support and emotional well-being within the workplace. The COVID-19 pandemic has redesigned employee expectations, placing greater emphasis on mental health; however, there remains a lack of comprehensive research examining the direct association between organizational mental health initiatives, psychological safety, and retention of employees, especially within the Indian context.

The outcomes of this study will enhance the existing literature by offering empirical insights into how mental health support systems relate to employees' intentions to stay. In doing so, it addresses a notable gap in current research and provides valuable understanding for organizations seeking to align their retention strategies with employees' changing psychological and emotional needs.

From a practical perspective, this study will provide actionable guidance for organizations and HR professionals on developing and implementing mental health programs that not only foster employee well-being but also strengthen retention efforts. By emphasizing the critical role of psychological safety and emotional support, this research will help organizations create more supportive and inclusive work environments, contributing to reduced turnover and greater workforce stability.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of Existing Research and Theories

Employee retention has long been a priority for organizations, but in the post-pandemic work environment, mental health and emotional well-being have emerged as critical factors influencing employees' decisions to stay or leave. Recent studies have highlighted this evolving relationship, emphasizing the growing need to integrate mental health initiatives into retention strategies.

Falcon et al. (2021) demonstrated that evidence-based psychotherapy not only improves mental health outcomes but also positively impacts employee retention. Their study highlights how accessible mental health services within organizational settings contribute to reduced turnover, supporting the argument that mental health support is no longer an optional benefit but a key determinant of workforce stability.

Monteiro and Joseph (2023) further examined how workplace culture significantly affects mental health and well-being. A positive, inclusive, and supportive culture

not only improves psychological safety but also enhances employee commitment and retention. Their review stresses the importance of organizational culture as a moderating factor in the well-being-retention relationship.

Retention challenges within high-stress sectors such as healthcare are particularly pronounced. Adams, Ryan, and Wood (2021), through a systematic review, identified that poor mental health and burnout are leading contributors to turnover in the mental health nursing workforce. Their synthesis underlines that mental health is not only an individual concern but also a systemic organizational issue that directly influences retention outcomes.

Gap in the Literature

Prior studies have stressed the significance of mental health and emotional well-being in organizational settings, there is a noticeable lack of quantitative research establishing a positive connection between mental health support and workforce retention, particularly in the post-pandemic period. Much of the existing literature is concentrated on Western countries or specific industries such as healthcare and information technology, leaving Indian organizations relatively underrepresented. Furthermore, the potential mediating role of emotional well-being and psychological safety in enhancing employee retention has not been sufficiently explored. This investigation strives to close these gaps by offering empirical insights drawn from the Indian organizational context.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach, incorporating both descriptive and causal-comparative research designs to investigate the connection between mental health support, emotional well-being, psychological safety, and employee retention. The descriptive component enables an assessment of the existing state of mental health initiatives and employees' perceptions regarding well-being and retention. Meanwhile, the causal-comparative element examines whether differences in the level of mental health support correspond to variations in employees' intentions to remain with their organization.

Data Collection Method

The study relies on data collected through a well-designed questionnaire. The survey consists of close-ended questions along with Likert scale items designed to assess employees' perceptions of mental health support, emotional well-being, psychological safety, and their intention to remain with the organization.

The questionnaire is distributed using online platforms such as Google Forms, while printed versions are provided where required to accommodate employees without internet access.

A pilot test is carried out to ensure the clarity and reliability of the survey instrument. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary, with confidentiality strictly maintained. The information collected is used exclusively for academic purposes and is analyzed using suitable statistical methods.

IV. SAMPLE AND POPULATION

Sample Size

This study plans to include a sample of approximately 200 to 300 employees from various organizations across multiple sectors. This sample size is considered suitable for a quantitative, survey-based study, as it enables the collection of sufficient data to conduct meaningful statistical analysis and produce reliable findings.

The chosen sample size aligns with previous research on employee retention and mental health, where similar participant numbers have been used to explore workplace factors affecting retention. Such a sample size provides representation across age, gender, industry, and professional experience, enhancing the study's representativeness. Moreover, this sample size is practical and manageable in terms of time, available resources, and data processing, particularly given that both virtual and face to face data collection modes will be utilized.

Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling technique, falling under non probability methods is used for participant selection in this study. This approach is considered suitable as it enables the researcher to gather data efficiently from employees who are easily accessible and willing to take part in the survey.

To enhance the diversity of the sample, efforts are made to include participants from different sectors, age groups, genders, and levels of work experience, which helps improve the balance and generalizability of the findings. The questionnaire is distributed via electronic means such as Google Forms and paper-based surveys are provided when necessary to ensure participation from individuals with limited access to digital tools.

Data Analysis Techniques

This research applies quantitative data analysis methods to discover the connection between mental wellbeing support, emotional well-being, psychological safety, and employee retention. The collected data is explored through the application of descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, carried out

with the help of Excel software. The findings are illustrated through tables, pie charts, and graphs to facilitate clear and straightforward interpretation.

Ethical Consideration

The study will be conducted in a manner that ensures all participants participate willingly, based on their informed consent. Their responses will be treated with complete confidentiality and anonymity. Participants

will be thoroughly briefed on the research and have the freedom to leave the study at any stage without facing any adverse consequences. All responses will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and will be used exclusively for academic research. The research will be carried out ethically, ensuring that no harm or discomfort is caused to any participant.

V. RESULT

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	46%
	Female	130	54%
Age Group	18-25 years	50	20%
	26-35 years	120	48%
	36-45 years	80	32%
Sector	IT	90	36%
	Education	70	28%
	Healthcare	60	24%
	Retail	30	12%

Table 1- Demographic Profile of Respondents

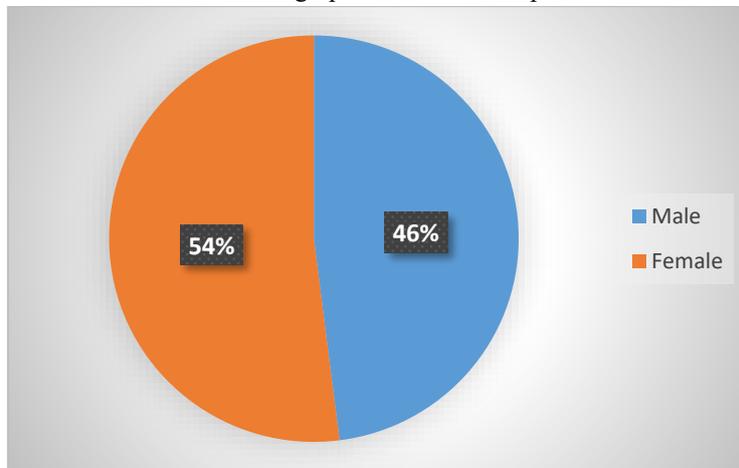


Fig 1.1- Gender Distribution

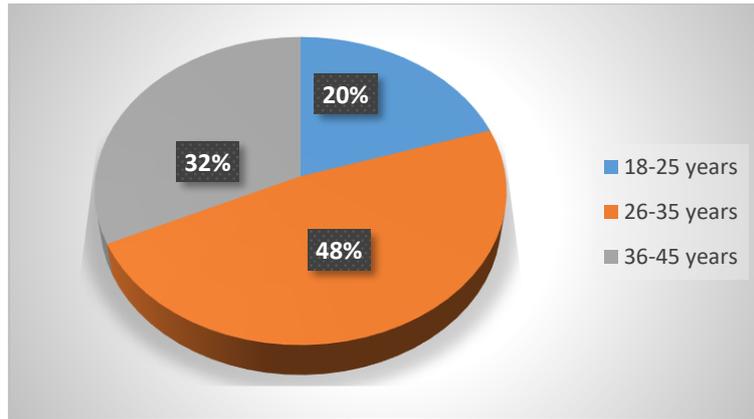


Fig 1.2- Age Category Distribution

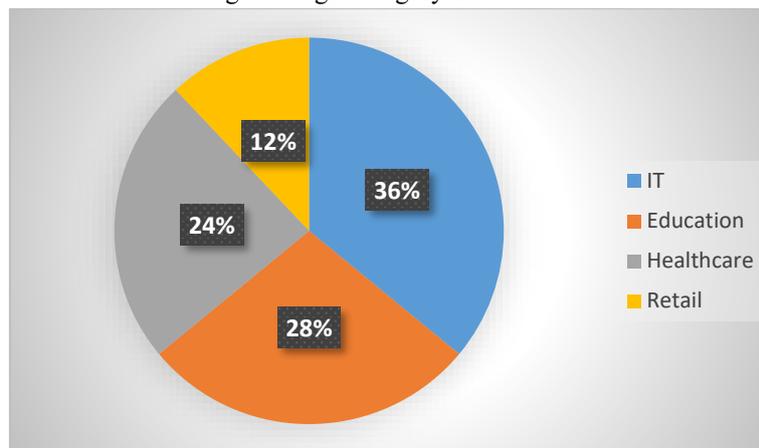


Fig 1.3- Sector-Wise Distribution

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My organization provides mental health support.	32%	44%	20%	4%	0%
I feel emotionally supported at work.	28%	48%	16%	8%	0%

Table 2- Perception of Menta Health Support

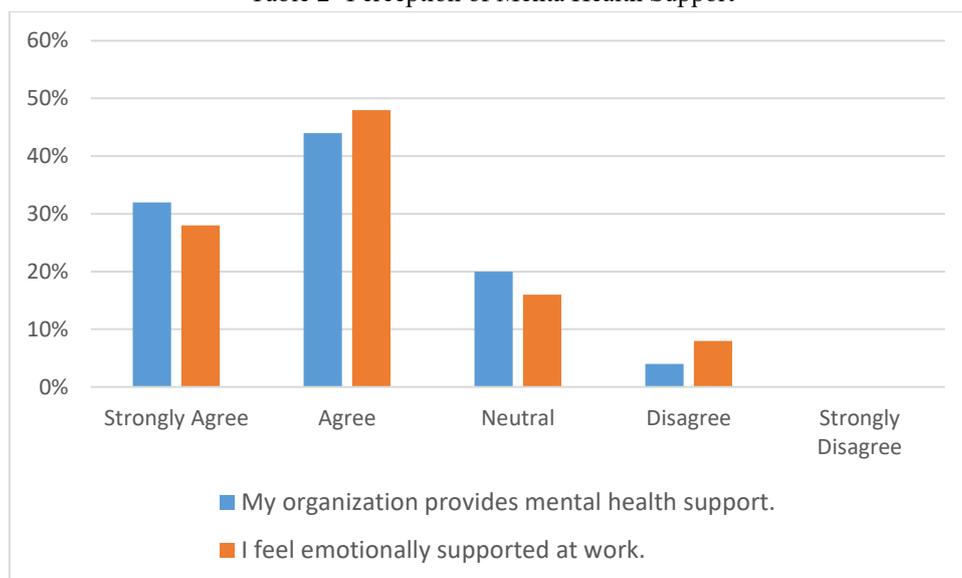


Fig 2.1- Perception of Mental Health Support and Wellbeing

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p-value)
Mental Health Support & Retention Intention	0.68	0.000 (Significant)

Table 3- Correlation between Mental Health Support and Retention

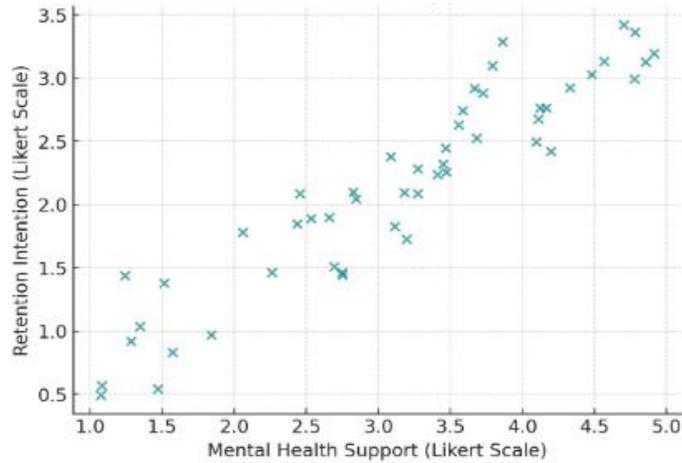


Fig 3.1- Correlation between Mental Health Support and Retention Intention

Predictor Variable	Beta Coefficient (β)	Significance (p-value)
Mental Health Support	0.55	0.000 (Significant)
Emotional Well-being	0.42	0.001 (Significant)

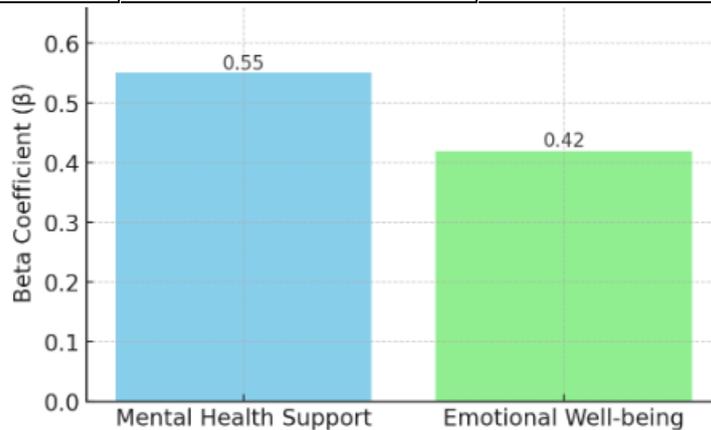


Fig 4.1- Regression Analysis

VI. SUGGESTIONS

1. Introduce Structured Mental Health Initiatives

Organizations should establish formal programs such as counseling sessions, wellness activities, and stress management workshops to promote employees' mental well-being.

2. Equip Managers to Offer Emotional Support

Leaders and supervisors should be trained to identify mental health issues and provide compassionate support, helping to build a psychologically safe work environment.

3. Encourage a Culture of Psychological Safety

Employers should cultivate a safe and inclusive workplace where employees can freely express mental health issues without facing judgment or bias.

4. Provide Flexible Working Options

Implementing flexible work arrangements, including remote or hybrid work models, can ease stress, enhance work-life balance, and positively impact employees' mental health, leading to better retention.

5. Implement Regular Feedback and Assessment Systems

Organizations should carry out frequent surveys and feedback sessions focusing on employee satisfaction and mental health to detect issues early and take appropriate action, boosting overall morale and retention.

6. Establish Recognition and Appreciation Programs

Recognizing employees' contributions and providing consistent positive reinforcement helps improve emotional well-being and strengthens their sense of belonging within the organization.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on understanding the vital connection between mental health support, emotional well-being, and employee retention, particularly after the pandemic. The findings indicate that employees who experience greater mental health support and feel psychologically safe in their workplace are more inclined to remain with their current employer.

The results clearly demonstrate a notable positive correlation between mental health initiatives and employee retention. Regression outcomes reinforce that mental health support and emotional well-being are crucial determinants of an employee's retention intention. These findings emphasize the importance of organizations viewing mental health support as a strategic component of their retention efforts.

In summary, it is evident that companies that proactively enhance organizational focus on mental health initiatives not only enhance the well-being of their workforce but also achieve higher retention rates. Given the rise in mental health concerns following the pandemic, this research underscores the critical need to foster supportive, secure, and inclusive workplace environments.

REFERENCES

[1]. Falcon, M., Chen, C. E., Bandari, R., Kocher, B., & Shah, N. R. (2021). Impact of evidence-based psychotherapy on employee retention. *Medical Research Archives*, 9(11).

[2]. Bhanumathi, P., Chandrika, P. K., & Babu, B. S. (2024). Employee Well-Being and Mental Health: Critical Role in Retention Strategies. In *Global Practices on Effective Talent Acquisition and Retention* (pp. 169-192). IGI Global.

[3]. Monteiro, E., & Joseph, J. (2023). A review on the impact of workplace culture on employee mental health and well-being. *International Journal of*

Case Studies in Business, IT and Education (IJCSBE), 7(2), 291-317.

[4]. Adams, R., Ryan, T., & Wood, E. (2021). Understanding the factors that affect retention within the mental health nursing workforce: a systematic review and thematic synthesis. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 30(6), 1476-1497.

[5]. Selvi, R. S. A., & Madhavkumar, V. (2023). The mediating effect of happiness at workplace on the relationship between hybrid work model and employee retention in it industry. *International Journal of Industrial Management*, 17(1), 40-49.

[6]. Weich, S. (2022). Mental health after covid-19. *Bmj*, 376.

[7]. Shanbehzadeh, S., Tavahomi, M., Zanjari, N., Ebrahimi-Takamjani, I., & Amiri-Arimi, S. (2021). Physical and mental health complications post-COVID-19: Scoping review. *Journal of psychosomatic research*, 147, 110525.

[8]. Pandey, K., Thurman, M., Johnson, S. D., Acharya, A., Johnston, M., Klug, E. A., ... & Byrareddy, S. N. (2021). Mental health issues during and after COVID-19 vaccine era. *Brain research bulletin*, 176, 161-173.

[9]. Hamouche, S. (2023). COVID-19 and employees' mental health: stressors, moderators and agenda for organizational actions. *Emerald Open Research*, 1(2).

[10]. Li, T. M., Pien, L. C., Kao, C. C., Kubo, T., & Cheng, W. J. (2022). Effects of work conditions and organisational strategies on nurses' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 30(1), 71-78.

[11]. Kumar, A., & Nayar, K. R. (2021). COVID 19 and its mental health consequences. *Journal of Mental Health*, 30(1), 1-2.

[12]. Chatzittofis, A., Constantinidou, A., Artemiadis, A., Michailidou, K., & Karanikola, M. N. (2021). The role of perceived organizational support in mental health of healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: a cross-sectional study. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, 707293.

[13]. Adiawaty, S., & Moeins, A. (2024). The Role of Leadership and Workplace Climate in Promoting Employee Well-Being and Engagement. *Sinergi International Journal of Psychology*.

[14]. Westover, J.H. (2025). We Need to Talk More About Mental Health at Wor. *Human Capital Leadership Review*.

[15]. Ms.Sandhya, M., Thanga, M., & Amuthan², B. (2025). Employee Well-Being and Its Influence on

Retention Strategies Among the Workers at Manufacturing Industries, Oragadam, Chennai. *International Research Journal on Advanced Engineering and Management (IRJAEM)*.

- [16]. Arevin, A.T., Rustam, A., Widaningsih, W., Saryanti, E., & Wulandari, H.P. (2024). Fostering Workplace Wellness: Strategies for Improving Employee Engagement and Productivity. *The Journal of Academic Science*.
- [17]. R, T., & A, V. (2025). A Study on Understanding and Addressing Employee Burnout at Integra Software Services. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*.
- [18]. Adiawaty, S., & Cahyono, M.Y. (2024). Burnout and Work-Life Balance: Addressing Gender Disparities and Institutional Support. *Sinergi International Journal of Psychology*.
- [19]. Munda, N., Srivastava, N., & Kaman, K. (2025). Mental Health and Employee Wellbeing: A Bibliometric and Thematic Content Analysis. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management*.
- [20]. Nurhadi, M., Arna, Y.D., Erika, E., & Mutmainnah, M. (2024). Mental Health In The Workplace: Overcoming Stigma And Increasing Support. *Oshada*.
- [21]. Suter, J., Kowalski, T., Anaya-Montes, M., Chalkley, M., Jacobs, R., & Rodriguez-Santana, I. (2020). The impact of moving to a 12 hour shift pattern on employee wellbeing: a qualitative study in an acute mental health setting.
- [22]. Jose, D., & S Prasad, D. (2025). The Impact of Corporate Wellness Programs on Employee Mental Well-Being: A Quasi-Experimental Study in Corporate Bangalore, India. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*.