



Effectiveness of Employee Assistance Program Interventions for Mental Health

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Abstract

With the rapid development of the modern economy and society, the pace of work, study and life in the workplace is becoming increasingly fast, and with it, various kinds of pressure. China is in a period of transition, with a rapidly developing economy and increasingly diverse values causing spiritual anxiety, lack of faith and emotional confusion. The current EAP can be implemented within the scope of appropriate activities to give employees a comfortable and relaxed working environment to improve cohesion, employee motivation, and thus overall performance and image. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a set of systematic long-term employee services and welfare programmes set up by companies for their employees, which help to solve the psychological and behavioural problems that plague them through professional counselling and training. This paper introduces some of the existing relevant studies and provides a detailed explanation and description of the concept definition, development history and relevant theories of employee help programmes.

Keywords

Employee Help, Psychological Intervention, Effectiveness

1. Introduction

For people in the workplace, the demands of raising a family, pursuing better material living conditions and realising their self-worth force them to place a high priority on their workplace jobs, and they must put in more time and effort for better performance, more pay and higher positions. Due to the influence of traditional thinking, the psychological counselling profession in China started late. Most people tend to think of health as a physical aspect of health, but largely ignore mental health. More than half of Chinese employees feel workplace stress at least once a week, and stress can trigger or even exacerbate existing mental health problems. Companies have traditionally attached great importance to the physical and mental health of their employees, insisting on ideological and political education and humanistic care for their staff, but due to the lack of a systematic mechanism for mental health education and psychological stress relief work, the results achieved are limited and the construction of an EAP is urgent.

2. Related concepts and theoretical foundations

2.1 EAP Concept

The full name of EAP is Employee Assistance Programs, after searching the literature, this paper decided to adopt Employee Assistance Program as the Chinese translation. So far, there is no unified definition of EAP in academic circles, and it is more based on psychological perspective, human resource management perspective and

comprehensive perspective, from the perspective of application to understand what EAP is, what it does and how it is done. The fundamental purpose of implementing EAP is to solve social, psychological, financial and physical health problems of concern to the organisation and its employees, to improve employee efficiency and job satisfaction, to reduce life stress and to make the best use of welfare expenses. It is a long-term, dynamic system that ultimately aims to prevent problems from arising. Therefore, this paper defines EAP as: EAP is a long-term, dynamic service provided by an organisation through professional or non-professional staff to management, employees, their families and related people, through a series of guidance and consultation such as planning, research, intervention, training and evaluation, to solve the social, psychological, financial and physical health problems of concern to the organisation and its employees, with the aim of improving their work performance, job satisfaction and quality of life. job satisfaction and quality of life.

2.2 The evolution of EAP

EAP originated in the United States and it is generally agreed that the development of EAP can be divided into four stages.

(1) The nascent stage of EAP. In the late 19th century, alcohol consumption became common in workers' work and life, negatively affecting work efficiency and factory management, and employers gradually realised that alcoholism was a direct cause of various problems. In the early 20th century, some companies in the US hired experts on the subject to explore the possibility of solving the problem of alcohol dependence. In 1935, the predecessor of EAP, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), was formed to help employees with serious alcohol problems. group (AA for short) was formed to help employees with serious alcohol problems. As AA continued to grow and develop, some managers introduced the idea of AA within their companies in the 1940s and Occupational Alcoholics Anonymous (OAP) programmes emerged, but the programmes were not recognised by managers and were mostly conducted in secret (Brandhorst & Compton, 2022).

(2) The developmental stage of EAP. By the 1960s, as society developed and more and more government and legal agencies in the US took action, the efforts of professional bodies such as AA made managers aware of the significant impact that the work environment had on employees' mental health, and more and more companies began to implement employee help programmes, mainly addressing employees' alcoholism and partly expanding to help employees deal with their personal problems. In 1970, the US federal government. In the 1980s, a decline in funding for social welfare in the US forced major alcohol and psychological research organisations to shift their services to major corporations. This led to EAPs going beyond alcoholism and focusing more on this led to the development of the EAP, which was not limited to alcoholism, but focused on identifying and solving problems affecting the physical and mental health of employees in and out of the workplace, improving the physical and mental health of employees, and achieving improved corporate performance (Smith, 2019).

(3) The expansion stage of EAP. As the social environment changes, the connotation of EAP extends from helping employees solve existing problems to focusing on the overall health of employees in all aspects, both employee growth plan (EEP), EEP is committed to helping employees learn to control stress, improve the quality of work and life, learn a healthy lifestyle, and start from prevention to solve possible behaviours that may cause future physical and mental health problems, more systematic and comprehensive EEP is the future direction of EAP in the new era.

2.3 Services of EAP

At this stage, the services of EAP are quite extensive, with similar definitions of EAP in the classroom, and many researchers have their own views on the service content of EAP. According to the International EAP Association, EAP services include: providing advice, training and assistance to organisational leaders in managing employees, improving the work environment and enhancing employee performance; providing assistance services to employees and their family members; providing confidentiality for employees' personal problems; using interviews, motivation and short-term interventions to help employees deal with problems that may arise; providing referrals, therapy and follow-up services for employees; providing organisational The eight areas of EAP are: counseling; and evaluation of effectiveness. The domestic EAP mainly focuses on the heart aspect of help. Summarising the views of different scholars, it is believed that the content of the domestic EAP includes eight aspects of survey and analysis, individual counselling, group counselling, education and training, career planning, promotion and facilitation, crisis intervention and personal assessment.

By reviewing the literature, in the international arena, most scholars use the distinction of service sources to clas-

sify EAP projects into four models, namely internal model, external model, joint model and mixed model.

(1) Internal model. The internal model is the establishment of a dedicated EAP function within the organisation. In most organisations, the EAP function is undertaken by HR-related departments, while in some organisations it is undertaken by trade unions or party groups and other departments. EAP-related services are provided to employees through internal staff, with an emphasis on a management-based approach. This model is highly compatible with the internal culture of the organisation, and the implementation plan drawn up is more focused and less difficult to implement, which is conducive to the formation of a good environmental climate. However, as the full-time and part-time staff are located in the same internal environment of the organisation, there is a certain degree of subjectivity, especially as the service provider and the person being served are located within the same organisation, and the effectiveness of the service is affected by the concern of the employees receiving the service about the leakage of their personal privacy (Attridge, 2019).

(2) External model. The external model is to have an external professional EAP company undertake the organisation's EAP services, and the professional EAP company has a wealth of experience in psychological counselling expertise. The advantages of this model are that the service provider is a professional, who is paid to provide more advanced and professional EAP services, and that the privacy of the person being served is easier to maintain, making EAP services more efficient. However, the EAP company has less knowledge of the organisation and is less focused, and has higher costs.

(3) Joint model. The joint model refers to multiple organisations with the same characteristics joining together to set up an organisation that specialises in providing EAP services to multiple organisations, with specialist staff. This model allows for a significant reduction in costs and a strong focus on services due to the relevance of the organisations' businesses. However, this model is difficult to implement in China because, on the one hand, domestic organisations have relatively little demand for EAPs and it is difficult to form a scale; on the other hand, there is the possibility of disputes between organisations in terms of staffing, salary allocation and specific service needs.

(4) Hybrid model. The hybrid model refers to the combination of a non-specialist department responsible for EAP within the organisation and a professional EAP organisation with experience outside the organisation, to design a set of EAP models that are deeply compatible with the organisation. This model has the advantages of the above models, improving relevance and ease of implementation through the internal department, and improving professionalism and privacy through the external department (Holbrook et al., 2018).

2.4 Psychological Capital Theory

Psychological capital is a positive psychological state that individuals demonstrate as they grow and develop, with investment and profitability. Psychological capital focuses on how to develop human potential to make the best of it in an organisation, and is an important source of psychological motivation for organisational performance and competitive advantage. Effectiveness research has found that every 2% increase in psychological capital generates over \$10 million in revenue for the business. Psychological capital is made up of optimism, self-efficacy, hope and resilience, and the initials of these four words together are HERO, so we use the term 'inner hero' to describe psychological capital. We believe that this psychological capital can augment other tangible (e.g. economic, financial) and intangible (e.g. human, social) capital, enabling us to better understand how to maximise sustainable, human-based competitive advantage. We assert that psychological capital helps to overcome today's and tomorrow's most stressful challenges, that it can be developed and nurtured, and that it has a tangible performance impact, making it closely linked to the recyclable and manageable resources of individuals, teams, units, organisations, communities and nations. Psychological capital theory interprets issues and phenomena arising in business management from a psychological perspective, delves into practice and combines management psychology with the aim of enhancing the psychological resilience of corporate employees and stimulating positive team energy, thereby improving employee performance and corporate effectiveness (Salas, 2020).

2.5 Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is a psychological discipline whose mission is to study the positive qualities of human beings and to explore the creation of a happy life for individuals and a harmonious society, and was influenced by the humanistic orientation of psychologists such as Rogers and Maslow in the 1950s. The discipline of psychology emerged with three distinctive missions: to treat mental illness, to enrich the lives of all people and to identify the development of genius. Positive psychology is the ability to stimulate the potential positive qualities inherent in

people and aims to enable them to develop a good life in harmony. It is a better fit with modern management thinking and has greatly contributed to the use of positive management methods to develop the positive strengths of individual employees, which are strongly advocated in organisational behaviour and human resource management practices. We advocate the introduction of positive psychology into business management and the interpretation of various events and phenomena in the management process with a positive mindset. In this way, in the process of human resource management, we will always pay attention to the psychological needs of employees, follow a people-oriented approach, stimulate the positive psychological power of employees, help them to achieve happiness and satisfaction in their work, and form a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation with the company.

3. Intervention effectiveness analysis

3.1 Plan is effective in the long term

Service is the core content of the enterprise, and serving a better life is also one of the missions of Company A. If there is no suitable channel or correct method to deal with the complaints, the staff motivation, stability and corporate cohesion will face a large negative impact. It is an important part of a company's human resources management to ensure that employees are able to learn and master the correct methods of dealing with stress, adjust their mindset and face their work in a timely manner. The Employee Assistance Programme is a systematic welfare programme that provides professional help to solve psychological and behavioural problems; it helps employees to manage stress and emotions and take control of their work and life with ease and autonomy. It is more stable and professional than setting up in-house counselling and training departments. It is not affected by factors such as staff transfers and staff departures, and uses the expertise of EAP service providers to address specific matters, which usually gets twice the result with half the effort. It is also a way of bridging the gap between the company and its employees, helping them to face negative events positively, to learn and acquire knowledge and skills, to solve all kinds of psychological difficulties, and ultimately to improve their motivation, to make organisational communication and the operation of the wheel and belt more effective, and to bring economic efficiency to the company. Manpower is like a person's meridian, where it is blocked it hurts. If you get the transport routes running at high speed and unobstructed, you will help to increase turnover and improve the profitability of your business. Employee assistance programs can help open up pain points in human resource management, clear traffic jams, prevent disease, strengthen organisational muscles and improve the efficiency with which organisations function.

Due to the characteristics of the industry, the income of stable projects is basically fixed, with the increase of projects, although a certain scale effect will be formed, but the cost of employees rose year by year, can not be like some new industries with high profits to support material rewards to maintain staff motivation, how to maximize the mobilisation of staff psychological capital is a management problem, so companies can help improve corporate cohesion and staff psychological capital of the project This is why companies are more accepting of programmes that can help to improve cohesion and psychological capital, and if they are effective, they are basically accepting of long-term employee assistance programmes.

3.2 Motivating employees to seek knowledge

Although the EAP concept started late in China, many companies are unconsciously providing EAP services as their concern for employees' mental health gradually increases. The ideological and political work and health management work carried out in the early stages have laid a solid foundation for the formal implementation of the EAP programme, and "ideological and political work" and "ideological work" are carried out consistently throughout the year. Many enterprises have innovated measures for ideological and political work and established six mechanisms for the management of employees' ideological guidance, willingness to appeal, heart-to-heart talks, visits by leading cadres, psychological stress reduction and the identification of hidden problems in the mind, while formulating various systems to sort out and implement the contents, so as to unite the whole bank's efforts and provide spiritual motivation and ideological assurance, with remarkable results. At the same time, the mental health problems in the workforce have also been exposed from time to time: some employees have been suffering from insomnia and depression for a long time, and individual employees have taken sick leave due to depression, and very few employees have chosen suicide as an extreme way to relieve themselves.

The general increase in consumer demand for service quality has tested the service awareness of frontline staff and placed higher demands on them. The industry's frontline staff in general has yet to improve in terms of knowledge structure and lacks knowledge learning practice and practical training. Management has become an important

aspect of urban civilisation, face quality requirements and image requirements of the general environment is increasing, how the front-line staff in practice and the reality of the needs of the fit, which requires enterprises to provide systematic training assessment and a series of human resources management support. In particular, the desire of frontline staff to learn, whether to cooperate with training, how to mobilise enthusiasm for learning, are an urgent problem to be solved. With the development of intelligence, intelligent operating equipment has replaced some of the manual labour, but there is a large gap between technological development and personnel skills improvement; enterprises not only need to invest large sums of money to transform facilities and equipment, but also need to invest in training or recruiting highly skilled staff. Intelligence can indeed reduce the problem of labour shortage, but the requirements for the quality of personnel also present new challenges. In the face of a constantly changing environment, the quality of employees needs to be constantly improved.

4. Conclusion

In the future, companies should pay more attention to employee mental health issues to improve corporate well-being and work performance, and EAP programmes will be upgraded in the future to facilitate the transition from simply solving employee mental health problems to improving the positive psychological level and overall personal development of employees, thereby better maximising value.

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