



Rochelle Fadzai Jayirayi Kanda

The Role of Employee Well-Being in Business Success

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Abstract

Author(s):	Rochelle Fadzai Jayirayi Kanda
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In this modern world we are living in, a lot around the business sector has changed, transitioned, or completely diversified. To adapt all the changes, companies and other small business employers have had to also improve on how to best provide for their employees to improve their satisfaction and performance as well as to attract the best talents in the world. Human needs vary for every individual, and it is of great value to also do our level best in organizations to improve on how the job security of employees is preserved and they grow individually, feel safe, feel protected, respected, and heard.

In this paper, the employee wellbeing will be discussed. The research will answer the questions on what makes up employee well-being and to what extent does it contribute to the success of a business. The research will also investigate the relationship between employee wellbeing and job satisfaction and how laws in different countries can be a limiting factor on how an organization can support employee wellbeing.

Interviews were conducted through open-ended questions to better understand the small sample of how they view their employee wellbeing as well as to determine their level of job satisfaction. The respondents were from Finland and the USA to have a better view on how different countries are doing on the employee support towards their wellbeing. Online sources were used to obtain secondary data on the relationship between employee wellbeing and business success.

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1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study and defines the statement of the problem. Research questions that are indispensable to this study will be dealt with in this chapter. The essence of the study to various persons and stakeholders will be outlined. The limitations that are associated with the study and the delimitations of the study will be explained and key definitions of terms will also be outlined. This thesis is a case study of employee wellbeing's relationship to business success within the constant evolving world standards and how companies have been maintaining in different parts of the world by comparing the Finnish working environment and United States of America. Both countries are developed countries but with very distinct working environment pertaining to employee benefits offered in the two countries. The analysis of the laws in these two countries will provide an overview of the limitations that are brought about by labour laws in the countries. The scope of the thesis is to identify the factors that contribute to employee wellbeing, an investigation of the level of satisfaction of employees pertaining to employee wellbeing and an analysis of the role of employee wellbeing in daily operations of a business and how it affects the success of a business.

2 Background of the Study

Many researchers have formulated ways to boost the morale of employees, and to improve their performance and productivity. The history of today's employee wellness began with the work of an Italian occupational scientist, Bernardino Ramazzini, around 1633 until the early 1700s (Gainer 2008: 5-9). According to Gainer (2008), Bernardino's primary work was to examine work hazards and his conclusions were centred on repetitive strain injury, the posture of an individual during work, the exposure to chemicals or other toxins around the working industry as well as the psychological effects. Employee wellbeing subsequently became a much-discussed topic around the industrial revolution period.

There have been so many changes since the 18th century which have been slowly adapted and improved till now. This paper aims to shed more insight into how different parts of the world have developed in relation to employee wellbeing and identify how companies can best improve in promoting it. As evidently in the 1800s the eight-hour work rule was established, this was only done after Robert Marcus Owen had initially proposed a 10 working hours per day recommendation - this is an indication that change is always constant and there is always room to provide the best for workers (Donachie, 2000).

Charles Thackrah (1832: 18), "The evil of the employ is the incidental one of intemperance."

Charles Thackrah, from a different angle, focused on how employers may fail to look into, and understand the workers they hire, and what impacts them during their work life, and how failure to back them up and support them may prove to be catastrophic to the success of a business. In the earlier centuries it was more a case of how to protect employees from work hazards. However, in the 1900s there was so much reform including the introduction of Retirement Insurance for workers as well as promotion of employee fitness to work on the job (Rucker, 2016).

In the most recent years, in particular the 2000s, most big companies have partnered with health organizations as well as the governments of their countries to help provide medical assistance to employees. This includes medical assistance for work related injuries, or illness affecting normal work performance, fitness, as well as counselling services and physical therapy (Wieczner, 2013).

There is so much pressure in businesses trying to develop cost-effective ways in order to keep profits high, that so many considerations in employee wellbeing need to be made overtime and there may be a possibility of some issues being overlooked during business start-up. Nevertheless, it is very important to note that most countries may not offer affordable health care to general citizens, which affects the extent to which companies may be able to offer wellness benefits to their employees. Nevertheless, with the evolving nature of technology and the new dynamics in working conditions, it is quite important to value employees as they are the backbone of day-to-day operations of a business (Rucker 2016). This study will examine how important employee wellness is to the success of a business and how to further improve it and bridge the gap between companies, governments, private wellness entities can venture to provide support for employees. The study will as well analyse the how different countries are doing in terms of employee wellbeing.

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Human needs vary according to every individual and sometimes it is not easy to identify exactly what is needed. There is a need to identify exactly what employee wellbeing means and what factors surround it. Not all organizations are equally supportive, so the research needs to explore the relationship between employee wellbeing and business success and what the future may bring to curb the wellness of employees across different organisations and its impact on business success.

2.2 Research Questions

1. What the effects employee wellbeing in this day and age?
2. To what extent does employee wellbeing contribute to the success of a business today?
3. What is the relationship between employee wellbeing and job satisfaction?
4. What are the laws in Finland and USA that are limiting factors or guidelines on how businesses support employee wellbeing?
5. Are employees satisfied with the current support they are getting from the organizations they work for? What can be done better?

2.3 Research Objectives

1. Identify the factors that contribute to employee well-being.
2. Outline the role of employees in a business and how does employee wellbeing impact the success of a business.
3. To explore how laws of US vs Finland provide guidelines and limitations to how employee wellbeing is supported in the respective countries.
4. To discover if employees in different organisations have a sense of job satisfaction with respect to their well-being and what they hope the organizations can do better at.

2.4 Aims of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify the role of employee wellbeing in business success. The study aims to explore the extent of how important employee wellbeing is in business operations. Furthermore, there is need to review how companies are already progressing in providing the best support to ensure employees feel safe and happy to work more efficiently with greater productivity. Today there is a need to identify new ways to support the wellbeing of every employee as awareness of its importance grows and certain businesses are apparently successful on this basis. Lastly, it is important to understand if employees are in sync with how they are being supported and what are their

wishes and what can be done to make their work experience a more comfortable and memorable one.

2.5 Justification of the Research

The study on employee well-being is highly beneficial to current employers in different organisations around the globe to be aware of the importance of every individual's well-being that is under their employment. Careful plans can be drawn to determine how best can employees be supported in their well-being within the organisation. The research can serve to highlight how best companies can improve the ways they can provide job satisfaction to their employees and how employee wellbeing can be a huge contributing factor to business success.

2.6 Case Study and Research

A comparison of Finland and the United States of America (USA) will be examined on how each country prioritizes and ways in which they support their employee's wellbeing. A series of interviews has been conducted in the investigation on employee wellbeing and they were directed mainly to employees and provided answers based on their own work experience.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the topic of the thesis and explained the purpose for the thesis. The research objectives and research questions are stated, and a case study focus has been introduced. The chapter was focused on the background of the research with an emphasis mainly on the employee wellbeing. The

chapter also highlighted the contribution of the laws of Finland and USA to employers' decisions on how to support employee well-being. It was also emphasized that employee wellbeing is important to business success through the efficiency and productivity that results from the state of the worker. This led to an investigation of how organizations in Finland and USA are doing, which nation is doing better, and how both can be of better support to their workers. The other point of investigation focuses on employee satisfaction currently and their views of how organizations can do better. The following chapters will define the key terms of this paper, starting with a literature review on business success, employee wellbeing, motivational theories, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the methodology and forms of data collection will be discussed. Lastly the data gathered, and results of the research will be presented.

3 Literature Review

This section is a presentation of the findings from reviews of how employee wellbeing was identified, a detailed analysis of the factors contributing to the wellness of employees, an overview of the different laws of Finland and USA in regard to employee wellbeing and an outline of the importance of employee wellness. The role of employee wellbeing will also be reviewed. Through this review, the author identifies gaps in the research that make this study necessary.

3.1 Employee wellbeing

In the earlier literature, the description of employee wellbeing has been quite broad, and a relatively precise definition was given. Warr (1987) defines employee wellbeing as the combined quality of an employee's work experience and their functionality. This notion lacks the specifics of what exactly describes employee wellbeing and only gives managers an overall view of their own assumptions of what employees should accept. Earlier in the 20th century most employees had not much opinion on what would make their work experience more favourable, hence a set of benefits were rather imposed from management (Mahajan 2020).

As defined by the author in the previous chapter, employee well-being is a term which refers to the physical, emotional, mental health and safety of employees. These factors can be classified into working environment, workplace culture, work-life balance, and their job satisfaction, as referred to by Marinaki (2022). The literature is more specific and denotes the key necessary factors in describing the necessities that comprise employee wellbeing. Waida (2021), consistent with more recent literature, also supports the theory of employee wellbeing as being a critical aspect in the business working environment in the present day. Work culture and co-worker relationships are also part of employee wellbeing as they have an impact in an individual's daily work life (Kaikhosroshvili 2022).

Meister (2021) supports the above argument in the sense that employee wellbeing has evolved so much that it depicts branches which support the topic more in depth.



Fig. 3.1: The holistic pillars of employee wellbeing

The figure above **Fig. 3.1**, provides an outline of the factors that contribute to employee wellbeing (Meister 2021). The theory is beneficial as a guideline to managers or business owners on how to create an environment that promotes the wellbeing of employees through ensuring their physical wellness, financial wellness, emotional wellness, social wellness, career growth, community impact, and individual purpose. Kaikhosroshvili (2022) also agrees to most of the above depiction of the holistic approach to employee wellbeing.

3.2 Maslow hierarchy of needs

The review of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs is used to identify the how employee wellbeing plays a role in their work performance. As will be further discussed in the literature review of productivity we need to understand the motivation of employees and Maslow theory brings up some of the aspects related to employee wellbeing. Wasserman & Wasserman (2020) explain the ideology of Maslow (1943) that motivation is derived from within the person until

they reach a level of self-actualization from having fulfilled basic biological needs.



Fig 3.2 Maslow Hierarchy of Needs

From the figure above **Fig 3.2**, Maslow (1943), describes the motivation of employees to begin from physiological needs which are basic needs which include water, food, clothing, shelter, sleep, and reproduction. He further explained that when an individual has managed to secure those initial needs, they are motivated to move on to the next stage of fulfilling their safety needs, that is to secure employment, take care of their health, personal safety and acquiring resources like having law and order, police, access to health care and medical supplies. Maslow (1943) also goes on to describe the third stage as the motivation driven from love and belonging to a family, group, society or in any environment an individual may thrive from. The fourth stage is esteem fulfilment which comes from earning respect from the people they are surrounded by the act of recognition for good work or effort and freedom or independence to express oneself (Maslow 1943). The final stage in the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) is self-actualization, this is when an individual has reached their desired potential and they are ready to expand their career or have new goals.

The theory has been really helpful in helping businesses derive new ways to motivate employees to produce better results and good quality.

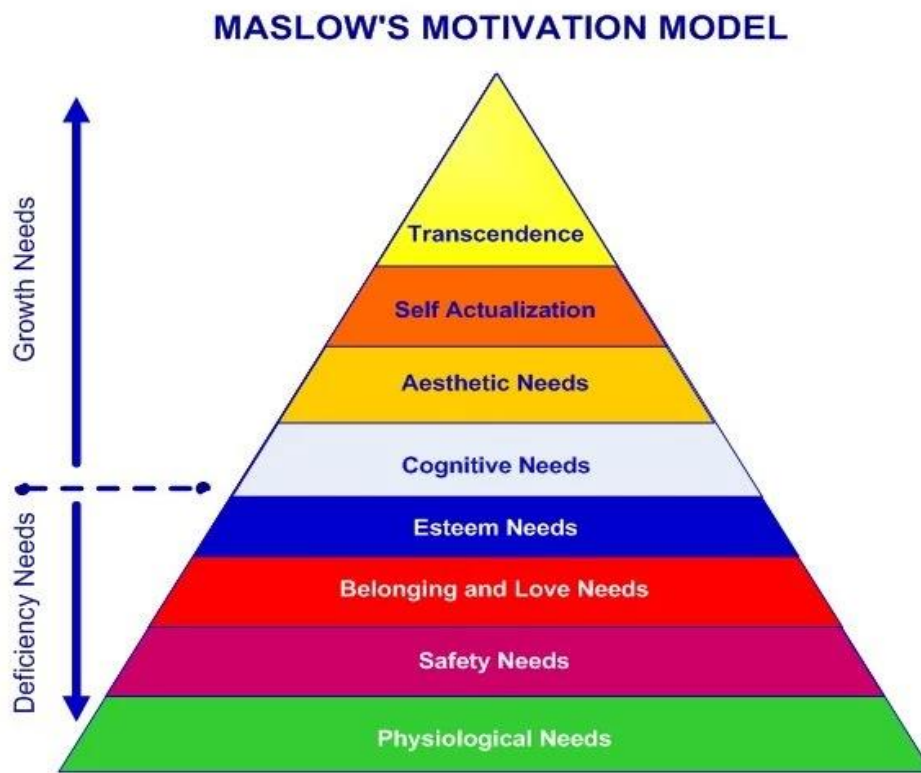


Fig 3.3 Maslow Hierarchy of needs (breakdown)

Over the years Maslow (1943, 1962, 1987) has improved this theory as illustrated in the above **Fig 3.3** in which there is cognitive needs, aesthetic needs and transcendence are added to the pyramid. McLeod (2007) explained cognitive needs as the level of understanding and where an individual develops curiosity, seeks adventure and hopes to have predictability to the activities in the future; aesthetic needs are described as the feelings of need to embrace beauty and life balance of nature; lastly transcendence, which comes after self-actualization, is outlined as the stage when an individual pursues life's mysteries that are beyond everyday experience, including spirituality, scientific research and inventions.

The Maslow hierarchy of needs has been a very useful for many years to date and most employers have succeeded in motivating employees into contributing to business success. The author believes that this theory is highly applicable in identifying employee wellbeing factors and possible solutions as illustrated in the below **table 3.1**.

Table 3.1 Maslow theory of needs in relation to employee wellbeing at work

Theory Stages	Employee wellbeing factor(s)
Physiological needs	Physical & biological basic needs
Safety needs	Financial, career, physical
Belonging and Love needs	Community, social, emotional
Esteem needs	Emotional, social, financial, career
Cognitive needs	Financial, career, physical
Aesthetic needs	Physical
Self-Actualization	Career, financial
Transcendence	Personal

The above **table 3.1**, is showing the link between the, Maslow (1943, 1962, 1987) theory of needs to the employee wellbeing factors by Meister (2021). Each factor can impact the motivation of an employee at some stage in the hierarchy of needs. The author explains this in the later chapter of this paper.

However, there are critics of the Maslow hierarchy of needs and the approach to his findings. The most recognized criticism is that of Wahba and Bridwell (1976). Their review of Maslow as not scientific and more generalized than

applicable to individual persons. Some of the Maslow theory content is acceptable and some is rejected as there was no substantial definition and it is quite difficult to measure the level of satisfaction of an individual's needs. When a level of satisfaction is reached on a particular need there's no clear explanation on how an individual feels that they need to move to the next level (Winter, 2016).

Winter (2016) claims that Maslow theory also presents an ethnocentric bias since the research was more based on individuals who emerge from a more 'well-up' background culture. The hierarchy of needs may not apply to those from less privileged cultures. For one to look for self-achievement, esteem, or growth there are factors like social, religious, economic, political and gender which affect this notion, hence the Maslow theory presents a flaw despite having not considered all of these.

Maslow hierarchy of needs has quite high expectations from an individual. Maslow noted that there is possibilities of one returning to a lower level in the needs and there are individuals who may settle at a certain level as may give them the satisfaction they are seeking. There are also other individuals who may not find other needs as a priority or a necessity and all they work on is their self-actualization for example, creative individuals like artists.

Finally, the notion that needs are in a fixed hierarchical order is to a lesser extent relatable since individuals have different goals and paths in their life. Some people aim to have just food, yet some are focused on having the latest brand of a car or having real estate property (Winter, 2016).

3.3 Job satisfaction

BasuMallick (2021), as mentioned in the previous chapter, observes that job satisfaction is quality measure, meaning it cannot be quantified. Bourne (2020) defines job satisfaction using Hoppock (1935) as the state in which the

psychological, physiological and the environment around the workplace of an individual are balanced and enables the fulfilment of one's job expectations. The definition of job satisfaction has been fully described in different contexts by different authors and scholars.

Bourne (2020) wrote on how an individual can reach a satisfaction level in their job. Communication is the main key, and it has to be effective and with room for feedback (Kumari, 2011). The culture of an organization plays a role in which a person can feel belonging to the group they work with including relationship with management. Bourne (2020) further goes on to list pay and benefits, and rewards as another factor leading to job satisfaction. Every employee is entitled to be remunerated, but the fairness and equality as to how the difficult the job is and according to experience and expertise may contribute to the satisfaction of an individual (Bourne 2020; Edwards 2008). Rewards and benefits also affect job satisfaction as they support the wellness of employees, build up their esteem and make them enjoy some perks in around the organisation.

Opportunities and career development (Bourne 2020) show how important it is for employees to have room for growth especially within the company would make them feel more secure in their job and can even improve their productivity. The opportunity to try more challenging tasks or projects and the involvement in company development plans and try outs can bring about satisfaction of growth within an individual. Working conditions also have an impact since an individual needs to feel safe around the workplace, be protected in case of any type of harassment, taking breaks in between work and the space to provide feedback which is implemented can bring about job satisfaction (Bourne 2020). Job security influences how one is satisfied on the job, for example, a clear contract on if or when employment ends, the future of the company and how the company goals are stated which will ensure that the employment of the individual does not abruptly come to an end (Bourne 2020; Berg, Grant & Johnson, 2010). Management or the leadership in the company has an effect on job satisfaction (Bourne 2020; Kinicki & Kreitner, 2006) as they are the ones guiding and influencing a group of employees towards organizational goals and when the relationship between both parties and the

employees feel comfortable and safe as well as understanding of their leader, they tend to feel satisfied with their job.

However, the employee personality traits, which has no direct effect from the organization may have an effect on job satisfaction. This means that, their own personal drive to do the job and how they decide to interact or respond to any form of feedback may impact their satisfaction of the job (Bourne 2020; Bakker, Tims & Derk, 2012).

The literature above is quite detailed with respect to how the organisation plays a larger role in providing job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is achieved when employee wellbeing within the organisation is promoted, and most of the factors that affect job satisfaction also affect employee wellbeing. Bourne (2020) also lists the importance of job satisfaction which also correlate with the importance of employee wellbeing by Meister (2021); that is, increased productivity that leads to higher profits, lower employee turnover and workers' loyalty towards the company.

3.4 Business Success

Business success can be defined in different points of view. This section aims to identify the literature on the extent to which employee wellbeing is a contributing factor to business success. Wright (2012) researched on different literature on how business success can be defined. Wright (2012); (Watson, Hogarth-Scott & Wilson, 1998) referred to business success as a complex combination of interrelated factors that determine the chances of success of an organization, that when each of them are in equilibrium, can a business achieve success.

“Rauch and Frese (2000) used the Giessen-Amsterdam model of entrepreneurial to measure business success. This is an

interdisciplinary model which assumes that there is no success without action” (Wright 2012).

“De Brentani (2003) developed seven keys to measuring business success...measured by the fit between the need of the customer and the solution offered, having expert and efficient frontline employees, offering unique competences, a culture that enhances creativity, good market potential, innovativeness, and senior management involvement” (Wright 2012).

The above definitions offer almost the same ideology in different perspectives. Due to the complexity in how business success can be defined, it is important to note that all ideas are correct although there are gaps in Rauch and Frese (2000) as there could have been a much deeper explanation. However, “...no success without action...” is an agreeable statement to work with. From the authors’ understanding, if all the stakeholders in the company contribute enough effort and drive there is room for success. Employees have a responsibility of either being in the frontline or doing floorwork are mainly the ones producing goods or delivering services to customers. The employee’s efficiency and productivity are mainly the source of the survival of a business in order for the company to fulfil customers’ needs. If employee’s wellbeing is taken care of and they have job satisfaction, the higher the chances are for quality goods and/or services, the more satisfied the customer is, the more the revenue and profits are realised by the company.

De Brentani (2000) also states that employees can be used to measure business success, but the seven key factors determine the sustainability of success. The author disputes this fact to a greater extent since in the seven key factors, De Brentani (2000) mentions that expert and efficient frontline employees, creativity, innovativeness, and unique competences, all of these can be achieved by employees who are well and satisfied with their job, they can help drive business goals into its success.

The relationship between employee wellbeing and business success is not a direct relationship, but rather brought out by the positive experience of an employee. The positive experience is influenced greatly by the practices that promote employee wellbeing and the behavioural outputs result contribute towards the success of the business (Larsson, 2021). Employees behave more effectively, and this comes about when they feel at their best, which makes them more engaged, efficient, and put more effort in their performance (Larsson, Kling, Bowen, Hardy, Morokhovska, Sudarshan & Wee, 2020). Increased productivity, higher sales, remarkable customer service and the willingness of an employee to remain within the organisation are some of the results that stem from good behavioural input by employees which in turn, boosts the business competitiveness and its financial position.

3.4.1 Employee life cycle

The Employee Life Cycle, according to Holliday (2021), refers to the model that explains the stages in which employees go through before, during and after employment. The stages may differ from different organizations, but the overall experience is quite similar

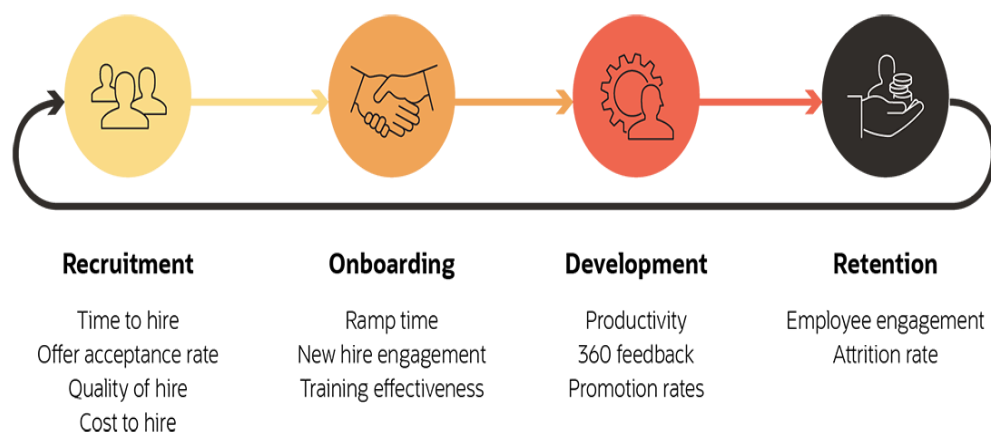


Fig 5.7: Employee Life Cycle Metrics

The above **Fig 5.7** shows the simplified process of the employee life cycle (Holliday 2021). The author has related this theory on where and when the

organisation begins to affect employee wellbeing. Employee wellbeing already becomes important during the recruitment process, as in this stage the recruiting team explains fully about the job, the tasks, the salary, and other benefits. It is important that at this stage everything is transparent, and the potential employee gets the opportunity to ask more questions and be able to negotiate working hours and/or salary. In this phase the morale of the employee is either boosted or destroyed depending on how the recruitment team presents themselves as an organisation and how far they are willing to negotiate and if an agreement is settled upon.

The onboarding phase is also important as the first day's experience of the new recruit have a huge impact on their perception of the job entirely. Holliday (2021) further goes on to outline how training during onboarding needs to be effective rather than fast tracked. The new employee deserves adequate training so as to improve their knowledge and confidence on the job. From the interviews, one the respondents mentioned how their wellbeing is affected especially when their trainers expect them to rush in learning some of the job skills which ends up resulting in shortcuts which reduces the quality of work and violates the regulations of the job. There is also need for adaptation to organizational culture and how the new employee engages with other employees who are already there, the more comfortable and welcome they feel the more they are willing to learn more and grasp the skills more accurately and faster (Holliday 2021).

In the development phase, it is when the continued support employees need to be maintained and challenging them with set targets and providing a platform for them to give feedback to the company. In this phase, management can also provide feedback on employee performance both positive and constructive criticism, as well as inquire with the employee if they need more training. Workshops can be organised to help employees with tips on how they can perform better and increase their productivity (Holliday 2021). All the aspects mentioned contribute to employee wellbeing and if implemented well, the rate at which an employee may fall sick, succumb to occupational hazards or injuries, or show up for work maybe lower and managed better.

The final phase of retention, Holliday (2021), points out that at this level, if employees are supported adequately the rate at which employees leave the company is reduced and the losses incurred when employee leaves are reduced as well. In the retention phase, the organization is able to determine areas of improvement and how satisfied employees are in the company. Therefore, the wellbeing of an employee is important and has to be supported throughout in order to retain more profits, have employees who stay longer and contribute to the success of the business.

3.4.2 Human resource capital

According to MBA Knowledge Base, human capital is one the backbones to the success of a business and it is the term used to refer to the recognition of the role of people or employees within an organisation. People are more like assets, this being derived from the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and their abilities to drive the business into achieving its goals. MBA Knowledge Base has noted that human capital is now considered the cornerstone to business success, as employees are the ones who provide service to customers, control production or are producers, even in this tech world, it requires the skills of a human to operate machines and computers and these only make the work easier. Without employees it is quite impossible to operate a business to its success.

The author has established that, in order to keep productivity of the company at its best, it is important to support employee wellbeing as they are the most important in the business capital. The lack of employee engagement may result in high employee turnover, lack of productivity and it affects the business profits as well as disrupt business operations if the workforce is compromised.

3.4.3 Productivity vs Employee Wellbeing

Clear (2022) defines productivity as the measure to which an individual can complete a few tasks while maintaining a normal average pace rather than

constant speed on everything. James (2021) reviewed the study by Gallup on the relationship between productivity and employee wellness, they state that in order to reach maximum productivity, there is need of engaging and connecting with employees and Forbes magazine also noted how employee satisfaction can result in vast productivity and reduce employee turnover.

Clifton & Harter (2021), wrote on how employee wellbeing affects their engagement in their work, which in turn has an effect on their productivity. Clifton & Harter (2021) carried out research on how the different stages in employee's life evaluations and grouped them into suffering, struggling, and thriving. The employees who are non-engaged gave the results that 61% are prone to easily feel exhausted, while 48% tend to experience daily stress, 66% constantly worry about their job and are two times more likely to experience anger and sadness daily (Clifton & Harter, 2021). It is important for management to curb the issues associated with employee wellbeing and their engagement as they simultaneously have an effect on productivity and impacts the success of a business.

There are certain aspects around working life that contributes to employee satisfaction and when those are not met, may result in productivity being compromised. These include, nepotism, discrimination, ineffective communication between managers and employees, too much workload for an individual, unfair treatment and the pressure exerted on an employee. Companies have the capabilities to support their employees in everyday work life (James 2021). For example, when an employee is sick at work, they should have the opportunity to get the appropriate days off, have a doctor consultation and have sickness allowance in some cases. It is quite challenging for a person to complete daily tasks at work if their overall health is not stable and some of these are highly attributed by the work environment as discussed above.

However, according to Wright (2012), investors are significant to the success of a business through the provision of capital. Good industrial relations for the provision of supplies in a business are a contributing factor to the success of a business. The market strategy and implementation play a role on how the

company can succeed their goals. A good customer base enhances the chances of success within an organization.

4 Methodology

The aim of this section is to provide an insight to the methodological choices made in this research project, so that the reader can understand the scope of the research. The chapter aims to review the research context, research method, data collection and analysis methods, and reliability of the results.

4.1 Research Context

The research identifies the role of employee wellbeing in business success, as well as possible ways in which organizations can promote employee wellbeing. The researcher will compare and contrast employee wellbeing in Finland and the USA to develop a clear view of the current progress and how it can be further developed as the two countries are governed by different labour laws although both are first world countries. In order to answer the research questions, online sources as secondary data have been used as well as a series of interviews from volunteers in Finland and the USA.

4.2 Research Method

This chapter aims to describe the methodology used in the research. In this research, case study is used as a research strategy. Qualitative research aims to identify challenges and benefits in an empirical setting by observing, gathering information, and explaining constructs in context (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005, p. 58). Yin (1994) points out the circumstances in which case study research is beneficial. The research method used in this research is interviewing 10 employees from Finland and USA. The individuals have had different working experience in their respective countries. The research also used the secondary data that is provided by both the Finnish government and USA government from their labour statistics and laws.

State laws contribute to how many businesses operate, to some extent they also apply to businesses in the private sector. There is also secondary data

from global surveys in how employee wellbeing is being considered. The interview questions were based mainly on how employee wellbeing is supported in the different organisations of the respective countries. The interviews also focused on how satisfied the individuals are with their job and workplace environment and the challenges they face. The interview also focused on the views of the individuals on what the companies could do better in the future. The interviews were conducted via social media platforms through private video session to protect the anonymity of the interviewee. The interviews were all voluntary and the response rate was quite satisfactory.

4.3 Data Collection

The research area of the study is centred on the comparison of the Finnish business environment and that of the USA. The Finnish business environment is governed partly by the European Union laws and partly their own national laws and there has been studies online that give the latest data on how Finland is ranking and performing in terms of the labour laws. USA has a labour laws report published every year online that gives an overview on how the country is performing as well as very reliable researchers that have ranked USA on their performance in the labour market. The data from a sample of employees in both countries was conducted online through video call on the social media platform, Instagram, where it was quite easy to find people willing to have the interviews. The questions in the interview focused mainly on the overall experience of the respondents in their work life and listed below. The interview also focused on employees and entrepreneurs rather than big company owners or shareholders as they have more ground experience of how work life and culture directly impact this group of individuals.

Interview Questions

1. *In which country do they work in?*
2. *In what industry/ work line they are in?*
3. *Home or office or hybrid place of work?*

4. *Are they frontline workers or in the management or owner/entrepreneur of the business?*
5. *What are the employee benefits and perks they receive from the business?*
6. *During working in the office, what are the most favourable things you look forward to that are provided by the company?*
7. *What are the issues that make you feel like not going to work on certain days and every other day?*
8. *How well are you supported by the management or direct superiors?*
9. *How efficient or productive are you at work with your current state of being?*
10. *What changes do you hope to get for supporting your wellbeing at work?*
11. *Would the company you work for do better in terms of success with these changes?*
12. *Job satisfaction on a scale of 1-5.*
13. *Organizational culture on a scale of 1-5.*
14. *Free comment on how you view your overall employment experience.*

These questions were chosen in order to analyse the current wellbeing of employees in Finland and in the USA. They had the choice of keeping discretionary details of their work and at the same time giving an overview of how they are experiencing their wellbeing support from the company. The use of open-ended questions allowed the respondents to answer freely and in more depth. The author used field notes to record the answers and one sheet of paper for each respondent, which helped in the grouping and classification of the data. The respondents did not consent on recorded interview to protect their identities. The approach of the interview was to be more casual and connected with the respondents to ensure the reliability of their answers to the question. Each interview lasted between 30-45 minutes.

4.4 Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the collected data through qualitative content analysis. The goal was to create a description of the phenomenon that is relatively easy to understand. After analyzing the data using qualitative content analysis, the results could be compared and merged with previous research (Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2009). Qualitative content analysis supports the goals of an exploratory study because it provides flexibility in analysis and the researcher is able to focus on intangible meanings that would likely not be identified in a quantitative setting (Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2009). The analysis of this study began with a focus on the apparently most relevant findings, based on findings from literature research. The main focus is on success factors in the research context and the phenomena and observations around them.

4.5 Reliability of the Results

Interviews are quite more direct and personal in nature. To gain reliable results or responses there is need of trust and credibility of the individual being interviewed (McDougall, 2000). The researcher has thoroughly confirmed the location of the 20 people interviewed and 10 are based in Finland while the other 10 are based in the United States of America. The reliability is strengthened by availability of government data online in order to verify some of the responses from the people interviewed. There is also data online from credible researchers that have been gathering statistics for years and their results have been relied on by other scholars. The research has a comparison of two countries which strengthens the results as it is gathering facts from reliable sources and gives a clearer picture of the gaps in the topic in discussion so as to come up with solutions. The reliability of the results is fulfilled by having the reference table, which is presented at the end of this study, and having the interview transcripts in one database. Although the data is not public, it can be obtained from the researcher.

5 Data Presentation and Analysis

The chapter presents the findings of the research, review of the current statistics of Finland and USA in the employee wellbeing sector and also the analysis of the results. This is going to be done through the comparison of labour laws of each country and how they rank in the world as well as their employee wellbeing plan, a mapping of what comprises of employee wellbeing today and a comprehensive description of the importance of employee wellbeing to business success.

5.1 Finnish Business Environment

According to Business Finland, Finland is a small country with a transparent government, state institutions that are effective and an independent judicial system will clear and enforced laws. The BMI research has indicated that in the forecast of the years between in the next 4 to 5 years, Finland will likely be one of the most politically stable countries in the world. It is highly industrialized, knowledge-based, and very innovative country which is centralized on free trade and globally open to investments. Finnish corporate tax is among the lowest in Europe. The infrastructure as of 2018 by the Global Competitiveness Report, at the Switzerland Economic Forum, Finland had a 6.1 out of 7 making it one of the highest. In 2019, in the Economic forum, Finland was second country to have the most skilled work force in the world in terms of education, wellbeing and employment. Finally, Finland is part of the top 10 countries with patented innovations (Business Finland).

5.2 USA Business Environment

According to Santander Trade (2022), the USA has the largest economy in the world. However, in the most recent years the economy is facing challenges from

obsolete infrastructure and rising inequality. The USA has financial flexibility as they own one of the most powerful currencies, the US dollar (US\$), which has been rising in value following the change in global monetary policy during 2022. The country is highly industrialized with respect to the use of modern technology. It is the third in the world in the production of oil. Most of the employment sector comprises service providers compared to the industrial and agriculture sectors. The USA ranks number 20 in the Economic Freedom and 7th best business environment globally (Santander Trade, 2022).

5.3 Comparison of Finnish and USA Rankings

Table 5.1: Employee Wellbeing differences in Finland and USA

	Finland	USA
Universal Health Care	Yes	No
Paid sick leave	Yes (mandatory)	According to contract
Annual Leave benefits	Yes (mandatory)	According to contract
Average working hours weekly (max)	40hrs	40hrs
Average wage monthly (max)	3,758€	US\$4,479
Social Security Insurance	Contributions from salary	No
Wellness programs	Public and private sector	Mostly private sector
Overtime	According to contract	According to contract

Table 5.1 gives an overview of what each country offers its employees. The One Brief (2014) released some of the statistics of how both countries rank. However, the information may be quite obsolete hence the need to enhance reliability by making use of the work of other researchers online. Gilbert (2022) provided a comprehensive outline of how the Finnish business environment as a whole supports its employees both according to company guidelines and contract law in Finland. As a resident in Finland and employed in any firm, one is entitled to social security which includes health care insurance, and Finland offers affordable health care to all residents (Gilbert 2022). This differs from the USA as health care is not subsidised and quite expensive. Companies especially in the private sector are the ones that offer wellness programs to approximately 43% of the employed in the private industry (U.S. Department of Labour, 2022).

5.4 Interview Results

In this section, the results of the interview will be presented. In the following figures, tables and diagrams, the author has compiled their findings from the interview according to the responses. The responses are grouped mainly between the countries Finland and USA. The results from the interview provide evidence of how people in different countries and industries are support on their wellbeing in their organizations. The interview questions were as follows:

1. *In which country do they work in?*
2. *In what industry/ work line they are in?*
3. *Home or office or hybrid place of work?*
4. *Are they frontline workers or in the management or owner/ entrepreneur of the business?*
5. *What are the employee benefits and perks they receive from the business?*
6. *During working in the office, what are the most favourable things you look forward to that are provided by the company?*
7. *What are the issues that make you feel like not going to work on certain days and every other day?*
8. *How well are you supported by the management or direct superiors?*

9. *How efficient or productive are you at work with your current state of being?*
10. *What changes do you hope to get for supporting your wellbeing at work?*
11. *Would the company you work for do better in terms of success with these changes?*
12. *Job satisfaction on a scale of 1-5. 1= not satisfied 5= highly satisfied*
13. *Organizational culture on a scale of 1-5. 1= poor organizational culture, 5= excellent organizational culture*
14. *Free comment on how you view your overall employment experience*

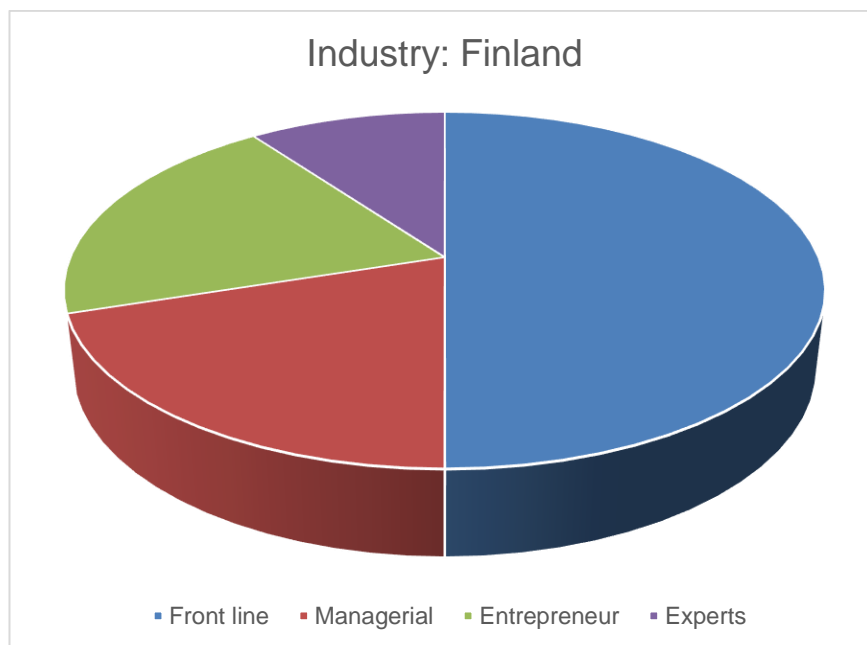


Fig 5.1: Industry Categories of Finland

The above **Fig 5.1** shows the industries in which the interviewed persons from Finland work in. 10 respondents work in the frontline, that includes nurses, restaurant workers and cleaners. Those in managerial positions only were 4 of the respondents. There were 2 experts among the responders and lastly 4 are entrepreneurs.

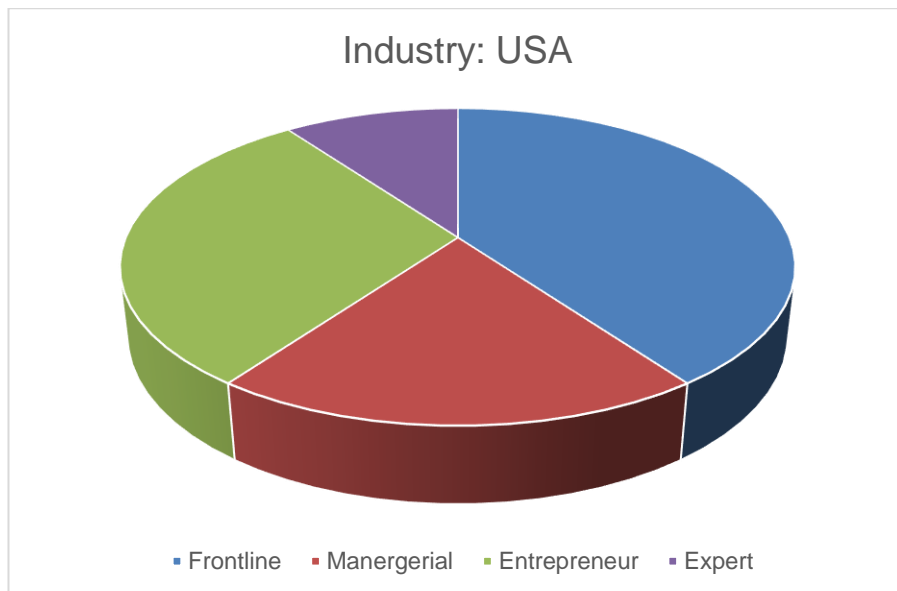


Fig 5.2: Industry Categories of USA

Fig 5.2 shows the how the respondents are spread in the industry chain of USA. There were 8 frontline employees of the respondents which consists of service providers, nurses, factory workers. 4 of the respondents were in managerial positions. 2 were experts and 6 of the respondents were entrepreneurs.



Fig 5.3: Place of work for employees in Finland & USA

The above chart **Fig 5. 3** gives an overview of place of work of the respondents. Those who work from home were 5 and most of them were either service providers or experts. 13 are office workers as their line of work is more frontline which includes nursing, restaurant work, production workers and customer service. Lastly, 2 of the respondents do hybrid work and mainly the entrepreneurs have the opportunity to work from either home or in the office.

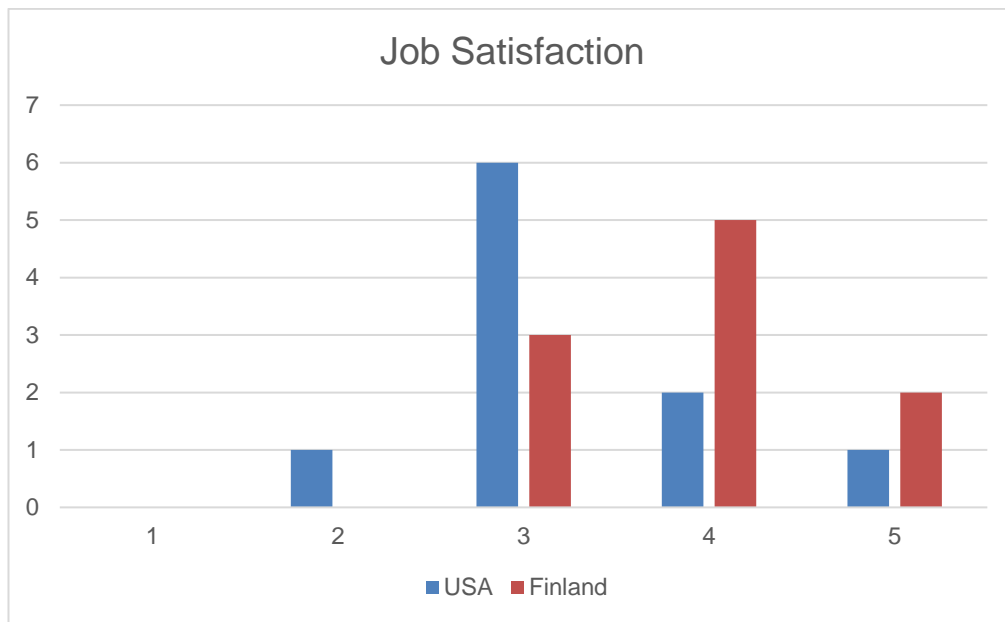


Fig 5.4: Job Satisfaction evaluations

Job satisfaction of the respondents in their overall evaluation from 1-5, 1= not satisfied and 5= highly satisfied, has been presented above in **Fig 5.4**. Overall, among all respondents from both countries, none of them were completely dissatisfied with their job. One respondent from the USA gave a score of two which was below the average of the respondents. Most respondents from the USA gave 3 as a score for their level of job satisfaction while most respondents gave a score of 4. The score 5 was not much chosen in response, and only those in the managerial positions were more satisfied with their job than frontline workers.

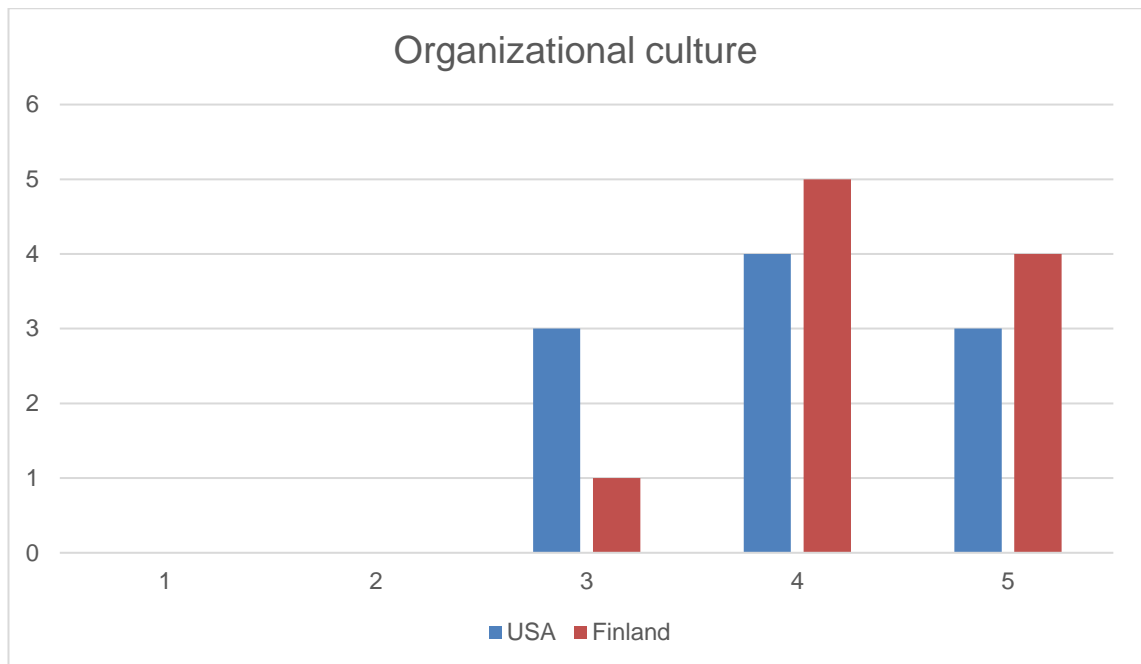


Fig 5.5: Organizational culture

The respondents rated the organizational cultures in their companies from 1-5, where 1= poor organizational culture and 5= excellent organizational culture. All respondents were quite pleased with organizational culture as all respondents gave a score of 3 and above as depicted in the above **Fig 5.5**. Most respondents applauded the companies or organizations they work for especially due to the current efforts of being more diverse and promotion of equality all around the globe.

Table 5.2: Employee perks and benefits

Finland's Employees	USA's Employees
Occupational Health Care	Health Insurance
Dental care	Gym and wellness programs
Gym and wellness programs discounts	Clothing and cosmetic discounts
Restaurant, hotel, and travel discounts	Maternity leave (only with health insurance)
Office snacks, tea, coffee and drinks	Hotel and travel discounts
Team building sports, outings and parties	
Sick leave benefits	
Maternity & Paternity leave	

Table 5.2 is an overview of the kind of benefits received by the respondents in their respective countries, that is, Finland and USA. As shown above there are similarities in the benefits they receive and may differ according to the laws and conditions of each labour market. However, in the author's observation, it is evident that the Finnish working environment offers more in benefits than in the USA especially considering the conditions in which they are offered.

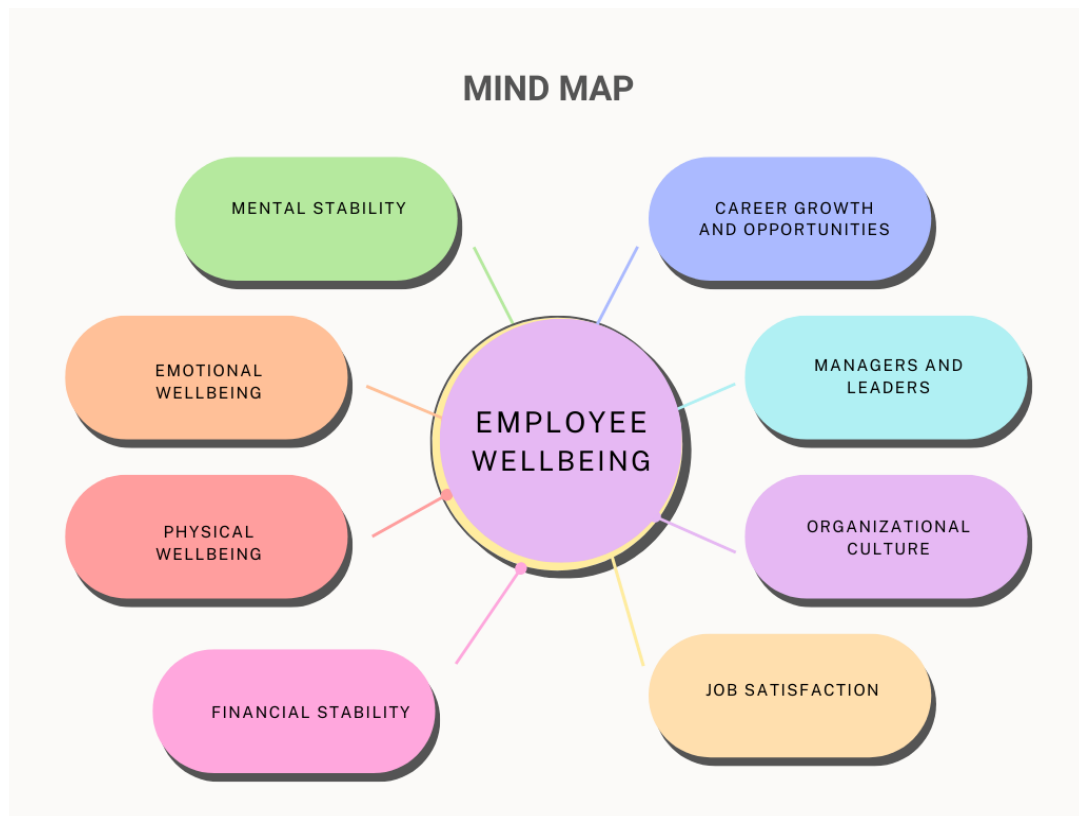


Fig 5.6: Compilation of interviewees' factors that improve their wellbeing at work.

The above **Fig 5.6** is a compilation of the points raised during the interviews and they have been presented as a mind map showing how they feed into employee wellbeing. The respondents outlined the factors that contribute to their wellbeing as employees in an organization. They also collectively sited how their wellbeing affect their level of productivity and how efficient they can be. The author has combined the factors and presented them in the above mind map **Fig 5.6**.

All the respondents mentioned that they look forward to a clean working environment and having everything organised in the working place. 65% of the respondents noted how they look forward to having kind and friendly working colleagues and 90% hope that their manager is kind and patient as well as ready to assist and communicate with them, at least a kind greeting. 74.4% of the respondents mentioned looking forward to office snacks for example coffee, cookies or cake, and juice in some instances.

30% of the respondents in Finland and 25% of the respondents in USA reported not feeling like going to work on a daily basis due to the either manager's communication or high expectations to complete certain tasks which may deem impossible for some of them. 60% of Finnish respondents and 80% of USA respondents also reported of having days they wish they would not go to work, sometimes due to workload or having particular individuals as a work mate for that shift. 40% of the respondents in Finland 30% of the respondents in the USA also mentioned that sometimes feel like not attending work just from general tiredness.

As for support from management 40% in Finland and 50% of the in the USA respondents felt that there has been receiving adequate support from their managers were as 60% and 50% of the respondents from Finland and USA respectively of them feel there is need from their managers to improve on how they relate with them concerning work matters. 20% of the respondents in Finland reported to be very less productive as compared to 25% of the respondents in the USA in their present state of wellbeing at the time of the interview due to work stressors and less employee wellbeing support. 70% of the respondents in Finland while 65% of the respondents in the USA reported to be moderately productive and that there is room for improvement if they receive adequate support to their wellbeing at work. However, 20% of the respondents in Finland and 30% of the respondents in USA feel highly productive as they are receiving the support, they need to support their wellbeing at work. The same respondents from the immediate text above also reported how successful the companies they work for are due to the level at which employees in their company are. Most of the respondents

reported that there are issues that need to be addressed to improve the success of their organisations, though they are already doing well on success, but more could be done.

Contributions from the respondents have resulted in the following suggestions of how their companies could do better. Firstly, they hope to get support to be able to handle childcare when they are at work, for example, subsidies for day care fees or discounts from professional babysitters. In parts of the USA, the respondents hoped for more support in health care and sick leave benefits as well as paid paternal leaves after having a new-born child. The understanding of management that training is essential and different people grasp certain skills in a longer time than others. Team building activities were mentioned as way to foster good relationships among co-workers and managers together.

6 Conclusion

Employee wellbeing has become a much-discussed topic all over the globe and most organizations are working towards improving their culture and conduct as well as what they offer to support the wellbeing of their employees. This has been shown through outlining the role of employees in an organization and human capital is already an essential when considering the operations of the business. The lack of human capital highly affects productivity and therefore hinders the day-to-day operations in the business. Companies have to come up with ways to promote employee wellbeing and some of them include health support, managerial support, salaries, improving work culture and other small aspects that support the wellbeing of an individual at work in order to increase productivity, hence contributing to the success of a business.

Nevertheless, there are other factors that contribute to business success. Investments, infrastructure, equipment, and technology also contribute to business success. These aforementioned do also play a huge role in a business and most may not be ignored.

In a nutshell, from the evidence recovered from the study, employee wellbeing is important to business success as employees are more prone to be more engaged in the business activities and become more productive when they are supported. The support may come through health insurance, a friendly and inclusive organizational culture, effective communication or having room for opportunities and growth. For a business to be run there is always need for human capital hence ensuring the wellbeing of every employee as much as possible improves and highly supports business success.

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