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The Impact of Employee Silence on Healthcare and Wellbeing in Sustainable Communities

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ABSTRACT-

In the pursuit of healthcare excellence and holistic well-being within sustainable communities, the phenomenon of employee silence emerges as a crucial yet understudied factor. This research paper undertakes an in-depth exploration of employee silence within the context of healthcare and well-being initiatives in sustainable communities. Employee silence, the withholding of critical information, concerns, or innovative ideas by employees, presents a unique challenge and opportunity within the framework of sustainable community development. This silence can impact the quality of healthcare services, the effectiveness of well-being programs, and ultimately, the resilience and vitality of these communities. This paper delves into the multifaceted dimensions of employee silence, examining its causes and implications for healthcare and well-being outcomes in sustainable communities. Furthermore, this research paper unveils evidence-based strategies and interventions aimed at breaking the silence barrier. It highlights the significance of fostering a culture of psychological safety, employee engagement, and participatory decision-making as essential tools in promoting open communication and innovation within healthcare and well-being initiatives. By acknowledging and addressing employee silence as an integral component of sustainable community development, these communities can embark on a journey toward not only providing equitable and accessible healthcare but also fostering a culture of well-being that resonates with the heartbeats of their employees and residents alike. In doing so, they can cultivate a future where health and well-being are sustainable and inclusive for all.

Keywords-Employee Silence; Healthcare; Sustainable Community

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare, particularly hospitals, is recognized as among the most dynamic industries in India and globally, and working in such an area may be highly stressful. The healthcare industry offers numerous opportunities, but it also presents numerous challenges. Among the biggest service sectors, it faces many difficulties, such as excessive patient loads and customer expectations, workplace violence, a scarcity of medical professionals like doctors and nurses, long work hours, Insufficient resources and restricted healthcare availability in rural regions. Working in the healthcare industry, particularly in hospitals, is known to be highly stressful. The healthcare sector is one of the most dynamic in India and the world. The healthcare sector has numerous opportunities, but it also has many challenges. Being one of the biggest service sectors, it faces numerous challenges such as excessive patient loads and expectations from customers, workplace violence, a scarcity of healthcare professionals like doctors and nurses, long work hours, poor infrastructure, and limited access to healthcare services in rural areas. As a result of the expectation that healthcare professionals will freely and fearlessly voice their thoughts and opinions, mistakes and risks do happen.

These techniques are undesirable since they could jeopardize the patient's health as well as impair their motivation and sense of fulfillment at work (Vogus, Weick, and Sutcliffe, 2010). Good decision-making is hampered by a lack of ideas, which increases the risk of hospital injuries brought on by medical mistakes. Therefore, staff silence may be a hidden danger to the well-being of patients (Mrayyan, Shishani, & Al-Faouri, 2007).

Generally speaking, modern companies want their employees to voice their opinions, understand challenges encountered at work, not be afraid to share their knowledge and experiences and stand up for both the company's and their own values (Liu, Wu, and Ma, 2009). It is anticipated that fulfilling those requirements will contribute to the organization's success in this way. In actuality, workers in every company have suggestions for how to make their organizations better. While some employees voice their feelings and opinions, many would rather keep quiet, which keeps important ideas from being discussed and ultimately hinders the growth of the company. Employee silence is a situation that is extremely detrimental to the company and increases employee dissatisfaction, tardiness, and attrition (Morrison and Milliken, 2000).

Workplace silence is a collective action influenced by a number of organizational, cultural, and individual factors. There are a number of negative consequences of workplace silence for both individuals and organizations. Employee silence is one of the biggest obstacles to organizational development and change (Yildiz, 2013). Because of their silence, businesses miss out on a great opportunity to learn about the innovative ideas coming

from their employees (Hischrman, 1970). Employee silence inhibits the adoption of sound management practices, but it also keeps mistakes and problems from coming to light and getting fixed (Miller, 1972). Errors and inefficiencies may become irreversible without the proper feedback mechanism in place, which could have even greater detrimental effects (Milliken and Morrison, 2003).

Employee silence is a sort of conduct in which workers choose not to talk, according to Nafei (2016). To avoid negative outcomes, employees would rather remain mute and refrain from voicing their opinions within the firm. Karriker and Williams (2009) centered on the idea of organizational justice, characterizing it as just, fair, and impartial behavior attained by workers performing their duties in any company, and asserting that this fairness in treatment contributes significantly to workers' performance.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To investigate the phenomena of employee silence about sustainable community health and well-being activities.

2. To investigate the reasons behind employee quiet and how it affects health care, wellness initiatives, and the resilience of sustainable communities as a whole.

3. To determine evidence-based tactics and interventions that can be used to break through the barrier of silence and encourage Candor, creativity, and staff involvement in health and wellness programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

Scheepers et al. (2019) state that improving physicians' comprehension of their emotions can help them develop self-regulation of their conduct. Healthcare professionals' emotional wellness is essential to their personal and professional development. Good patient care requires medical professionals to have a positive emotional state because they need to be able to listen to and empathize with patients' anxieties and upset emotions. Better patient safety performance is encouraged by the well-being of medical professionals (e.g., medical mistakes). A comprehensive examination examining the mental health of remote workers during the COVID-19 pandemic was carried out by Pant and Agarwal (2020). Although views among workers are almost positive, they differ in terms of pessimism, rage, and loneliness. A study by French, Plessis, and Scrooby (2011) examined the impact of the professional environment on the mental health and coping strategies of nurses. Semi-structured talks were employed to collect information from the nursing personnel. The study's conclusions showed that there were both good and bad experiences for nursing practitioners. In order to deliver exceptional patient care, nurses put their work, morals, and team spirit first. Chana (2015) studied the relationship between the emotional health of nurses, their compassionate approach to patients, and their productivity at work. In a survey, data was gathered via questionnaires. The study's findings showed a strong relationship between workers' emotional health and their overall compassionate attitude toward patients as well as their productivity. The study concluded that health systems should prioritize improving the mental health of their staff due to the influence on patient care.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN HOSPITALS/HEALTHCARE

Emotional well-being is defined as having the ability to conveniently and effectively operate in addition to having the capability to appropriately understand, accept, and display one's emotions as well as the ability to acknowledge personal limitations (Kozier et al., 2000). (Smeltzer & Bare 2004). The mental health of healthcare professionals in the face of a growing likelihood of needing to use a multiskilled approach in emotionally taxing work environments. It is challenging for healthcare experts to find work in the Indian healthcare system. Issues include understaffing, inadequate training, hospital overcrowding, poor medical administration, a lack of supervisory support, long work hours, and an overload of tasks (Aucamp, 2003; Hall 2004). Such problems are exacerbated and the strain on healthcare personnel is increased by the limited intake of new nurses and an increase in the number of patients with extreme poverty (Subedar 2005). These problems mean that healthcare professionals—especially nurses working in hospital settings—must do multi-skill tasks daily. In other words, they are expected to perform tasks outside their work's purview and for which they did not receive formal training.

Healthcare workers may lack opportunities for open communication, leading to a tendency to stay mute. This can hurt the workers' emotional health (Adamovich et al. 1996; French, Plessis, and Scrooby, 2011).

EMPLOYEE SILENCE

Continuous advancement in employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities is highly valued by modern management. It inspires employees to be enthusiastic about their work, meet customer expectations, and work toward the success of the company in the future. It also motivates them to speak freely, share ideas, and take initiative. Workers are urged to speak candidly about their thoughts and opinions and to have faith in them. This is essential to the survival and expansion of a company's competitive advantage. Concerns about their companies' inconsistent promotion of open communication, transparency, and knowledge exchange have been voiced by a number of employees. Because of this, employees could be reluctant to voice their ideas

and opinions in public (Brinsfield, 2012; Yalçn & Baykal, 2012). Employee silence has been described by (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) as a phenomenon marked by a strong urge to repress important information, ideas, or proposals regarding potential organizational challenges and concerns.

FORMS OF EMPLOYEE SILENCE

In their research, a number of academics have divided silent conduct into various categories. The following is a description of the three categories of employee quiet that this study's research framework used.

1.Acquiescent silence: This occurs when workers believe that speaking up will be pointless and ineffectual (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Employees may behave silently, for instance, if they conceal information about a potentially dangerous work environment out of concern for the consequences or because their employer doesn't think the issue will be handled.

2.Defensive silence: This occurs when someone purposefully withholds information to prevent negative outcomes (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Being defensively silent is proactive; it involves weighing other options and wanting to avoid unfavorable outcomes. For instance, a worker may purposefully conceal information about a senior colleague engaging in unethical behavior or deceptive business practices if they fear repercussions (such as termination or lack of opportunity for promotion).

3.Pro-social silence: Pro-social silence is defined as withholding information for the benefit of another person out of concern for other people. Pro-social silence is a term used to describe this proactive conduct (Knoll and Van Dick, 2013).

Employees are strongly motivated to remain quiet about their coworkers' mistakes to protect their social network or to avoid embarrassing themselves, according to Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003).

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION:

To promote healthcare excellence and holistic well-being in sustainable communities, it is important to recognize and address employee silence. The study's findings highlight the negative effects of employee silence on both individuals and organizations, including decreased job satisfaction, reduced innovation, and decreased organizational performance. The study proposes that to counteract this, it is crucial to cultivate a culture of psychological safety, employee engagement, and participatory decision-making. This will encourage candid communication and innovation in healthcare and well-being initiatives, which will ultimately improve healthcare services, programs, and sustainable communities' overall resilience.

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