

## THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AND RETENTION

**Erna Herlina, Barzalius Akbar, Raden Suryandi Buwono Cokro,  
Garin Giffary Hartanto**

PLN (Persero) Pusdiklat UPDL Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: [eherlina20@gmail.com](mailto:eherlina20@gmail.com)

### *Abstract*

*This study aims to analyze the relationship between employee wellness programs and employee productivity and retention levels. Through the literature review method, this study collects and reviews various literature from reputable working paper sources, book chapters, and indexed journal articles. The results of the analysis showed that well-being programs that supported physical, psychological, and work-life balance significantly increased motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction. The study also supports that well-being drives employee retention by reducing burnout and increasing employee engagement and commitment to the organization. The implications of these results recommend the implementation of a comprehensive wellbeing program as an effective strategy in supporting productivity and retaining a talented workforce, so that companies can create a sustainable and competitive work environment*

**Keywords :** *Productivity, Retention, Turnover, Welfare*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Employee productivity has an important role in supporting the success of the organization. In the midst of technology-based industrial transformation, employee productivity is a key factor in improving organizational efficiency and competitiveness (Cresnar & Nedelko, 2017). Higher labor productivity ensures that resources, including time, capital, and materials, are used more efficiently, resulting in better outputs with equal or fewer inputs (Isham et al., 2021). This is important to increase the company's competitive advantage in the market. At the macro level, labor productivity contributes to economic growth by improving the way the economy distributes and uses resources, thereby increasing economic output and overall living standards (Nakamura et al., 2018). In addition to productivity, another important thing of an employee for an organization is employee retention. Employee retention has an important role to play in the sustainability and success of the company. First, high retention reduces expensive hiring and training costs. Whenever an employee leaves the company, the organization must invest time and resources in finding and training a replacement, which can interfere with overall productivity (Génesis et al., 2022). In addition, good employee retention improves team stability and supports efficient knowledge transfer. Employees who stay with the company in the long run will have a deep understanding of the organization's culture, processes, and goals, which increases their productivity and quality of work. This stability allows the team to work more effectively without the distraction of frequent personnel turnover (Srivastava, 2004). Retention also contributes to increased motivation and engagement. Employees who feel valued and have a clear career development path tend to be more motivated and engaged in their work, which has a positive impact on job satisfaction and overall team performance (Schmitt, 2024)

Employee productivity and retention also influence each other in the context of the organization. Research shows that high employee retention is often associated with increased

productivity, as loyal and committed employees generally have a deep understanding of organizational roles and processes (Winne et al., 2018). This condition results in more effective and efficient performance, as their knowledge and skills have developed through experience in the Company. On the other hand, high turnover has the potential to disrupt organizational productivity due to the need to recruit, train, and adjust new employees, which drains the Company's resources and time (Al-suraihi et al., 2021). Thus, an effective employee retention strategy not only retains a talented workforce but also supports the growth and sustainability of the company by creating a stable and productive work environment.

Companies and organizations are increasingly realizing the importance of employee productivity and retention as key factors for long-term success. This awareness encourages companies to develop programs as an effort to increase employee productivity and retention. The program often focuses on employee well-being, training, and engagement. Empirical results show that various welfare programs can increase employee productivity and employee retention. According to Kahn (1990), programs that pay attention to psychological conditions such as security, meaning, and availability can increase employee engagement, which in turn increases productivity and reduces turnover. The results of the study are reinforced by the study by Lyubykh et al. (2022), which also showed that well-being programs that include psychological and physical support, such as work-life balance policies and regular work breaks, play a significant role in reducing burnout rates and increasing productivity. The program has also been shown to improve retention by encouraging higher engagement and job satisfaction among employees.

The results of the research by Al Nahyan et al. (2023) state the same thing where policies that support employee welfare can increase employee loyalty and reduce the intention to leave the Company. Well-being also involves the well-being factor of positive interpersonal relationships, which directly affects job satisfaction and employee motivation to stay in the organization (Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Speicher & Francis, 2023).

This study aims to analyze the relationship between employee welfare programs and employee productivity and retention or turnover through a literature review method. By reviewing a variety of related literature, this study will explore how improved employee well-being through specialized programs can contribute to increased productivity and reduced turnover. This review is expected to provide insight into the effectiveness of welfare programs in retaining employees and optimizing performance, so that it becomes the basis for the development of more strategic policies in human resource management.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this article is a *literature review*, which aims to examine the relationship between employee welfare programs and job productivity and retention. The review collects and analyzes a wide range of relevant literature, including scientific articles from reputable journals and reference books that address the topics of employee well-being, productivity, and retention. The selected sources come from working papers, book chapters, and scientific articles published and indexed by reputable databases, such as Scopus, Scindirect, Emerald, MDPI, and Google Scholar, as well as various books that comprehensively outline the basic concepts and implementation of welfare programs in various industry sectors. Selected articles are critically analyzed to identify key findings, methodologies, and conclusions that support or challenge the relationship between well-being programs and employee productivity and retention.

### 3. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **The Relationship between Well-Being and Employee Productivity**

Many studies have shown that employee wellbeing programs have a significant relationship with employee productivity. Employee well-being can affect productivity and retention through several mechanisms, including increased motivation, reduced stress, increased employee engagement, and increased job satisfaction (Bakker et al., 2011; Hakanen et al., 2006). A good wellbeing program can also create a positive work environment, which supports better collaboration and communication between employees (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

*First*, increasing employee motivation. Employee welfare has many dimensions, including moral aspects that include feelings, attachment, and moral commitment to the organization. The research of William et al. (2016) highlights that moral well-being plays an important role in improving the quality of life of individuals. This study shows that the integration of moral values in daily life can improve subjective well-being and provide a deeper meaning to life. This condition provides intrinsic motivation for employees to be more involved in their work, which ultimately increases their productivity (Sarwani, 2024). Welfare program schemes that have been proven to improve employee morale and motivation, such as health benefits and conducive working conditions (Patro, 2016).

Another dimension of well-being is psychological. Psychological well-being involves employees' subjective experiences, such as cognitive assessments of work and the positive or negative feelings they feel in the context of work (Al Nahyan et al., 2023). Psychological well-being emphasizes the importance of a work environment that facilitates positive emotions, resilience, and moral support (Srivastava, 2004). Based on Kahn (1990) research, emotional and psychological engagement in the workplace is key for employees to feel connected and motivated. Employees who experience high psychological well-being generally have stronger intrinsic motivation, which encourages them to achieve their job goals more efficiently and effectively and strengthens their commitment and motivation towards tasks and responsibilities so as to increase their productivity (Gelencser et al., 2023). Some programs that can support psychological well-being include 1) The provision of counseling services, both individually and in groups, to support employees in dealing with emotional or psychological problems they may be experiencing (Hakim et al., 2023); 2) mental health training that provides skills to manage stress and deal with daily work pressure so that employees can learn ways to reduce stress and anxiety, which ultimately improves their psychological well-being (Kour et al., 2019); 3) Work-life balance, such as work flexibility or adjusted working hours help employees to maintain a balance between personal and work life. It is highly effective for improving psychological satisfaction and well-being, as well as reducing the risk of fatigue (Mohamad & Abidin, 2024).

*Second*, reducing work stress and burnout. Work stress and burnout are often the main inhibitors in productivity (Duygulu et al., 2013). Prolonged stressful conditions can weaken employees' ability to manage stress, contributing to the deterioration of employees' physical and mental health, such as causing anxiety and depression, which in turn can hinder focus and motivation to work optimally (Le et al., 2024). Nevertheless, stress does not necessarily decrease productivity. The concept of "eustress" or positive stress describes a constructive response to a stressor that can improve an individual's motivation, focus, and performance. For example, a study by Fevre et al. (2006) highlighted that eustress can promote increased productivity in the workplace. Similarly, research by (Pluut et al., 2022) developed a measuring tool to differentiate between eustress and distress, emphasizing the importance of understanding these two types of stress in both academic and organizational contexts.

Burnout usually occurs due to prolonged exposure to work stress without adequate recovery, causing employees to feel too physically and emotionally drained (burnout), cynical or unconcerned about their work (depersonalization), and feeling ineffective in carrying out their roles (decreased personal achievement) (Archer et al., 2024). Untreated burnout can decrease productivity, increase absenteeism, and affect mental and physical health employees (Burton et al., 2008). Meanwhile, this decrease in burnout rates helps maintain work focus and motivation, thereby improving employee performance and productivity (Gelencser et al., 2023).

Stress management and mental health support are considered essential to ensure optimal employee performance by maintaining their overall well-being (Le et al., 2024). Well-being allows employees to be better able to handle the demands of high work without experiencing emotional exhaustion, which is often a major factor in burnout (Cresnar & Nedelko, 2017). The implementation of wellness systems, such as a supportive work environment, work-life balance, and mental health support, helps create a healthier work atmosphere, which reduces fatigue and psychological distress in employees (Génesis et al., 2022; Isham et al., 2021). This not only prevents performance degradation due to burnout, but also improves job satisfaction, engagement, and employee efficiency (Harter et al., 2002). Winne et al. (2018) assert that employees who feel better well-being tend to be more resistant to stress, have lower levels of attendance, and show higher engagement in their work, which ultimately improves their efficiency and work results.

Several literatures prove that there are a number of well-being programs that can reduce stress and burnout, namely: 1) psychological flexibility training, including the *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy* (ACT) approach, can help employees manage work stress more effectively and increase their resilience to situations that trigger burnout (Archer et al., 2024).; 2) the implementation of well-being strategies that involve the involvement of nature, such as office design that incorporates natural elements, can significantly lower work stress and improve employee mental health (Sadick & Kamardeen, 2020); 3) improved mental and emotional well-being which has been shown to reduce work stress and burnout (Baker & Kim, 2020); 4) well-being facilities and supportive job design, contributing to increased employee motivation and job satisfaction, which helps them handle work stress more effectively and reduce the risk of emotional exhaustion (Alam et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2023); 5) social and recreational activities. Activities such as meetings, outings, or team building can strengthen relationships between employees and create a sense of belonging. This helps to improve emotional bonding between teams as well as provide a sense of psychological support (Hakim et al., 2023); Improving employees' physical and mental health through wellbeing programs can reduce stress and increase energy, which in turn increases productivity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017); 6) A healthy and safe work environment, including good ergonomics and work flexibility policies, contributes to the physical and mental well-being of employees. This is important to prevent burnout and increase motivation (Kattenbach et al., 2010).

*Third*, employee involvement. High work engagement acts as a trigger for employees to be more committed, enthusiastic, and willing to contribute more optimally to their tasks and maintain the quality of their work, which ultimately increases productivity (Schmitt, 2024). The same opinion was conveyed by Al-suraihi et al. (2021) and Lyubykh et al. (2022) that this involvement not only strengthens their loyalty and commitment to the organization, but also encourages productivity because employees are more focused and passionate in carrying out their duties. When employees feel well-off, whether psychologically, physically, or socially, they tend to be more engaged in their work (Fabio & Kenny, 2019). Thus, investment in employee well-being strengthens work engagement so as to support the achievement of higher productivity and sustainable long-term performance for the Company (Bakker & Demerouti,

2017; Wei et al., 2020). Specifically, Kundi et al. (2021) stated that the psychological well-being of employees plays an important role in increasing affective commitment, which in turn improves work performance. Wellbeing programs, such as health facilities, a supportive work environment, and work-life balance, play an important role in menciptakan suasana kerja yang kondusif bagi karyawan untuk berkontribusi secara optimal (Chen et al., 2023).

*Fourth*, increase job satisfaction. High job satisfaction encourages employees to give their best performance (Lee & Kim, 2023). This happens because employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to have higher motivation and engagement. The results of a study by Kattenbach et al. (2010) show that job satisfaction is positively related to intrinsic motivation, which encourages employees to work more efficiently and productively.

Employee well-being includes various dimensions that can increase job satisfaction. 1) psychological well-being. Psychological well-being, which includes positive feelings and life satisfaction, plays an important role in improving job satisfaction. A study by Kundi et al. (2021) shows that psychological well-being has a positive influence on employees' affective commitment, which in turn improves work performance; 2) work-life *balance*. An employee's ability to balance the demands of work and personal life contributes significantly to job satisfaction. Research by Diamantidis & Chatzoglou (2018) found that working from home can improve work-life balance and reduce stress, which ultimately increases job satisfaction; 3) a healthy and safe work environment. A work environment that supports employees' physical and mental health can increase job satisfaction. A study by Kain & Jex (2015) shows that a safe work environment and social support in the workplace contribute to employee well-being, which has a positive impact on job satisfaction; and 4) career development and growth. Kundi et al. (2021) stated that continuous career development helps meet employees' psychological needs, such as the need for achievement and recognition, which has a direct impact on their well-being. In addition, Bocciardi et al. (2017) highlighted that career adaptability, which is affected by career development, contributes to employee well-being. Employees who have high career adaptability tend to be better able to face changes and challenges at work, which improves their well-being and, ultimately, job satisfaction (Bocciardi et al., 2017).

*Fifth*, better collaboration and communication. Effective collaboration and communication within an organization are essential to increase employee productivity. A study by Schipper et al. (2015) highlights that team reflection and knowledge sharing collectively can encourage individual innovative behavior. In addition, research by Thornhill-Thornhill-Miller et al. (2023) emphasizes the importance of the "4Cs"—creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration—in the context of 21st-century education and work. They highlight that these competencies, especially communication and collaboration, are essential for success in the modern workplace. According to research by Yang et al. (2024), employees' psychological well-being contributes positively to work performance, which is mediated by job satisfaction and trust in superiors. Effective communication between superiors and subordinates regarding job opportunities can increase job success. Thus, employee well-being not only improves individual performance but also fosters a collaborative and communicative work environment, which is essential for organizational innovation and productivity.

### **The Relationship between Wellbeing Programs and Employee Retention**

Employee welfare plays an important role in increasing employee retention through several key mechanisms that are almost the same as the key mechanisms in the relationship between well-being and productivity, namely increased job satisfaction, increased employee engagement, reduced stress and burnout, and increased organizational commitment (Bakker et al., 2011; Lee & Kim, 2023).

*First*, increasing job satisfaction. Westover et al. (2010) identified that job satisfaction has a significant positive relationship with organizational commitment, which is one of the main factors in employee retention. When employees feel satisfied and their needs are met, the tendency to leave the job decreases, as they see value and satisfaction in the role mereka di organisasi. Satisfied employees tend to be more loyal and have a lower desire to leave the organization. This is also evidenced by the research of Harter et al. (2002) who concluded that high employee satisfaction is directly positively correlated with commitment to the organization, which reduces their intention to leave the company. This is mainly because a supportive work environment that fosters well-being increases employees' feelings of emotional attachment and loyalty.

Research that explains that employee welfare affects employee retention because of satisfaction was carried out by Gelencser et al. (2023). Employees who feel that their well-being is taken care of tend to have greater satisfaction in their jobs, which reinforces their commitment to stay within the company in the long run. A study from Isham et al. (2021) shows that the well-being of employees who are awake increases their satisfaction at work, as they feel supported and valued in a work environment that cares about their physical and mental well-being. Likewise, research by Kahn (1990) found that psychological well-being plays a role in increasing employee engagement and satisfaction, which reinforces their commitment to staying in the organization. Furthermore, research by Speicher & Francis (2023) notes that optimal well-being reduces burnout rates and increases job satisfaction, ultimately lowering employees' intention to leave the organization. This confirms that organizations that invest in employee well-being indirectly increase employee retention by creating a conducive work environment and employee satisfaction. Thus, optimal employee well-being not only supports personal well-being, but also promotes higher job satisfaction, which is an important element in retaining employees, reducing turnover, and ensuring the sustainability of human resources in the organization.

Welfare programs that can support job satisfaction include 1) the provision of compensation facilities and the formation of a conducive work environment. Based on research by Alam et al. (2020), the provision of adequate welfare facilities, such as appropriate compensation and supportive working conditions, significantly increases employee satisfaction, as they feel valued and motivated in a supportive environment; 2) health insurance. The program ensures employees have access to necessary healthcare, helping to reduce concerns related to medical costs and improve a sense of security in the workplace (Kundi et al., 2021); 3) wellbeing facilities and supportive job design, contributing to increased employee motivation and job satisfaction, which helps them manage work stress more effectively and reduces the risk of emotional exhaustion (Chen et al., 2023); 4) Career development and training opportunities provided by companies allow employees to improve their skills as well as create satisfaction in feeling appreciated and given the opportunity to grow (Kundi et al., 2021); 5) Social activities, such as company outings and work-life balance programs, help strengthen relationships between employees and create a positive work atmosphere, which is very important for job satisfaction (Kattenbach et al., 2010).

*Second*, increased employee engagement. According to (Bakker et al., 2011), employee engagement is defined as a positive state characterized by energy, dedication, and perseverance, which allows employees to feel more connected and connected to their work. This affects their loyalty to the organization, as emotionally engaged employees feel more committed to staying at work and contributing in a supportive work environment. Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) add that high employee engagement reduces the intention to change jobs because they feel supported by the resources available at work. This condition triggers a strong

sense of belonging and makes employees tend to stay in the organization rather than look for opportunities outside. Al-suraihi et al. (2021) emphasized that when employees feel involved and have an emotional connection to their work, the desire to look for other opportunities decreases, strengthening their loyalty to the organization.

Several empirical results show that well-being has an effect on employee retention through this engagement mechanism. In research by Lee & Kim (2023), employees' psychological and physical well-being was found to be an important factor in increasing their engagement with work. Employees who feel their well-being is assured tend to be more motivated and engaged in their tasks, which increases their commitment to the Company. Research by Hakim et al. (2023) also states wellbeing programs such as work flexibility, health benefits, and comfortable workplace facilities improve employees' physical and psychological well-being, which significantly increases their engagement. Employees who feel cared for by the organization are more likely to be involved in their work, which contributes to the commitment and desire to stay with the Company. Murray & Holmes (2021) It also emphasizes that when employee well-being is maintained through a supportive work environment, such as autonomy and support from superiors, employee engagement increases. Employees who feel emotionally and psychologically engaged are more likely to stay in the organization, reduce turnover, and strengthen workforce sustainability in the company. According to Gelencser et al. (2023), workplace well-being, including factors such as occupational safety and health, plays an important role in increasing employees' emotional attachment to their work. When these well-being are met, employees show greater engagement and tend to stay longer within the company

*Third*, stress reduction and burnout. According to Bautista & Cahigas (2024), with reduced stress, employees feel more comfortable and tend to stay longer in the organization. Burnout, or emotional exhaustion caused by chronic stress, has a significant negative effect on employee loyalty. The study found that employees who experienced burnout tended to feel less motivated and less engaged with their company, so they were more likely to look for other opportunities that offered better well-being (Wen et al., 2020). The research by Al-suraihi et al. (2021) emphasizes that companies that fail to implement measures to manage stress and burnout in the workplace face greater challenges in retaining employees, ultimately leading to increased employee turnover rates and associated costs.

Stress and bournut that interfere with employee retention can be reduced with the wellness programs recommended by previous researchers, including 1) Üngüren et al. (2024) in the results of this study recommend the implementation of welfare programs and social support in the workplace as an important step in retaining employees; 2) Speicher & Francis (2023) recommends managing stress and bournut well, through measures such as stress management training, equitable workload distribution, emotional support from superiors, and providing adequate rest time, help prevent burnout, which is often the leading cause of employees leaving their jobs; 3) Baker & Kim (2020) research on managerial support, in which emotional and procedural support from managers significantly improves employee psychological well-being, which is important for reducing employee turnover.

*Fourth*, increasing organizational commitment. Gelencser et al. (2023) revealed that organizational commitment creates an emotional attachment between employees and the company, so they are more motivated to stay at the company. When employees feel valued and have a strong attachment to the organization's goals, they tend to show high loyalty and have a lower desire to leave the Company (Srivastava, 2004). Factors such as supportive job design and psychological well-being act as mediators, increasing commitment and reducing the intention to change jobs (Chen et al., 2023). Srivastava, (2004) also emphasized the importance of the company's efforts to increase commitment through various strategies, such as effective



internal communication, involvement in decision-making, and the provision of career development opportunities. These efforts significantly strengthen commitment and assist companies in retaining talented talent.

Based on the literature review above, the author will summarize in a simple cycle that describes the ongoing relationship between employee well-being, productivity, and retention.



**Figure 1.** The cycle of ongoing relationships between well-being, productivity, and retention

The cycle shown in figure 1 can be explained that

1. Employee Well-being

According to research by Isham et al. (2021). Employee well-being has a direct impact on productivity. Employees who feel well-being tend to be happier and motivated, which improves their overall performance (Speicher & Francis, 2023).

2. Productivity

High well-being allows employees to work more focused and efficiently. Gelencser et al. (2023) found that the well-being of employees who are maintained is able to increase work productivity, which also strengthens their loyalty to Srivastava Company (2004).

3. Employee Retention

Commitment to employee well-being and productivity has an impact on retention. Research by Hakim et al. (2023) shows that organizations that focus on employee well-being successfully retain talented employees because they feel valued and supported in the workplace.

**4. CONCLUSION**

Based on a literature review from various reputable sources, it can be concluded that employee well-being plays a significant role in creating a positive work environment, where employees feel supported physically, psychologically, and socially. Comprehensive wellbeing programs, which include emotional support, wellness facilities, work-life balance, and career development opportunities, have proven effective in reducing stress and burnout, increasing job satisfaction, and strengthening employee commitment and engagement.

Maintained well-being not only contributes to increased productivity, but also encourages employee loyalty to the organization, thereby reducing turnover rates. Thus, organizations that



invest in employee well-Being has the potential to create a more productive and stable workforce, which supports the sustainability and long-term success of the company. The strategic recommendation of this study is that companies need to integrate wellbeing programs as part of their human resource policies to build a competitive work environment and support employee retention.

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