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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: A PATHWAY TO FLOURISH EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND PRODUCTIVITY

Abstract:

The ability to work in a fast-paced and high-pressure work environment is one of the required skills set by many employers in different industries (Evolve Organic 2018; ME Bank 2018; NetYourJob 2018; NSW Government 2018; Skillforce Recruitment 2018). Some job candidates believe that they are able to cope with such work environment, but in reality, they may be easily triggered by external environment resulting in depression and severe anxiety. Organisations around the world have developed and implemented stress management and intervention programmes to reduce workplace stress; however, studies found that work-related suicide has been increasing in Australia (Reynolds 2017; Routley & Ozanne-Smith 2012), France (Waters 2015), Japan (North 2011), and China (Chan & Ngai 2010).

Positive psychology focuses on how people optimise their strengths and values to flourish their life satisfaction and happiness (Lilienfeld, Lynn, Namy, Woolf, Jamieson, Haslam & Slaughter 2012). Hence, this research aims to critically review how positive psychology is used as a stress prevention and management strategy so as to improve employee well-being and productivity and ultimately work-related suicide. The research outcomes demonstrate that although there were criticisms of the positive psychology (Lazarus 2003), many studies (e.g. Lyubomirsky 2008; Seligman et al. 2005; Sergent & Monfrain 2011) found that the application of positive psychology exercises resulted in the improvements of the research participants' depressive personality styles or no improvement over time. In brief, positive psychology helps employees eliminate negative self-talk or self-critics and change themselves from being pessimistic to optimistic. It also tailors a stress prevention and management strategy to each employee by changing their mindset to effectively prevent and manage their work stress which is one of the causes of work-related suicide.

Keywords:

Positive psychology, work stress, work-related suicide, negative self-talk, stress management and prevention strategies

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