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## **Impact of Employee Assistance Programs (Eap) on Engagement, Workplace Stress, Job Performance, and Learning Development**

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### **Abstract**

The study aimed to determine the direct and indirect effects of employee assistance programs (EAP) on employee engagement levels and how they impact workplace stress, job performance, and staff learning development in an international marketing solutions consulting company. There were 131 participants based in seven countries: Thailand, China, Singapore, Australia, Mexico, the Philippines, and the United States. Statistical analysis was performed by correlation, multiple regression analysis, and Hayes process mediation analysis. A negative correlation was found between workplace stress and employee engagement, as well as between workplace stress and learning development. Strong positive correlations were found between job performance and learning development, employee engagement and learning development, and employee engagement and job performance. Path analysis using multiple regression showed that there were no significant direct effects of EAP participation on either job performance or learning development, but there were significant indirect effects via employee engagement. Hayes process serial mediation analysis supported only the hypothesis that employee engagement was a significant mediator of both job performance and learning development. Workplace stress was not found to be a significant mediator. The findings provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of EAPs and their impact on employee well-being and development in an international context.

Keywords: Employee Assistance Programs, Engagement, Stress, Job Performance, Learning Development

## Introduction

Every organization's success has a direct relationship to the happiness and well-being of its employees. These factors have been internationally recognized and attributed to each company's overall success and prosperity (Attridge, 2009). This study explores the impact of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) on employee engagement, workplace stress, job performance, and learning development. Observations made by the researcher within an international marketing solutions consultancy firm showed that departments where team leaders or managers prioritized employee well-being experienced higher levels of engagement, happiness, and better job performance. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that employee well-being and job satisfaction are key components to organizational effectiveness and success (Attridge, 2009; Atieno & Otsyulah, 2019).

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) in businesses have gained popularity as a way to support staff members with both personal and work-related skills, training, and other concerns. Masi (2011) claims that because various standards are used in different countries, the definition of an employee assistance program (EAP) varies. An Employee Assistance Program can be viewed as a workplace service that benefits every individual in the organization as well as the firm as a whole. Health is not defined only by the fact that one is free from any disease or disability, but one is also living in peace and quiet and surrounded by a good social and physical environment (Edlin & Golanty 2019; Hassan et al., 2022).

The research specifically examines the indirect effects of EAPs among employees who work from diverse countries and offices in Thailand, China, Australia, Singapore, Mexico, Philippines, the United States. The company's success has been due to its people-centric culture, where a high value is put on employee well-being as well as welfare through initiatives like in-house counselling services, internal and external courses, as well as related activities and exercises. This emphasis on employee support and development has not only enhanced job performance but also positioned the firm as a trusted partner in transforming its clients' marketing strategies and operations in multiple countries, as those mentioned above.

### Statement of the Problem

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are growing in popularity as an effective way to help employees deal with personal and work-related issues. EAPs generally provide a range of services such as counselling, mental health support, workshops, and other services to help employees cope with personal or work-related issues. Research on the indirect benefits of EAPs, such as their impact on employee engagement, workplace stress, job performance, and employee learning development; however, is scarce and existing research has produced conflicting results.

Current literature (Bouzikos et al., 2022; Nobrega et al., 2010) revealed consistent findings that support the notion that EAPs have a positive influence on employee productivity. The evidence indicates that EAPs contribute to a reduction in absenteeism, diminished “presenteeism” or workers just going through the motions of their jobs, and enhanced job performance. Furthermore, the utilization of EAP services is associated with increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. These collective findings highlight the pivotal role of EAPs in promoting employees' mental health, addressing personal concerns, and ultimately fostering a more productive work environment; however, these studies focus primarily on direct effects.

This study aimed to fill and bridge the gap as well as enhance understanding and knowledge of how EAPs can support better well-being, engagement, productivity, and learning development by exploring the direct and indirect effects of EAPs on employee engagement, workplace stress, job performance and learning development within an international marketing solutions company operating across multiple countries primarily among young adults in Thailand, China and Australia. This was by using a quantitative research approach that aimed to provide more information on EAPs and shed light on the importance of these initiatives. The findings of this study can add to the body of knowledge already available on EAPs and offer helpful guidance for human resources professionals to effectively implement EAPs in businesses that offer global marketing solutions or how EAPs could work in various business, sectors and cultural contexts.

## **Literature Review**

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) have become an important tool in organizational management and have become critical in enhancing wellbeing, development and productivity; especially in sectors with high-pressure such as consultancy firms.

### **Employee Assistance Programs**

In any organizational environment, it is difficult and unrealistic to think of a life entirely free of any stress denoting that stress cannot be wholly eradicated nor can it be divided into categories like job performance stress, professional role stress, family stress role, personal or social stress. Thus, EAPs aim to address stress in a comprehensive manner within organisations (Ajala & Osunrinde, 2016). Another example of a great component of EAPs is counselling, and it has been found that workplace counselling programs have a great impact in enhancing productivity of employees dealing with personal issues which also help contribute to their long-term well-being which benefits their development in their workplace and help employees work on their health as well as address social issues. (Tuvulla & Byaruhanga, 2017; Onsare, 2022).

Research showed that EAPs influence various factors such as learning development and job performance which have been subject of several research as well as employee engagement and workplace stress. By offering counselling, training, and career development services, EAPs help promote employee learning and development (Aragón-Sánchez et al., 2019) and has also proven to have positive benefits on work performance and decreased absenteeism (Kelloway et al., 2017).

### **Workplace Stress**

Numerous studies have examined human behavior in work contexts and strategies to enhance job satisfaction. While management teams prioritize boosting productivity, their efforts often result in workplace stress, also known as occupational stress, which can hinder employees' overall performance (Secapramana et al., 2020). A study done by Sharar et al. (2012) shows significant insights from the study they conducted on EAP counselling, whose findings indicate how EAPs can positively impact both employee engagement and reduce workplace stress. Daniel's (2019) study indicates the productivity peaking with moderate work pressure and stress diminishes as stress increments. Nearly three billion workers experience significant work stress that impacts their daily performance. To reduce this stress, companies must create a healthy working environment by implementing EAP programs, practicing a culture of prevention, and improving productivity. This, in turn, leads to increased economic growth and improved employee performance (Murali et al., 2017).

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is found to be a major marker of job performance and individual learning ability as well. Several studies have examined the relationship between employee engagement and job performance, most of which have found a positive association. Research studies have found that highly engaged employees had higher job productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), while also making employees more likely to participate in learning and development opportunities and committing to achieving their goals. Saks's (2006) study showed strong evidence that suggests that increasing employee engagement is critical to raising productivity and capacity for learning. The indirect effects of employee engagement on job performance are also notable.

The study by Anitha (2014) highlights the importance of several elements in influencing employee engagement, such as teams, the work environment, and peer relationships. The findings show that these factors significantly impact employee engagement, highlighting the need for businesses to create a positive workplace culture and to form strong relationships with coworkers is of top importance. Additionally, the study showed a positive correlation between worker engagement and output, suggesting that higher levels of engagement are linked to higher levels of output, furthering knowledge of employee

engagement and highlighting how important it is to consider improving performance on both an individual and organizational level.

According to Bakker (2011), there are four reasons why engaged workers tend to have better job performance and work better than the workers who are not as engaged. These include: the good feelings that come with the experience such as happiness and appreciation, better health overall, creation of their own resources and roles and transfer of energy to other people and level of engagement with those around them.

### **Research Objectives**

The research objectives of the study were to investigate the effects of employee assistance programs (EAP) on job performance and learning development mediated by workplace stress and employee engagement in an international marketing solutions consulting firm.

### **Hypotheses**

H1: EAPs have a direct positive impact on job performance.

H2: EAPs have a direct positive impact on learning development.

H3a: EAPs have an indirect positive impact on job performance mediated by a reduction in workplace stress.

H3b: EAPs have an indirect positive impact on job performance mediated by an increase in employee engagement.

H4a: EAPs have an indirect positive impact on learning development mediated by a reduction in workplace stress.

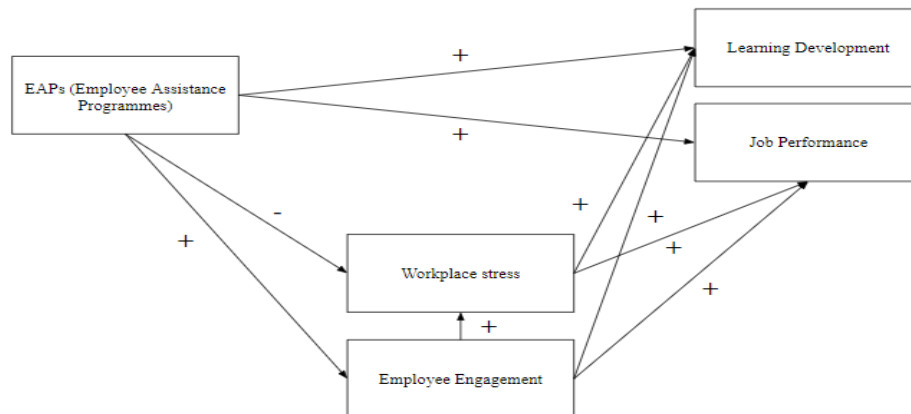
H4b: EAPs have an indirect positive impact on learning development mediated by an increase in employee engagement.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the path analysis indicating the direct and indirect impact of EAPs on employee job performance and learning development mediated by workplace stress and employee engagement.

**Figure 1**

*The conceptual framework of the study shows the direct and indirect influences of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) on Employee Learning Development and Employee Job Performance*



## Methodology

### Research Design and Setting

The study adopted a quantitative correlational path-analytic case study design to examine the impact of employee assistance programs on employee learning development and job performance mediated by workplace stress and engagement level within an international marketing solutions consulting company. It is hypothesized that employee assistance programs have a positive direct influence on employee learning development and job performance. It was further hypothesized that the employee engagement level would have a mediating role in improving learning development and job performance.

### Participants

Convenience sampling technique was employed from different departments and countries, with a minimum of three months of employment with the company. A total of 131 employees participated. From this participant pool, 54.2% were based in Thailand. This was followed by 16.8% of employees from China, 9.9% from Australia, 6.9% from Mexico, the Philippines and Singapore each account for 4.6% of the sample, and the United States had 3.1% of participants. The majority of the employees were young adults, with a lot of them aged between 21 to 35 years old. The required sample size for this study was determined using the statistical program G-power 3.1.9.4 (Faul et al., 2009) which determined 77 participants for the required sample size. However, a sample size of at least 100 was targeted to enhance the

likelihood of finding significant results, resulting in a final sample size of 131.

## **Instruments**

### ***Workplace Stress Scale***

The Work Stress Questionnaire (WSQ), a self-administered questionnaire designed to identify an early indication among individuals at risk because of work related stress leading to sickness was used. The WSQ consists of 21 items, developed by Holmgren et al. (2009); designed to measure four key themes: indistinct organization and conflicts, individual demands and commitment, influence at work, and work to leisure time interference. The scale uses a two-part response where in the first two themes, the respondent first indicates whether that issue is present or not (yes, partly or no) and rates the stressfulness (not stressful, less stressful, stressful, or very stressful). The other two themes are measured with a five-point Likert scale that ranges from yes or always to no or never. The scale's publishers did not provide specific reliability or validity data, but has been previously validated and demonstrated good psychometric properties among women especially in a clinical context and among men through a different study. The test-retest reliability was assessed over a two-week period alongside a face validity assessment by a pilot study, which showed stability through measurements of Relative Position (RP), Relative Concentration (RC) and also the Relative Rank Variance (RV); where the results showed all the items in the scale given except one were considered stable over time, with percentage agreement (PA) ranged from 55% to 98% with a medium of 77%. The results showed satisfactory reliability and face validity, but further research on the psychometric properties is recommended. Overall, the scale exhibited a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 which shows good internal consistency of the questionnaire.

### ***Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Scale***

The Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Scale is a widely used to measure employee engagement in the workplace. It consists of 12 items covering facets such as job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment. A 5-point Likert-type response format, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used to measure the level of employee engagement. Reliability and validity information for the Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Scale have been established through various studies. Harter et al. (2002) examined the psychometric properties of the scale in a large sample of employees from different organizations. The results indicated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.70 to 0.95 for all items. The scale has demonstrated strong construct validity and has been found to correlate positively with measures of job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and other indicators of employee well-being (Harter et al., 2002; Saks, 2006). Overall, the scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 which shows high internal consistency of the scale.

### ***Learning and Development Survey***

The Learning and Development Survey (LDS) was developed by Tones and Pillay (2008). It consists of 49 items that measure learning and development in the workforce. This theory emphasizes human growth and adaptation through interactions between biological processes, behaviors, and environmental factors (Heckhausen & Schultz, 1995; Li & Freund, 2005). The internal consistency analyses to look into the reliability of the Learning and Development Survey (LDS) indicated high reliability across all subscales, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha coefficients under each of the subscales, such as Organisational Opportunities – Learning Climate with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 reinforces the reliability of assessing organizational support for learning and development initiatives. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95 which shows excellent internal consistency of the scale.

### ***Self-Assessment Scale of Job Performance***

This self-report measure was designed to measure employee's perceptions of their job performance, and consists of 10 items using a 5-point Likert scale on aspects such as tasks effectiveness, technical knowledge, taking initiative, and problem-solving. Soares de Azevedo Andrade et al. (2020) study demonstrated strong psychometric properties. The factor loadings ranged from 0.59 to 0.82 ( $M = 0.71$ ), indicating strong correlations between the items and underlying construct of job performance. The Composite Reliability (CR) was 0.91 and the first factor had a Hierarchical Omega of 0.88, further supporting the scale's reliability in measuring the primary dimensions of job performance effectively. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 which shows high internal consistency of the scale.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Ethical approval from the institutional review board was obtained. Then, employees were briefed about the study and invited to participate voluntarily and provided informed consent forms. Data was collected through an on-line survey questionnaire and they were also asked to provide self-reported evaluations of their job performance. They were provided with a list of company external EAP programs, internal EAP programs, technical skills programs, and English classes for business communication that the company had offered and asked how many they had participated in.

### **Data Analysis**

The influence of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) on job performance and learning growth, with workplace stress and employee engagement as mediators were examined. Reliability analysis was carried out using Cronbach's alpha after the demographic analysis to measure the variables of job performance, learning development, workplace stress, and employee engagement.

Correlational analysis identified relationships between workplace stress, employee engagement and job performance. Variables in the conceptual framework were tested using

path analysis through regression models (Figure 2) investigating the direct and indirect consequences of EAP participation on the learning development and job performance of employees through the mediation.

## Results and Discussion

This section reports the findings through the descriptive and inferential statistical procedures employed to analyze the data gathered in order to establish the direct and indirect influences of employee assistance programs, mediated by engagement and workplace stress on employee job performance and learning and development across seven countries in an international marketing solutions consultancy firm.

### Demographic Profile of Participants

Regarding gender distribution, the sample comprised 45.0% females, 50.4% males, 2.3% gender queer individuals, and 2.3% who preferred not to disclose their gender. The age distribution revealed that participants ranged from 21 to 55 years old, with a majority (71.8%) aged between 26 and 35 years. In terms of location, the largest portion of the sample was from Thailand (54.2%), followed by China (16.8%) and Australia (9.9%).

The study also captured the diversity of job roles within the company. The most common roles were campaign developers (33.3%) and campaign consultants (9.1%). When examining tenure, it was found that 50.4% of participants had been with the company for 1-3 years, and 14% had been with the company for 5-10 years. Participation in EAP programs varied, with most participants (37.4%) having joined 3-4 programs. EAP participation was categorized into four levels: Level 1 (1-2 programs), Level 2 (3-5 programs), Level 3 (6-8 programs), and Level 4 (9 or more programs).

Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationships between EAP program participation, workplace stress, employee engagement, learning development, and job performance.

### Correlation Analysis

The results showed a significant positive correlation between EAP program participation and employee engagement. A significant negative correlation was found between workplace stress and employee engagement ( $r = -.36, p < .01$ ), as well as between workplace stress and learning development ( $r = -.28, p < .01$ ). There was a strong positive correlation between employee engagement and learning development ( $r = .76, p < .01$ ), between employee engagement and job performance ( $r = .57, p < .01$ ), and between learning development and job performance ( $r = .70, p < .01$ ).

**Regression Analysis**

For workplace stress, the analysis showed that EAP program participation did not significantly predict workplace stress, and the overall model was not significant. In contrast, EAP program participation was a significant predictor of employee engagement ( $\beta = .21, p = .02$ ), with the model being significant ( $F = 6.11, R^2 = .05$ ). For learning development, employee engagement was a significant predictor ( $\beta = .76, p < .01$ ), whereas EAP program participation and workplace stress were not. This model was significant ( $F = 59.09, R^2 = .58$ ). Finally, in the case of job performance, both employee engagement ( $\beta = .64, p < .01$ ) and workplace stress ( $\beta = .18, p = .02$ ) were significant predictors, while EAP program participation was not. The model was significant ( $F = 23.20, R^2 = .35$ ).

**Table 1**

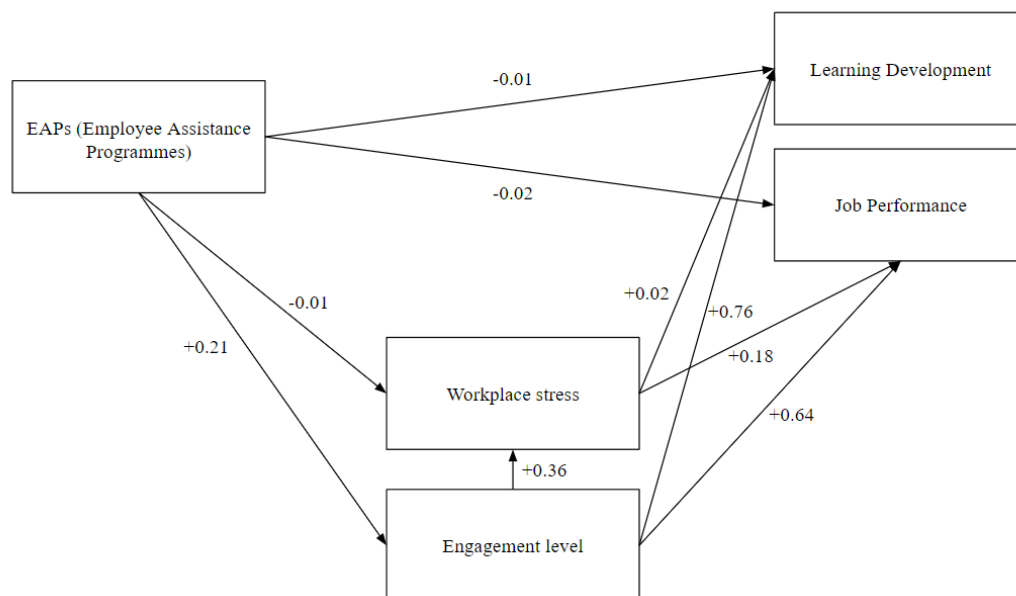
*Correlations between all the variables of the study (N=131)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>EAP program</b>	<b>Workplace Stress</b>	<b>Employee Engagement</b>	<b>Learning Development</b>	<b>Job performance</b>
EAP programs level of participation	1.00				
Workplace Stress	.01	1.00			
Employee Engagement	.21*	-.36**	1.00		
Learning Development	.15	-.28**	.76**	1.00	
Job Performance	.12	-.05	.57**	.70**	1.00

**Note:** \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

**Figure 2**

*Path model of the direct and indirect effect of EAP program level of participation on Learning Development and Job Performance mediated by Employee Engagement and Workplace Stress*



The regression analysis results indicate that employee engagement and workplace stress are significant predictors of job performance. EAP program level of participation is not a significant predictor of job performance. The overall model is significant, suggesting that the predictors explain 35% of the variance in job performance. This indicates that while EAP program participation does not significantly impact job performance, both workplace stress and employee engagement do. Employee engagement emerged as the most significant variable, influencing job performance, learning development, and workplace stress.

**Tests of Significance of the Mediation Hypothesis**

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the magnitude of the direct and indirect influences that EAP level of participation, workplace stress, and employee engagement had on job performance and learning development. The Preacher and Hayes (2008) developed macros for SPSS that allowed the researcher to request tests of total, direct, and specific indirect effects by bootstrapping confidence intervals (CI) at the 95% confidence interval.

Table 2 shows the results of serial mediation analysis of the total effect and direct effect of EAP level on job performance and learning development, as well as the specific indirect effects mediated by employee engagement and workplace stress. The findings reveal that only

employee engagement is a significant mediator of job performance, with a standardized effect size of .1359, and a Z score of 2.209 ( $p < .05$ ). The findings also reveal that only employee engagement is a significant mediator of learning development, with a standardized effect size of .1359, and a Z score of 2.434 ( $p < .05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that the only significant mediator of the indirect effect of EAP level on both employee job performance and learning development is employee engagement.

**Table 2**

*Test of Mediation Hypothesis*

<b>Employee Job Performance</b>					
Total Effect of EAP level on Job Performance					
Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI95%	ULCI95%
.081	.060	1.355	.178 (NS)	-.037	.199
Direct Effect of EAP level on Job Performance					
013	.050	-0.253	.801 (NS)	-.112	-.086
Indirect Effects of EAP level on Job Performance Mediated by Employee Engagement and Workplace Stress					
Mediator		Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Employee Engagement		.136	.062	.021	.257
Workplace Stress	.015	.016	-.011	.050	
<b>Learning Development</b>					
Total Effect of EAP level on Learning Development					
Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI95%	ULCI95%
.0881	.0512	1.700	.092 (NS)	-.0145	.191
Direct Effect of EAP level on Job Performance					
-.0084	.0351	-0.239	.812 (NS)	-.078	.061
Indirect Effects of EAP level on Job Performance Mediated by Employee Engagement and Workplace Stress					
Mediator		Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Employee Engagement	.162	.067	.029	.292	
Workplace Stress	-.001	.007	-.017	.014	

**Notes:** LLCI95% = Lower level 95% Confidence Level; ULCI95% = Upper level 95% Confidence Level; BootSE = Bootstrapped standard estimate; BootLLCI = Bootstrapped Lower Level 95% Confidence Level; BootULCI = Bootstrapped Upper Level 95% Confidence Level

**Findings**

The findings highlight the pivotal role of employee engagement in organizational outcomes. Despite EAP program levels not directly influencing job performance or learning development, they indirectly impacted and influenced job performance through their effects on workplace stress and subsequent influence on employee engagement. Higher engagement levels mitigated stress and bolstered job performance, emphasizing the importance of fostering a supportive work environment conducive to employee engagement. These results provide actionable insights for organizations aiming to enhance employee performance and well-being through targeted interventions in engagement and stress management.

In terms of the research hypotheses, H1 and H2, that EAPs have a direct positive impact on job performance and learning development were not supported. H3a, that EAPs have an indirect positive impact on job performance by reducing workplace stress, was also not supported. However, H3b, that EAPs have an indirect positive impact on job performance mediated by an increase in employee engagement was supported. H4a, that EAPs have an indirect positive impact on learning development mediated by a reduction in workplace stress, was also not supported, but H4b, that EAPs have an indirect positive impact on learning development because they are mediated by an increase in employee engagement was strongly supported. Therefore, the study's findings most importantly showed that employee assistance programs (EAPs) have a positive impact on employment engagement, which highlights the significance of employee engagement as a mediating factor in this study. This was in line with the literature that suggests using an EAP does not instantly have effects on job performance or reduce workplace stress; it does have a significant positive influence on employee engagement, which implies that EAPs may be a valuable long-term investment (Sharar et al., 2012). On the other hand, the correlations between workplace stress and employee engagement as well as between workplace stress and learning development were all found to be negative. These results underscore the critical role of employee engagement in influencing job performance and learning development. While EAP program participation did not directly impact job performance or workplace stress significantly, it showed an indirect effect through enhancing employee engagement.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Various limitations need to be considered. Firstly, the pool of participants chosen for the study was limited as the employees chosen to fill in the survey were from the one single international marketing solutions consulting firm. Although the sample size, 131 responses, was substantial and more than required by the G\*power analysis. The survey's non-mandatory nature due to employee turnover through resignations, terminations, and also layoffs and other company specific contexts also affected the response rates.

The use of the Work Stress Questionnaire (WSQ) with the lack of validity or reliability data from the scale's publishers raises questions about the instrument's robustness. Although studies like Farooq Abbasi (2015) have shown its usefulness in predicting workplace injuries among Egyptian construction workers, the lack of standardized reliability and validity measures limits the certainty with which the stress data can be interpreted in this study. This could be a factor affecting the non-significant relationship between EAPs and workplace stress. Without established reliability and validity, the scale might not have accurately captured the stress levels of the participants, leading to results that do not reflect true workplace stress patterns. As a result, this limitation then also could have affected the overall findings, making it more difficult to draw firm judgments and conclusions regarding how EAPs affect workplace stress. To improve the accuracy of results, future research studies should give priority to using better validated stress measures.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

### Implications

There appears to be a disconnect between EAP participation and job performance. The fact that there is not a discernible direct relationship between EAP participation and job performance could mean that the current programs do not adequately address the issues that employees deal with on a daily basis at work. This may point to the necessity for more specialized programs that directly deal with problems unique to a given work or incorporate objectives relevant to job success.

The way that EAP programs are designed may have significant limitations. Stress management and direct performance improvement are two crucial needs that the EAPs' existing structure could not be adequately meeting. This calls for reassessing the specific services provided under EAPs, with a focus on tailoring initiatives to more effectively handle high-stress situations or issues pertaining to job performance. This research showed that a more holistic strategy that tackles physical, mental, and emotional well-being can have a wider influence on employee engagement and stress levels, especially with the inclusion of wellness programs in addition to EAPs. Future research could examine how wellness initiatives combined with EAPs can result in a more complete and comprehensive system of employee support.

The company's engagement activities have undergone a notable transformation since the study. It is crucial to understand that engagement and learning development strategies are changing since the company launched new engagement-focused initiatives in response to the survey, such as global coffee talk, wellness club, buddy connect, and other learning programs like leadership program, sales bootcamp, and more. The company's engagement tactics can be further refined by doing research on the impact of these new programs, which are likely to lead to a more engaged workforce and potentially leading to better job performance and higher learning development as well.

The results of the study shows that the emphasis should be on the quality of employee assistance programs (EAP) rather than the number of programs that the company offers. More concentrated and in-depth surveys must be conducted for the study of the effects of EAPs on variables in order to fully comprehend and understand their effects. These surveys should be able to evaluate and assess a number of factors including how satisfied employees are with the EAP, how relevant the support is and what concrete advantages they have experienced. A more comprehensive knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the current EAPs will be possible with the collection of thorough feedback which will also offer insightful information for future developments. With this careful planning it should be easier to develop programs that are not only advantageous but also adaptable to the changing demands of the labor market. The timings of the survey have a significant impact on understanding the impact of EAPs. Several recently introduced engagement programs were in place when this study's survey was

conducted. It is possible that these new programs had a major effect on the results.

EAPs include a wide range of services and can be interpreted in various ways depending on the needs of the firm and the specific challenges faced by employees which can include everything from mental health support and counselling services to various development assistance. Given this diversity, it is essential to clearly define what aspects of EAP are being evaluated in any given study. Different components of EAP might have varying degrees of impact on different aspects of employee engagement, learning development, workplace stress and job satisfaction.

EAP is positioned as the main variable in the conceptual framework with job satisfaction and learning development serving as outcome variables and engagement levels and workplace stress serving as mediators. But, according to this research EAP may be better understood as a mediator in and of itself affecting workplace stress and engagement levels which in turn affect job satisfaction and the growth of learning. The researcher can look into how particular EAP components improve employee engagement and lower stress which can help improve job satisfaction and create opportunities for learning and development by redefining EAP as a mediator; which can help clarify the ways in which EAPs can support successful organizational outcomes.

This study has shown that engagement is an important factor as it has a significant impact on stress levels, job satisfaction and overall employee development. Employee engagement may be the most important factor in ensuring that EAPs provide the intended results according to the research. Consequently, it is essential to prioritize improving and increasing engagement through EAPs. Future research can focus comprehending the system behind engagement, the ways in which Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) can cultivate elevated levels of engagement and the consequent effects on workplace efficiency and employee contentment. In the context of employee assistance and development programs engagement should be the main focus of both research and practice due to its crucial role.

## **Conclusion**

It seems that a key area of concentration for organizational results is employee engagement. Employee engagement is crucial to achieving important organizational outcomes, as demonstrated by the strong relationship between employee engagement, learning development, and job performance as well as the mediation analysis showing it is a significant mediator between EAP participation and the two outcome variables. This suggests even more that organizational strategies ought to give priority to programs aimed at enhancing employee engagement.

Workplace stress was a major predictor of job performance even though EAPs did not significantly predict it. This suggests that job performance is directly impacted by an employee's capacity to manage stress. Therefore, in order to maximize the effects of EAPs on performance outcomes, companies should add more stress management related components

into these programs. It is possible that a more accurate measurement of workplace stress would have revealed a stronger correlation between EAPs and workplace stress.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Upon reflection, it can be learned that because there are a broad range of services that EAPs provide, such as counselling services, leadership development training, coaching, and English language improvement courses, it would benefit to have more targeted and specific survey questions that not only focus on what programs and number of programs are joined, but learning more deeply and shifting the focus more on the quality of these programs. Also, through the results it is clear that engagement seemed to be the critically important factor. After the initial survey was sent out, the company had brought about new and more engagement-focused programs that were not included in the options and as part of the EAPs questions in the survey. Hence, it is a noteworthy point that since the results showed great importance on engagement, the information on the new engagement programs, such as Global Coffee talk, Wellness club, Buddy Connect, country gatherings and other global and country specific engagement programs offer the best potential for getting employee engagement. A big group of employees have already joined these since the launch of the programs as they occur either quarterly, monthly, bi-weekly or weekly. Additionally, implementing pre- and post-test assessments may provide insightful viewpoints on the immediate impacts of these programs in terms of worker engagement stress levels and overall job performance.

Various evaluations conducted independently of each program may result in a fragmented perception of the overall impact of the program and may cause employees to respond to way too many surveys at one time. Furthermore, data collection and consistency are complicated when these assessments are used among various teams or departments within the organization. Therefore, in order to produce useful information about program success and employee participation, it is important to put into practice an optimized strategy that minimizes respondent survey load while also still capturing important insights from diverse programs.

The introduction of new career development pathways and wellness programs following the survey raises the possibility that employee opinions will be impacted by the timing of these new initiatives. Future studies may document further ways in which these modifications improve job performance, stress reduction, and employee engagement.

The firm has implemented extensive wellness programs in addition to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) after the survey questionnaire was distributed and answered, with the goal of improving employees' general well-being as well as engagement. These wellness programs offer a variety of services and activities aimed at enhancing mental emotional and physical well-being along with increase in employee engagement. Workout regimens, team building activities online and in person, mindfulness practices and availability to wellness applications with various challenges and prizes are a few examples. The firm and the talent and team development team hope to lower stress levels, boost productivity and

increase employee engagement by incorporating these wellness programs and fostering a caring environment that supports healthy lifestyle choices.

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