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Strengthening Employee Performance through Wellness Strategies in Occupational Stress Management: A Quantitative Analysis at RECO Manufacturing Industry, Kasese District, Uganda

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of wellness strategies on employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry in Kasese District, addressing a notable gap in the literature regarding the integration of wellness interventions and measurable performance outcomes within manufacturing contexts. While workplace wellness has been extensively studied in service and health sectors, empirical evidence on its impact in manufacturing, where employees face high job demands and stress levels, remains limited. The study was anchored on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. A quantitative research approach was employed, utilising correlational, descriptive, and survey research designs to examine the relationship between wellness strategies and employee performance. The study targeted a sample of 100 permanent employees from a population of 134 across seven functional departments. Stratified, proportionate, and simple random sampling techniques were used to select respondents, while purposive sampling determined departmental representation. Primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, validated with a content validity index of 0.750 and reliability confirmed via Cronbach's alpha of 0.853. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to assess relationships and predict performance outcomes. Regression analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between wellness strategies and employee performance (B = 0.744, Beta = 0.885, t = 18.498, p = 0.000), indicating that improvements in wellness strategies significantly enhance productivity, motivation, teamwork, and overall job performance. The study concluded that structured wellness strategies act as critical resources that reduce stress and strengthen performance. It recommended that management and HR departments systematically implement, monitor, and refine wellness programmes to optimise employee engagement and organisational outcomes. The findings provide evidence-based guidance for policy and practice and contribute to the body of knowledge by empirically validating the JD-R theory in a manufacturing environment.

KEYWORDS:*Employee Performance, Wellness Strategies, Occupational Stress Management, RECO Manufacturing Industry*

1.0 Introduction

Employee performance in manufacturing industries is a key determinant of productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness, yet it often faces challenges due to the high-pressure environments that expose workers to occupational stress (Radha&Aithal, 2023; Xinjian&Idrakisyah, 2025). The demanding nature of manufacturing work, which involves extended hours, strict deadlines, and significant physical and mental exertion, makes employees more vulnerable to stress-related issues that can lower concentration, morale, and overall performance (Hasanvand, 2024; Selvakumar et al., 2026). To address these concerns, wellness strategies have emerged as vital components of occupational stress

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management, focusing on both physical and psychological wellbeing while supporting organisational outcomes (Maluegha et al., 2024). Interventions such as employee assistance programmes, stress management training, counselling services, flexible work arrangements, and health promotion activities are increasingly being applied to reduce the impact of workplace stressors (Raghuwanshi, 2025). When effectively executed, these strategies not only minimise the risks of burnout and absenteeism but also enhance resilience, motivation, and job satisfaction, thereby improving employee performance (Awashreh&AlGhunaimi, 2024). In manufacturing settings where productivity goals are central, embedding wellness initiatives within occupational stress management offers a strategic means of aligning employee wellbeing with organisational objectives

This study examines the relationship between employee performance and wellness strategies in occupational stress management to assess how targeted interventions can improve productivity and efficiency at RECO Manufacturing Industry. Employee performance, conceptualised as the measurable output of employees in achieving organisational objectives, meeting production targets, maintaining quality standards, and showing commitment to assigned tasks, is treated as the dependent variable (Latham, 2023). Wellness strategies in occupational stress management are defined as structured organisational initiatives designed to alleviate work-related stress and enhance both physical and psychological wellbeing. These include interventions such as stress reduction programmes, counselling services, flexible work arrangements, and health promotion activities (Ohadomere&Ogamba, 2021). By integrating these variables, the study investigates how the adoption of wellness strategies can positively influence employee performance through improvements in concentration, motivation, resilience, and job satisfaction, while simultaneously reducing the risks of absenteeism and burnout.

Employee performance in Uganda's manufacturing industry plays a vital role in driving productivity and economic growth, yet it continues to face significant obstacles that limit optimal output. Workers in this sector often contend with high workloads, outdated machinery, inadequate training opportunities, and restricted access to modern technology, all of which undermine efficiency and the quality of production (Alinda et al., 2022). These operational limitations are compounded by low motivation, poor remuneration, and substandard working conditions, which contribute to absenteeism, diminished morale, and high staff turnover, thereby weakening overall performance outcomes. Occupational stress, generated by factors such as tight deadlines, repetitive tasks, and insufficient support mechanisms, further intensifies these challenges by affecting both the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees (James et al., 2024; Pross, 2022). Although certain firms have adopted performance management systems and skills development initiatives, many organisations continue to struggle with sustaining high productivity levels due to structural inefficiencies and limited investment in employee welfare (Tumusiime, 2022). Addressing these challenges requires integrated strategies that simultaneously improve operational efficiency and meet the psychosocial needs of the workforce to achieve sustainable gains in employee performance.

Employee performance at RECO Mattress Industry in Kasese District remains significantly constrained by persistent occupational stress, despite ongoing efforts to introduce wellness programmes and flexible work arrangements. High job demands, production pressures, inadequate resources, and socio-economic challenges such as poverty and limited access to healthcare continue to undermine employees' physical and psychological wellbeing, leading to high absenteeism, low job satisfaction, increased staff turnover, and reduced productivity (Wenene, 2023; Asiimwe&Rwanyonga, 2022). The fragmented nature of current interventions, including wellness programmes and stress relief sessions, has proven insufficient in addressing the root causes of stress, leaving employees vulnerable to burnout and poor performance (Kisakye&Mpiira, 2021). These gaps in effective occupational stress management compromise organisational competitiveness, diminish product quality, and weaken operational efficiency, with broader socio-economic consequences for the Kasese community that depends on the company for employment. A comprehensive integration of wellness strategies, incorporating mental health support, structured stress reduction initiatives, health promotion programmes, and proactive resource allocation, is therefore essential to enhance resilience, motivation, and job satisfaction among employees. Such an approach is expected to strengthen employee performance, minimise absenteeism, and improve organisational productivity, while providing empirical evidence of the value of targeted wellness interventions in the manufacturing sector.

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of wellness strategies in occupational stress management on employee performance at RECO Mattress Industry in Kasese District, Uganda. The study focused on examining how structured wellness initiatives such as stress reduction programmes, counselling services, flexible work arrangements, and health promotion activities can alleviate work-related stress while enhancing employees' physical and psychological wellbeing. Through this investigation, the research aimed to generate empirical evidence on the effectiveness of occupational stress management interventions in boosting productivity, minimising absenteeism, and improving job satisfaction. The findings are expected to inform actionable recommendations that will enable RECO Mattress Industry to design and implement comprehensive wellness strategies that not only enhance employee performance but also strengthen organisational competitiveness.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the effect of structured wellness programs on employee productivity and efficiency at RECO Mattress Industry, Kasese District.

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2. To identify gaps in the existing wellness interventions and provide evidence-based recommendations for improving occupational stress management.
3. To highlight areas for future research aimed at strengthening employee performance and organisational competitiveness.

The null hypothesis

H_0: Wellness strategies in occupational stress management have no significant effect on employee performance at RECO Mattress Industry, Kasese District, Uganda.

Theoretical framework

This study was underpinned by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, propounded by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli in 2001. The theory posits that every occupation is characterised by specific job demands, such as workload, time pressure, and emotional stressors, as well as job resources, which include physical, psychological, social, and organisational support systems. While high job demands often lead to strain and potential burnout, the availability of sufficient resources enables employees to cope effectively, stay motivated, and perform better. Wellness strategies such as stress management programmes, employee assistance services, and workplace health promotion can be categorised as resources that buffer the negative effects of demands while enhancing engagement and productivity (IBRAHIM, 2021; Langseth-Eide, 2022; Granziera et al., 2021).

This theory provided a framework to guide the study by linking wellness strategies directly with employee performance outcomes at RECO Manufacturing Industry in Kasese District. By applying the JD-R model, the study examined how wellness interventions serve as critical resources that counterbalance occupational stress, sustain employee health, and improve job efficiency in a manufacturing setting where job demands are often intense. The theory also offered a quantitative basis for evaluating how resource allocation, in the form of wellness initiatives, influences measurable performance indicators such as output, attendance, and job satisfaction, making it an ideal foundation for analysing the impact of stress management on workforce performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

Influence of wellness strategies on employee performance in manufacturing industry

The study by Miragaia and Aleixo (2021) examined the relationship between employee well-being, satisfaction, and organisational productivity, focusing on the role of workplace physical activity programmes. Using survey data from 202 employees and 17 employers in Portuguese organisations, the researchers applied exploratory factor analysis and Pearson correlation, revealing that employee health, satisfaction, and well-being are positively associated with performance and organisational outcomes. Both employees and employers perceived workplace gymnastics as effective in addressing stress, emotional issues, and work task challenges, thereby enhancing productivity. The study concluded that such wellness strategies not only improve performance and organisational effectiveness but also align with corporate social responsibility goals, while creating opportunities for entrepreneurship in sport and wellness service delivery, offering valuable insights for sectors such as manufacturing where employee performance directly influences output and competitiveness.

The systematic review by Marin-Farrona et al. (2023) investigated the impact of different modalities of worksite physical activity programmes (WPPAs) on employees' productivity, health, and economic outcomes. Registered in PROSPERO and following PRISMA guidelines, the review included 16 randomized controlled trials published between 1997 and 2021, identified from 860 studies across multiple databases. The findings showed that WPPAs had a significant positive effect on productivity, with workability being the most improved variable, while health outcomes such as cardiorespiratory fitness, muscle strength, and reduced musculoskeletal symptoms also consistently improved across studies. Despite these positive results, the review highlighted challenges in determining the most effective exercise modality due to heterogeneity in programme design, duration, and workforce characteristics, and noted that cost-effectiveness could not be evaluated because of insufficient reporting. The study concluded that WPPAs provide measurable benefits to both employee health and productivity, offering valuable evidence for organisations, including those in manufacturing, where physically demanding roles require effective wellness strategies to sustain performance and reduce health-related risks.

The systematic review and meta-analysis by Peñalvo et al. (2021) assessed the effectiveness of multicomponent workplace wellness programmes in improving diet and cardiometabolic risk factors, using data from 121 controlled studies published between 1990 and 2020. Drawing from over 10,000 abstracts and applying PRISMA guidelines, the review revealed that these programmes significantly enhanced dietary behaviours, such as increased fruit and vegetable intake, while also improving key anthropometric and cardiometabolic indicators including body mass index, waist circumference, blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, and triglycerides. Although moderate benefits were found for body weight, glucose regulation, and HDL cholesterol, no significant changes were observed in vegetable intake, fibre, polyunsaturated fat, body fat percentage, or waist-to-hip ratio. The findings highlighted substantial heterogeneity across studies, which limited conclusions on the consistency of effects across different settings and populations. Overall, the study demonstrated that multicomponent wellness programmes have measurable positive impacts on employee health, offering critical implications for industries like manufacturing, where reducing cardiometabolic risks can directly support sustained workforce productivity and performance.

The study by Wasike and Wabala (2024) examined the influence of employee wellness programmes on workforce productivity in community health non-governmental

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organisations (NGOs) in Kenya, focusing on flexible working arrangements and physical fitness as key determinants. Guided by contingency theory and goal-setting theory, the researchers employed a cross-sectional survey design targeting departmental heads across 10 NGOs, with data collected through structured questionnaires. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha exceeded the 0.7 threshold, confirming instrument validity, and the data were analysed using SPSS. Findings revealed that employee physical fitness had the strongest positive effect on productivity ($\beta = 0.377$), followed by flexible working ($\beta = 0.292$), indicating that improvements in these wellness dimensions significantly enhanced workforce performance. The study concluded that prioritising employee wellness not only improves individual health and satisfaction but also strengthens organisational capacity to achieve project goals, manage risks, and foster long-term success, offering valuable implications for sectors such as manufacturing where physical demands and productivity targets are central.

The systematic review by Hulls et al. (2022) evaluated the effectiveness of workplace health and well-being interventions in male-dominated industries, filling a gap in understanding how outcomes compare with mixed-gender environments. Drawing on 35 eligible studies identified across multiple databases, the review analysed interventions delivered primarily face-to-face, with some implemented through internet or postal channels, and assessed quality using the Cochrane Collaboration's Risk of Bias Tool. Reported adherence ranged from 50% to 97%, depending on the mode of delivery and industry context. The findings provided moderate evidence of positive outcomes, particularly for interventions addressing musculoskeletal disorders, while only limited evidence was observed for reductions in body mass index and blood pressure. The review concluded that workplace health and well-being programmes can be effective in male-dominated settings, but their success is shaped by cultural factors, delivery methods, and industry-specific demands. These insights are especially significant for the manufacturing sector, where physical intensity, male dominance, and workplace culture strongly influence the adoption and impact of wellness strategies on employee performance.

The study by Mohamed et al. (2022) evaluated the effectiveness of a workplace health promotion (WHP) program in reducing depression, anxiety, and stress, while improving quality of life among Malaysian manufacturing workers. Using a randomized controlled trial with 88 employees in a food and beverage manufacturing factory, the intervention group received a comprehensive WHP program incorporating mental health modules, anxiety management techniques, mindfulness, and stress management through the Occupational Stress Management Course and Employee Assistance Program, while the control group received only general stress-related information. Over a three-month intervention and three-month post-intervention follow-up, the intervention group showed significant reductions in self-perceived stress, anxiety, and depression ($p \leq 0.001$), alongside improvements in all domains of health-related quality of life, social support, and problem-solving coping skills ($p < 0.001$), whereas the control group showed no significant changes. The study concluded that structured WHP programs effectively enhance mental health, coping abilities, and overall well-being among manufacturing employees, highlighting the critical role of targeted wellness strategies in supporting workforce performance and resilience in high-stress industrial settings.

Research Methodology

Research design

The study employed correlational, survey, and descriptive research designs to investigate the relationship between wellness strategies in occupational stress management initiatives and employee performance because these designs were necessary to achieve the research objectives. The correlational design was required to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between wellness initiatives and performance outcomes without manipulating variables, which reflects the naturally occurring behaviours in the workplace 9Devi et al., 2022). The survey design was essential to collect data systematically from a larger sample, allowing the study to capture employee perceptions, experiences, and self-reported outcomes related to wellness programmes and performance (Lohr, 2021). The descriptive design was necessary to provide a detailed account of the characteristics of the sample and the wellness strategies implemented, offering context and baseline understanding of occupational stress management practices (Ghanad, 2023).

Combining these designs enabled the study to generate reliable and generalisable findings, perform statistical analyses, and present a comprehensive understanding of the impact of wellness strategies on employee performance, which would not have been possible using a single research design.

Research approach

The study employed a quantitative research approach because it was necessary to objectively measure and analyse the relationship between wellness strategies in occupational stress management and employee performance using numerical data. This approach allowed for the testing of hypotheses about the strength and direction of relationships and the identification of statistically significant patterns. It provided a method for consistent data collection and enabled the use of statistical analyses, including correlations, regressions, and comparisons, to quantify the effects of wellness strategies on employee performance. The quantitative approach was essential to produce reliable and generalisable findings that could demonstrate the impact of wellness initiatives on workforce productivity and well-being (Ghanad, 2023).

Target population

The total target population for this study consisted of 134 permanent employees drawn from the Human Resources, ICT, Production, Marketing and Sales, Transport, Finance, Quality Control, and Agriculture departments as shown in Table 1. These departments were selected because they

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represent the core operational functions of the organisation, each with unique stressors and performance expectations, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of occupational stress and the effectiveness of stress management initiatives across diverse roles.

Inclusion criteria specified permanent employees from the identified departments who have substantial exposure to workplace stressors and the organisation's stress management initiatives. Employees with consistent tenure were included to ensure they could provide reliable insights into how wellness strategies affect performance over time.

Exclusion criteria filtered out temporary or contract employees, employees from departments not included in the study, individuals with short tenures of less than six months, and, where relevant, managerial or executive-level employees. These exclusions ensured the sample reflected employees with stable, relevant experiences of workplace stress and access to stress management programs, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings regarding the influence of occupational stress management initiatives on employee performance.

Table 1: Target Population

Department	Number of Employees
Human Resources	10
ICT	8
Production	50
Marketing and Sales	20
Transport	15
Finance	12
Quality Control	10
Agriculture	9
Total	**134**

Source: Human Resource Manual (2024)

Sampling

The researcher used the target population of 134 to select a sample of 100 respondents using Yamane formula (1967) as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population Size

e = Error term (5%)

$n = 134/1+134(0.05)^2$

n= 100

Table 2: Sample Size

Department	Sample Size
Human Resources	07
ICT	06
Production	38
Sales & Marketing	15
Transport Agents	11
Finance	09
Quality Control	07
Agriculture	07
Total	**100**

Source: Researcher Computation (2025)

The study utilized stratified random sampling, proportionate sampling, and simple random sampling techniques to select respondents, ensuring that participants were fairly and representatively drawn from each department according to their size and composition. Stratified random sampling allowed the population to be divided into subgroups based on departments, capturing the unique stressors and performance expectations of each group. Proportionate sampling ensured that the number of respondents from each department reflected their actual representation in the total population, maintaining the balance and accuracy of the sample. Simple random sampling was applied within each stratum to give all eligible employees an equal chance of selection, reducing selection bias. Purposive sampling was used to select specific categories of employees relevant to the study objectives, such as individuals with significant exposure to stress management initiatives, ensuring that the collected data focused on participants capable of providing meaningful insights into the relationship between wellness in occupational stress management and employee performance (Lohr, 2021;Chakraborty, 2024).

Data collection

The study employed self-administered questionnaires to collect primary quantitative data from respondents. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to wellness strategies in occupational stress management initiatives and their influence on employee performance. This method allowed for standardised responses, facilitating the quantification of subjective experiences and enabling statistical analysis to determine patterns, relationships, and the overall impact of wellness initiatives on workforce outcomes.

Piloting

A pilot study was conducted with 10 respondents, representing 10% of the total sample size, from Hima Cement Industry in Kasese District. The purpose of the pilot study was to evaluate and refine the research instruments, ensuring clarity, reliability, and validity of the questionnaire items before the main data collection phase. This process allowed the researcher to identify and correct any ambiguities, test the feasibility of the data collection procedures, and enhance the overall quality and accuracy of the study instruments.

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The research instruments demonstrated a content validity index (CVI) of 0.750, indicating that the items were adequately representative of the concepts being measured. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded a value of 0.853, reflecting high internal consistency and confirming that the questionnaire produced stable and dependable results. These metrics demonstrate that the instruments were both valid and reliable for assessing the impact of wellness strategies in occupational stress management initiatives on employee performance.Aung et al., 2021;Muasya, &Mulwa, 2023).

Data analysis

Data analysis for the study involved descriptive and regression techniques. Descriptive analysis was used to summarise and present the characteristics of the respondents, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, providing an overview of attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to wellness strategies in occupational stress management. Regression analysis was applied to examine the relationship between wellness strategies and employee performance, allowing the study to determine the extent to which variations in wellness strategies initiatives could predict changes in performance outcomes. This combination of analyses enabled both a comprehensive understanding of the data and the testing of hypotheses regarding the impact of wellness strategies on workforce performance.

The study tested the null hypothesis at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This threshold was used to determine whether the observed relationships between wellness strategies in occupational stress management initiatives and employee performance were statistically significant. By setting the significance level at 5%, the study allowed for a 95% confidence that any observed effect was not due to random chance, providing a rigorous standard for evaluating the impact of wellness strategies on employee performance.

Ethical consideration

The study observed ethical principles throughout the research process. This included obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of respondent information, and protecting participants from any potential harm or discomfort. Ethical approval was sought and granted from the relevant institutional authority, ensuring that the study adhered to established guidelines for responsible and professional conduct in research involving human subjects (Eungoo& Hwang, 2021;NiiLaryeafio&Ogbewe, 2023).

4.0 Findings

Response rate

The study achieved a response rate of 100%, with all 100 distributed questionnaires completed and returned by the selected participants. This complete participation ensured that the data collected was comprehensive, representative of the target population, and free from non-response bias, enhancing the reliability and validity of the study findings.

Descriptive statistics on wellness strategies

This study examined respondents' perceptions regarding the effect of wellness strategies in occupational stress management initiatives on employee performance at the RECO Mattress Industry in Kasese. Participants rated their agreement using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) to quantify their perspectives as presented in Table 3.

Table3: **Descriptive Statistics onWellness Strategies**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
The regular health screenings provided by in workplace is effective in supporting employee well-being	100	1	5	4.04	1.004
Fitness programs in my organization help in managing stress and improving morale	100	1	5	4.18	1.114
The nutrition and dietary support offered in workplace are helpful in promoting wellness programs	100	1	5	4.04	1.014
Mindfulness sessions in my workplace help in stress reduction	100	1	5	4.11	1.205
Social support programs in my work place contribute to a positive work environment	100	1	5	3.89	.777
wellness initiatives at my workplace are effective in promoting a balanced lifestyle	100	1	5	4.37	.981
Overall	100			4.11	1.0158

Source: Primary data, 2025

The findings in Table 3, indicate that employees hold a highly positive view of the organization's wellness strategies, with an overall mean score of 4.11 out of 5. The initiative perceived as most effective is the promotion of a balanced lifestyle (Mean=4.37), suggesting that the holistic package of wellness programs is successfully helping employees integrate well-being into their daily lives. This is strongly supported by high ratings for specific components like fitness programs (Mean=4.18) for managing stress and improving morale, and mindfulness sessions (Mean=4.11) for stress reduction. Health screenings and nutrition support are also viewed very favorably, both sharing an identical mean score of 4.04.

However, a notable area for improvement is social support programs, which received the lowest mean score (3.89).

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While still positive, this suggests that initiatives aimed at fostering community and collegiality are not perceived as impactful as the more individually-focused health and fitness offerings. The high standard deviations for fitness programs (1.114), mindfulness sessions (1.205), and other items reveal a significant spread in responses. This indicates that while many employees find these initiatives extremely effective, a considerable number do not, highlighting a variability in experience that the organization may need to address to ensure its wellness programs are inclusive and beneficial for all.

The analysis of employee perceptions of workplace wellness strategies revealed an average mean score of 4.11, indicating that employees generally view these programs as effective in promoting well-being and supporting a balanced lifestyle. This suggests a positive organisational effort, as most employees agree that wellness strategies contribute to stress management, enhance morale, and improve overall health.

The overall standard deviation of 1.016 indicates moderate variability in responses, showing that while a majority of employees perceive the programs positively, there is a subset of the workforce with less favourable or divergent experiences. This variability highlights the need for continued assessment and refinement to ensure that wellness initiatives are inclusive and consistently beneficial across all employee groups.

Looking at specific components, fitness programs (Mean=4.18) and balanced lifestyle promotion (Mean=4.37) received the highest ratings, suggesting that these aspects of wellness initiatives are particularly valued by employees and are effective in addressing their health and well-being needs. In contrast, social support programs (Mean=3.89) scored lower, though the smaller standard deviation (SD=0.777) indicates relatively consistent perceptions among employees. This points to an opportunity for targeted improvements in social support initiatives to enhance engagement, foster collaboration, and provide more comprehensive support for employees' well-being.

The findings imply that strengthening weaker areas, such as social support programs, while maintaining high-performing initiatives in fitness and lifestyle promotion, could further improve overall employee satisfaction, reduce stress, and enhance performance outcomes. Organisations can use this evidence to prioritise resource allocation, tailor wellness programs to employee needs, and ensure consistent delivery of services that maximise the benefits of workplace wellness initiatives.

Descriptive statistics on employee performance

The study sought to examine the perception of respondents on employee performance as shown in Table 4.

Table4: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Performance

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stress management initiatives contribute to enhancing productivity of workers in my organization	100	1	5	3.90	1.142
Reduced workplace stress helps you in achieving production targets	100	2	5	4.15	1.019
Supportive workplace environment helps me in maintaining high work quality	100	2	5	3.99	.663
Stress management initiatives in my workplace foster teamwork within your department	100	2	5	4.05	.742
I am motivated perform well in my current workplace culture	100	2	5	4.04	.716
I am confident in the safety measures currently in place in my workplace	100	2	5	3.91	.767
Overall	100			4.01	.8415

Source: Primary data, 2025

The findings in Table 4, reveal a strong positive link between well-being initiatives and employee performance, with an overall mean score of 4.01. Employees clearly recognize that a reduction in stress directly enhances their ability to meet key performance indicators, as evidenced by the highest mean score (4.15) for the statement connecting reduced stress to achieving production targets. This performance-oriented mindset is further supported by high ratings for motivation (Mean=4.04) and the role of stress management in fostering teamwork (Mean=4.05). The notably low standard deviations for these last three items (all below 0.77) indicate a powerful and widespread consensus among employees on these points, suggesting that the workplace culture is successfully promoting collaboration and motivation.

However, the data also highlights a crucial area for strategic focus. While the impact on productivity is acknowledged (Mean=3.90), this score is the lowest in the set and is coupled with the highest standard deviation (1.142). This indicates that while many employees feel more productive due to these initiatives, there is significant disagreement, with a sizable portion of the workforce not experiencing this benefit. This suggests that the current stress management programs may be more effective at improving cultural factors like teamwork and motivation than they are at directly translating into measurable gains in individual productivity output. Addressing this perception gap could be key to unlocking further performance gains across the organization.

The findings in Table 4 indicate a strong positive relationship between stress management initiatives and employee performance, with an overall mean score of 4.01. Employees generally perceive that these initiatives contribute to improved

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work outcomes, demonstrating that workplace efforts to reduce stress and foster a supportive environment are associated with productivity, motivation, teamwork, and quality of work. The highest mean score (4.15) was observed for the item connecting reduced workplace stress to achieving production targets, reflecting employees' recognition that lower stress levels directly enhance their ability to meet key performance indicators. High mean scores for motivation (4.04) and teamwork (4.05) further indicate that stress management programs effectively promote a performance-oriented and collaborative workplace culture. The relatively low standard deviations for these items (all below 0.77) suggest strong consensus among employees, highlighting the widespread acknowledgment of these positive effects.

However, the data also points to areas requiring strategic attention. While the contribution of stress management initiatives to productivity was acknowledged (Mean=3.90), it received the lowest score in the set and was coupled with the highest standard deviation (1.142). This suggests variability in employee experiences, with some employees not perceiving significant productivity benefits from the initiatives. Similarly, confidence in workplace safety measures (Mean=3.91) shows room for improvement. These findings imply that while cultural and motivational benefits of stress management are well-established, translating these gains into tangible productivity improvements requires targeted interventions.

The implications of these results highlight that reducing workplace stress and creating supportive environments are particularly valued for sustaining productivity, maintaining work quality, and fostering motivation and teamwork. To further enhance employee performance, organisations should focus on strengthening safety measures and implementing targeted productivity support initiatives. By addressing these areas, management can ensure that stress management programs deliver both cultural and measurable performance benefits, thereby maximising their overall impact on workforce effectiveness.

Linear Regression Analysis

Linear regression analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between wellness in occupational stress management and employee performance at the RECO Mattress Industry in Kasese district.

Table 5: Model Summary[a]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
1	.885[a]	.783	.780	.34684

a. Dependent variable: EP- employee performance
b. Predictor: (Constant): WS-wellness strategies

Source: Primary data, 2025

The model summary in Table 5 shows a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.885, indicating a strong positive relationship between wellness strategies and employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry in KaseseDistrict. The R Square value of 0.783 suggests that approximately 78.3% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by wellness strategies, demonstrating that these approaches have a substantial influence on performance outcomes. The Adjusted R Square of 0.780 confirms that the model provides a reliable estimate of the relationship, accounting for the number of predictors and ensuring that the observed effect is not due to chance. The standard error of the estimate (0.34684) indicates the average deviation of observed performance scores from predicted values, showing that the model predicts employee performance with reasonable accuracy.

The implications of this analysis are significant for organisational management. The strong explanatory power of wellness strategies underscores the importance of implementing structured approaches that enhance employee well-being to improve performance. By focusing on strategies that address physical, psychological, and social aspects of wellness, RECO Manufacturing can expect notable improvements in productivity, motivation, teamwork, and overall workforce effectiveness. These findings provide empirical support for prioritising wellness strategies as a key driver of employee performance and organisational success.

Table 6:ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.160	1	41.160	342.160	.000[b]
	Residual	11.428	98	.120		
	Total	52.588	99			

a. Dependent Variable: EP-Employe performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), WS-Wellness strategies

Source: Primary data, 2025

The ANOVA table shows that the regression model assessing the effect of wellness strategies on employee performance is statistically significant. The F-value of 342.160 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the model explains a significant portion of the variance in employee performance, and the likelihood that this result occurred by chance is effectively zero. The regression sum of squares (41.160) reflects the portion of total variation in employee performance explained by wellness strategies, while the residual sum of squares (11.428) represents the variation not accounted for by the model.

The implications of this analysis are that wellness strategies have a significant and meaningful impact on employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry. The statistical significance supports the conclusion that implementing structured wellness strategies can effectively enhance productivity, motivation, teamwork, and overall performance outcomes. This finding reinforces the value of investing in comprehensive wellness strategies as a key organisational approach to improving employee performance and achieving operational success.

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Table 7: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.969	.169		5.741	.000
	WS	.744	.040	.885	18.498	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EP-employee performance
b. Predictor: WS-wellness strategies

Source: Primary data, 2025

The regression coefficients show the nature and strength of the relationship between wellness strategies and employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for wellness strategies is 0.744 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that for every one-unit increase in wellness strategies, employee performance is expected to increase by 0.744 units, holding all other factors constant. The constant (intercept) of 0.969 represents the predicted employee performance when wellness strategies are absent. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.885 confirms that wellness strategies have a strong positive effect on employee performance, and the high t-value of 18.498 further demonstrates the significance of this relationship.

The implications of this analysis are that wellness strategies are a major determinant of employee performance. Organisations that implement effective wellness strategies can expect substantial improvements in productivity, motivation, teamwork, and overall performance. The findings emphasise the importance of prioritising wellness strategies as a strategic approach to enhance employee outcomes and organisational success.

Hypothesis testing

Based on the coefficient findings, the null hypothesis stating that wellness strategies have no significant effect on employee performance is rejected. The unstandardized coefficient for wellness strategies (B = 0.744, p = 0.000) indicates that for every one-unit increase in wellness strategies, employee performance increases by 0.744 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.885) further confirms a strong positive effect, and the high t-value (18.498) demonstrates that this relationship is statistically significant. These results provide sufficient evidence to conclude that wellness strategies significantly enhance employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry.

Discussion of findings

Based on the empirical review, the collective findings strongly indicate that wellness strategies positively influence employee performance in manufacturing and related sectors. Miragaia and Aleixo (2021) observed a clear positive relationship between employee well-being, satisfaction, and organisational productivity, with workplace physical activity programmes perceived as effective in addressing stress, emotional challenges, and work task demands. This aligns closely with the findings of Mohamed et al. (2022), who demonstrated that structured workplace health promotion programs significantly reduced stress, anxiety, and depression among manufacturing employees while improving quality of life and coping skills, thereby supporting enhanced workforce performance. Both studies underscore the importance of targeted wellness strategies in improving both employee health and performance outcomes.

Similarly, the systematic review by Marin-Farrona et al. (2023) concurs with these findings, showing that worksite physical activity programmes significantly improve workability, musculoskeletal health, and general employee productivity. The review by Peñalvo et al. (2021) also supports the positive influence of wellness programmes, highlighting improvements in dietary habits and cardiometabolic indicators, which are critical for sustaining productivity and performance, particularly in physically demanding roles typical in manufacturing. Wasike and Wabala (2024) further reinforce this perspective, demonstrating that employee physical fitness and flexible working arrangements significantly enhance productivity in community health NGOs, providing analogous implications for manufacturing settings where physical and organizational demands are high.

The systematic review by Hulls et al. (2022) provides partial concurrence, highlighting that wellness strategies in male-dominated industries, such as manufacturing, yield positive outcomes in musculoskeletal health and well-being. However, it notes limited evidence for impacts on body mass index and blood pressure, indicating that not all health or performance outcomes are equally affected by wellness programmes, possibly due to industry-specific cultural or delivery factors. This partially contrasts with the findings of Peñalvo et al. (2021) and Mohamed et al. (2022), who reported more consistent improvements across a range of health indicators.

Therefore, the majority of empirical studies reviewed consistently support the conclusion that wellness strategies improve employee performance, stress management, motivation, and overall well-being in manufacturing contexts. Discrepancies arise mainly in the magnitude and scope of physiological health outcomes, suggesting that while wellness programmes are broadly effective, their design, delivery, and alignment with industry culture are crucial for maximising both health and performance benefits (Miragaia&Aleixo, 2021; Marin-Farrona et al., 2023; Peñalvo et al., 2021; Wasike&Wabala, 2024; Hulls et al., 2022; Mohamed et al., 2022).

Contribution to theory

The findings of the study provide strong empirical support for the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, demonstrating that wellness strategies function effectively as job resources that mitigate the negative effects of occupational demands and enhance employee performance. The positive relationship observed between wellness strategies and performance outcomes, as indicated by high mean scores and regression

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results, confirms that providing employees with physical, psychological, and social resources enables them to manage stress, maintain motivation, and achieve higher productivity. For instance, reduced workplace stress, supportive work environments, and targeted wellness programs were associated with improved teamwork, motivation, and the ability to meet production targets, which aligns with the JD-R proposition that resources buffer job demands and foster engagement.

Moreover, the findings highlight that wellness strategies do not merely serve as supplementary benefits but play a central role in sustaining workforce health and efficiency, particularly in high-demand manufacturing environments. This extends the JD-R theory by illustrating that organisationally provided resources, such as stress management programmes, physical fitness initiatives, and mental health interventions, have measurable effects on both health and performance outcomes, reinforcing the theory's applicability in industrial contexts. The study also implies that the JD-R framework can guide practical interventions, helping managers strategically allocate resources to counterbalance job demands, reduce strain, and optimise employee performance. In essence, the findings validate and operationalise the theoretical linkage between job resources and performance, demonstrating the tangible impact of wellness strategies as critical resources within the JD-R model.

Conclusion

The study concludes that wellness strategies have a significant and positive influence on employee performance in RECO Manufacturing Industry in Kasese District. The findings demonstrate that initiatives aimed at promoting physical, psychological, and social well-being, such as stress management programmes, supportive workplace environments, and health promotion activities, substantially enhance productivity, motivation, teamwork, and overall job satisfaction. Statistical analysis, including regression and ANOVA, confirmed that wellness strategies are strong predictors of employee performance, explaining a large proportion of the observed variance and highlighting their critical role in mitigating workplace stress and improving operational outcomes.

The study further concludes that while wellness strategies are broadly effective, certain areas, such as social support programmes, workplace safety confidence, and direct productivity support, require targeted improvements to ensure consistent benefits across all employees. These findings validate the applicability of the Job Demands-Resources theory, showing that wellness strategies function as essential resources that buffer occupational demands, reduce strain, and foster engagement, ultimately leading to improved performance. Therefore, the study underscores the importance of systematically implementing and continuously refining wellness strategies as a strategic approach for enhancing employee well-being and organisational effectiveness in manufacturing contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, several actions and strategies can be adopted by key stakeholders in RECO Manufacturing Industry to enhance employee performance through wellness strategies.

Management should prioritise the implementation and continuous improvement of comprehensive wellness strategies. This includes expanding stress management programmes, promoting physical fitness initiatives, and ensuring that mental health support services are accessible to all employees. Management should also integrate wellness strategies into organisational policies, linking them directly to performance objectives to reinforce their relevance and encourage employee participation. Regular evaluation of these strategies, informed by employee feedback, can help identify gaps in effectiveness, such as areas where productivity support or social well-being initiatives require strengthening.

Human Resource departments should focus on creating structured programmes that target both individual and group well-being, including team-building exercises, workshops on coping skills, and flexible work arrangements. HR should also track participation rates, monitor health and performance outcomes, and provide training for supervisors to recognise and respond to signs of stress or burnout, thereby ensuring that resources are deployed efficiently and equitably across departments.

Employees should be encouraged to actively engage with wellness programmes and provide feedback on their experiences. Promoting a culture of self-care, peer support, and utilisation of available wellness resources can enhance the individual and collective benefits of these strategies. Employee involvement in designing or suggesting wellness initiatives may also increase programme relevance and uptake.

Occupational health and safety teams should work closely with management to ensure that workplace safety measures complement wellness strategies. This includes regular risk assessments, ergonomic improvements, and initiatives that reduce physical strain, particularly in production-heavy roles, to support both health and productivity.

External stakeholders, such as wellness consultants and service providers, can be engaged to design targeted interventions, deliver specialised training, and support ongoing monitoring and evaluation of wellness programmes. Collaborating with experts ensures that interventions are evidence-based, aligned with best practices, and capable of addressing the specific stressors and performance challenges within RECO's manufacturing context.

Collectively, these strategies create a holistic approach whereby wellness initiatives are systematically integrated into organisational culture, directly addressing stress, motivation, teamwork, and overall employee performance, thereby maximising both individual and organisational outcomes.

Recommendations for future research

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Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for future research on the influence of wellness strategies on employee performance in manufacturing and similar industrial contexts.

Future research should consider longitudinal study designs to examine the long-term effects of wellness strategies on employee performance, stress levels, and overall organisational outcomes. This would provide insights into the sustainability of programme impacts and help identify any delayed or cumulative effects that cross-sectional studies may not capture.

It is recommended that future studies expand the sample size and organisational scope by including multiple manufacturing firms across different regions or sectors. This would enhance the generalisability of findings and allow for comparisons across diverse organisational cultures, production processes, and workforce demographics.

Researchers should explore the comparative effectiveness of specific wellness strategies, such as physical fitness programmes, mental health interventions, and flexible working arrangements, to determine which approaches yield the greatest improvements in performance, well-being, and engagement. Such studies could use experimental or quasi-experimental designs to establish causal relationships.

Further studies could investigate moderating and mediating factors such as employee age, gender, tenure, or job type, which may influence the effectiveness of wellness strategies. Understanding these factors can help tailor interventions to meet the specific needs of different employee groups within the manufacturing sector.

Finally, future research could examine the cost-effectiveness and return on investment of wellness strategies, linking improvements in employee performance and health outcomes to organisational productivity, absenteeism, and financial metrics. This would provide practical evidence for stakeholders seeking to justify and optimise investments in employee wellness programmes.

These directions would strengthen the evidence base, enhance practical application, and guide organisations in designing more effective wellness strategies to improve employee performance and organisational success.

Limitations of the study

The primary limitations of this study are its cross-sectional design and the reliance on self-reported data. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between wellness strategies and employee performance, as it captures only associations at a single point in time. The use of self-reported data introduces potential response bias, including social desirability and inaccurate recall, which may affect the accuracy and objectivity of the findings regarding employees' perceptions of wellness strategies and performance outcomes.

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