

Workplace Comfort: A Necessity for Employee Health and Well-being

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A conducive workplace plays a vital role in promoting employees' health and supporting a healthy lifestyle. This conducive workplace environment, which includes factors such as comfortable physical settings, supportive management, and positive workplace culture, is an important element in ensuring organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. A study conducted by Kamarulzaman et al. (2011) shows that organizations need to manage human resources not only in terms of salary or benefits, but also through a conducive work environment that supports the emotional, mental and physical growth of their employees. Aspects of the work environment that affect performance and employee well-being include workplace design, indoor climate, noise and positive workplace culture (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). All of these elements play an important role in developing employee behavior, performance, health, and safety. Therefore, with the current needs and an awareness of employee safety and health, organizations need to take proactive steps to ensure a conducive, safe, and supportive work environment. A comfortable workplace can not only reduce employee absenteeism and health issues but can also foster a positive work culture, good communication within the organization and organizational productivity in the long run.

Workplace features effect on health and safety influenced by the following factors:

1. Inadequate Ventilation

Several studies shown that indoor temperature or climate will affect employees' health, performance and also their productivity. Discomfort can lead to stress and diminish employees' focus on their work. According to Mohamad (2021), the effect of indoor temperature or climate is determined by several environmental components such as temperature, humidity, wind, sunlight and it will influence the heat in a building. Adequate ventilation results in a comfortable and conducive workplace.

2. Continuous Noise

A study conducted by Lela (2021) shows that the noise exposure received by employees does not exceed the limit prescribed by the Department of Occupational Safety and Health under the Occupational Safety and Health (Noise Exposure) Regulations 2019. However, prolonged and uncontrolled exposure to excessive noise—beyond the prescribed limits—can have adverse effects on human health, including physical stress responses, long-term health problems, and psychological issues such as stress, anxiety, and loss of emotional sensitivity.

3. Non-Ergonomic Chairs or Tables

According to the International Ergonomics Association (IEA), ergonomics (known as Human Factor Engineering) is a discipline that is closely related to human interaction with other elements of the system while working take place. A study by (Kamarulzaman, Saleh, Hashim, & Abdul-Ghani, 2011) stated that giving importance to ergonomics aspects in the workplace can enhance employees' overall productivity as well as the effectiveness of their job performance. Employees will not get tired quickly when provided with suitable and comfortable chairs and tables that support good posture and reduce physical strain. With better ergonomic support, they are also less likely to fall sick, which indirectly reduces the rate of sick leave and minimizes health-related issues among staff. Consequently, employees are able to maintain higher productivity, work more energetically, and contribute positively to the overall performance of the organization" (Utusan, 2025).

4. Mold on Walls or Ceilings

Mold growth on walls and ceilings typically occurs in environments with high moisture levels, often caused by building leaks. It can also result from a poorly maintained ventilation system that fails to regulate humidity and air circulation, allowing damp conditions to persist (Ambu et al., 2008). Mold can produce fine spores that are easily inhaled and enter the human lungs, triggering irritation and inflammation of the respiratory tract and leading to symptoms such as nasal congestion, sneezing, coughing, shortness of breath and wheezing (Ambu et al, 2008). Scheduled maintenance of buildings, equipment, and air conditioning in the workplace is very important to ensure they are always in good condition, fully functional, and do not cause any harm to users.

5. Positive Workplace Relationships

Positive workplace relationships among colleagues are also important in order to create a harmonious atmosphere in the workplace. Positive workplace culture activities can enhance employee performance, satisfaction, and outcomes such as innovation, productivity, and competitiveness, with high job satisfaction driven by a positive work environment closely linked to improved performance" (Radu & Catalina, 2023). Similarly, there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and quality of performance.

Conclusion

Every day, people spend at least eight hours at work. At times, employees experience discomfort and declining health not due to workload, but as a result of the work environment. Chairs and tables that do not provide proper support the body, the air conditioners that are not in good condition, poor ventilation and rooms or workplaces that are gloomy or too bright.

Unsuitable lighting causes eye strain and fatigue and leading to mental exhaustion. Building conditions such as peeling paint, ceiling leaks, or mold growth can lead to skin allergies, persistent coughing and respiratory tract infections.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), every individual has the right to work in just and safe conditions. Physical factors in the work environment can influence employee performance, comfort, concentration, safety, satisfaction, health, and emotional well-being. When these factors are poorly designed or managed, they can lead to inefficiency, dissatisfaction, and reduced productivity (Bushiri, 2017). A conducive workplace is not solely focused on comfort, job satisfaction and positive spirit but also plays an important role in improving long-term health issues and well-being. It involves creating an environment that supports physical and mental health, ensuring that employees feel safe, valued, and empowered to perform at their best while maintaining work-life balance. A healthy workplace can help reduce the risk of chronic illness, stress, burnout and ultimately leading to increased productivity and organizational success.

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