College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management

Mental Well-Being and Management Support of Quick Service Restaurant Employees in the 4 Cities of Batangas

Melinda V. Tolentino
Rhea Corina V. Mejia
Sevillia S. Felicen

Abstract:- The study aimed to assess the mental well-being and management support during the time of the pandemic among restaurant employees in quick-service restaurants (QSR) in the cities of Batangas Province. It presented the profile of the restaurant employees in terms of gender, length of service, and type of employees; determined the mental well-being of employees in terms of well-being, psychological distress, absenteeism/presenteeism; and work engagement; assessed the management support in terms of supervision support at work and psychological safety climate management; tested the significant difference when grouped according to the profile. Descriptive research was used with 103 QSR employees weighted mean and ANOVA are the statistical tests utilized.

Based on the result, the majority of the QSR employees were 20-30 years old, female, working for less than 6 months, in a full-time category, in a franchised quick service restaurant with 1 to 2 days missed shifts in 28 days. The mental well-being of the QSR employees was stable because they often felt that they are close to other people, though sometimes they experienced that working was an effort, and during their absence, they are contacted by their manager or supervisor and their supervisor was accessible and approachable to their team. With this supervisor attitude, they felt that time passed quickly when they working. The responses of the QSR employees with regard to well-being differed when grouped according to profile. Assessment of psychological distress differed in terms of age, length of service, and type of ownership while for absenteeism the assessment differed in terms of types of employment and number of days missed. As to management support, only the assessment of QSR employees differed in terms of supervision at work and work engagement when grouped according to age.

I. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19, a novel virus that emerged in late 2019, swiftly spread worldwide, prompting the World Health Organization to declare it a pandemic in early 2020. With over 8,835,000 cases reported globally by 2020, countries responded with measures such as social distancing, city lockdowns, and border closures to curb its transmission. These actions profoundly impacted businesses, particularly the leisure and hospitality sector, which faced immediate repercussions. Cancelled events, conferences, and sports gatherings, coupled with reduced travel and tourism due to fear of virus transmission, severely affected the industry. Consequently, businesses within hospitality, including restaurants, bars, and cafes, struggled amidst the pandemic due to unsafe working conditions and decreased patronage. (Combs, 2020)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, QSR's or fast-food restaurants had a tough time. Some had to cut down on the number of items they served and limit how many people could be inside at once to prevent crowding (Hobbs, 2020; Rude, 2020). Fast-food places can be risky for spreading the virus because employees work close together for a long time, making it hard to keep distance. Plus, it's noisy, so people might talk loudly and spread more droplets in the air (Stewart et al., 2020). Workers in these places often don't earn much and might not have health insurance or paid time off if they get sick, so they might keep working even if they're not feeling well, which makes the risk of spreading the virus

higher. Also, the cold and damp environment in some restaurants can help the virus spread more easily (Artiga & Rae,2020).

Mental health issues are leading to more employees taking time off work in many countries. The fear of getting sick with the virus is causing a lot of stress and worry, especially for those who still have to go to work despite the increasing number of cases. This fear is affecting their mental well-being. Many efforts in workplaces are focused on helping people become more resilient to these challenges. Mental health at work is about how an individual, the workplace, and various factors within the organization all interact. Factors related to the organization and the psychological aspects of the job are known to have a big impact on a worker's mental health and their ability to do their job well (Bridget, 2018).

Mental well-being varies from person to person and is shaped by individual perspectives on health. It is influenced by various factors including the environment, job type, sense of community belonging, societal support, and stressors. With the virus spreading, people are increasingly focused on their health and safety, making personal well-being a top priority. Mental health involves prioritizing oneself, recognizing emotions, and understanding how to manage them effectively. (Everymind, 2018)

The role and responsibilities of management significantly influence organizational performance. It is the responsibility of management to ensure that tasks and employee performance are aligned. Managers who are invested and engaged with the entire organization can boost productivity by providing support to employees.

The result of the study can be used by managers and owners of quick service restaurant to analyze and adopt changes as needed in the management support system to their employees in the new normal situation. For the students of hospitality and tourism management to realize the importance and impact of metal wellbeing in the workplace specially in the service industry.

This study will help improve the working conditions of restaurant employees of quick service restaurants and acknowledge the value of mental wellbeing while working during this time of pandemic. This will also help future restaurant managers and owners to know that the business should not only focus on the customers safety and well-being but also on caring for their employees. Webinar on mental wellbeing, safety protocols and current restaurant policies can be conducted through the initiative of the CITHM Department with restaurant employees, managers and owners as attendees

> *Objectives of the Study*

This study aimed to assess the mental well-being and management support in this time of pandemic among restaurant employees in quick service restaurants in the four cities of Batangas Province. Specifically: it presented the demographic profile of the restaurant employees in terms of gender, length of service, and type of employees; determined the mental well-being of employees in terms of well-being, psychological distress, absenteeism/presenteeism; and work engagement; assessed the management support in terms of supervision support at work and psychological safety climate management; tested the significant difference when grouped according to the profile variables and: proposed an action plan based on the result of the study.   .

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Mental health continues to be a persistent cause of absenteeism and impaired work performance among employees globally. Many workplace interventions now prioritize the enhancement of individual resilience. The concept of mental health in the workplace encompasses the interplay between an individual, their work environment, and various organizational and psychosocial influences. Research underscores the significant impact of these factors on an employee's mental well-being, which in turn influences their overall job performance (Petrie, et al., 2018).

Restaurant employees typically work long shifts, often spanning 8 to 12 hours, six days a week, without the typical weekends off. In this fast-paced environment, employees are expected to be quick and attentive to their surroundings. Their duties include welcoming guests, taking food orders, serving meals, clearing tables, and addressing any guest concerns or complaints that arise throughout the day (DiPietro & Bufquin, 2018).

Restaurants are often perceived as cheerful environments for both employees and customers alike. They provide a space where people can unwind and enjoy good food and service, thus alleviating stress and worries. However, it's important to recognize that the restaurant industry, as well as the broader hospitality sector, can also be stressful. Working in restaurants exposes employees to various pressures and stresses, including physical exhaustion, handling tense confrontations, and adapting to the demanding nature of the industry's work environment (Italian Bar & Kitchen (2018).

In contemporary management practices, there is a focus on efficiently organizing employees into designated groups prior to the start of restaurant operations. This approach aims to address various aspects such as employee well-being, psychological distress, absenteeism, presenteeism, and work engagement. Management evaluates the support provided in terms of supervision at work and the creation of a psychologically safe climate (Miksen, 2019).

Wesolowski (2016) supported this idea after studying how workers in the service industry deal with feeling stressed about meeting customers' changing needs. Because the industry is always coming up with new ideas, what customers want also changes. This can make service workers feel even more stressed when they have trouble providing good service to customers.

According to Preston (2017), the level of happiness and enthusiasm among staff is influenced by how they are treated by management. Management behavior is something that only they can control. When management provides a positive environment and atmosphere for employees, they are likely to exhibit good and positive behavior toward customers.

Ayas and Ugurlu (2016) suggested that fostering positive energy is crucial for boosting employee productivity. The notion of "all work and no play" has long been recognized in management and business literature. Therefore, management needs to ensure that employees enjoy their time in the organization and feel recognized for their contributions.

In another view, COVID-19 has led to the shutdown of the hospitality and tourism sector, causing many employees to be laid off or placed on temporary leave. This extended period of being at home has led to feelings of social isolation among hospitality workers, which can contribute to depression. Previous research suggests that when employees experience social disconnection due to staying at home instead of going to work, they may feel isolated, thus increasing the risk of depression (Li and Huynh, 2020).

Between December 2019 and July 2020, there was a notable rise in psychological distress among young people, particularly in females. However, by December 2020, this distress had subsided. The initial psychological well-being and personality traits of individuals were associated with their baseline level of psychological distress, but they did not influence the change in distress over time. Gender did not play a role in the initial level of psychological distress but was a factor in the increase of distress (Fujihara & Tabuchi, 2022).

The results of the study of Bufquin (2020) indicated that individuals who remained employed during the pandemic reported more significant psychological distress, along with increased drug and alcohol consumption, compared to those who were furloughed. Furthermore, it was observed that heightened psychological distress was linked to greater drug and alcohol usage and a heightened intention to change careers. Lastly, it's worth noting that all employees, irrespective of their mental health, showed an increase in substance use and expressed a desire to explore job opportunities in different industries during the pandemic.

III. METHOD

➢ *Research Design.*
This study used descriptive research to assess the mental well-being of quick-service restaurant employees in the 4 cities of Batangas namely Batangas City, Lipa City, Tanuan City and Sto. Tomas City.

The goal of descriptive research is to define the variables being investigated as they exist naturally, and it employs the survey method to represent people's responses to questions about their behavior and attitudes (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018).

➢ *Respondents of the Study.*
The quick service restaurant employees in the 4 cities of Batangas were the respondents of the study. Random sampling was utilized to gather the data. The number of respondents was computed using a Rao Soft calculator with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 5%. Out of 144 employees, there were 105 respondents, however, due to incomplete data, only 103 were considered for the final test.

➢ *Data Gathering Instrument*
The questionnaire used was an adapted questionnaire from the study of Arroyo et al., (2020) titled Mental Wellbeing and Management Support to Restaurant Employees in Batangas City. The first part contained the profile of the QSR employees in terms of age, gender, length of service, type of employment, type of ownership, number of times of shift missed. Part II contained mental well-being in terms of well-being, psychological distress, absenteeism, and work engagement. Part III contained the management support to the QSR employees in terms of supervisor support at work, and psychological safety climate.

➢ *Data Gathering Procedure.*
The researchers used Google Forms to gather the data. They contacted the managers of the quick service restaurants and sent the link of the questionnaire through email or messenger for the employees to answer the survey questionnaire. Attached to the Google form was the consent form and the data privacy notice. After the questionnaire was answered, data was downloaded and submitted to the Statistics to analyze the result.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents. Weighted mean and rank were used to determine the mental well-being of employees in terms of well-being, psychological distress, absenteeism/presenteeism; and work engagement; assessed the management support in terms of supervision support at work and psychological safety climate management. The Shapiro-Wilk Test results indicated that the p-values for all variables were below 0.05, indicating that the dataset did not follow a normal distribution. Consequently, non-parametric tests such as the Mann-Whitney U test for two groups and the Kruskal-Wallis test for more than two groups were employed to identify significant differences. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 28.

➢ *Ethical Considerations*
The personal information furnished by the participants was handled with the utmost discretion, and their identities were not disclosed at any stage of the research. They were given assurance that the data would exclusively be used for academic purposes. A permission letter outlining the study's objectives was provided to the respondents before collecting any data.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Less than 20 years old	19	18.4
21 - 30 years old	60	58.3
31 - 40 years old	24	23.3
Gender		
Male	47	45.6
Female	49	47.6
LBTQ+	7	6.8
Length of Service		
Less than 6 months	39	37.9
6 months to 1 year	3	2.9
1 - 5 years	21	20.4
6 - 10 years	26	25.2
11 - 15 years	14	13.6
Type of Employment		
Full time	91	88.3
Part time	12	11.7
Type of Store Ownership		
Company Owned	31	30.1
Franchise	72	69.9
Number of Times of Shift Missed		
1 - 2 times	42	40.8
3 - 4 times	19	18.4
5 - 6 times	29	28.2
7 - 8 times	13	12.6

Table 1 shows the respondent's profile in terms of age, gender, length of service, type pf employment, type of ownership, and number of times of shift missed.

The majority of the employees are in the age bracket of 21-30 years old with 60 or 58.30%, followed by 31-40 years old with 24 or 23.3% and the least are less than 20 years old with 19 or 18.4%.

The result indicates that a significant portion of the workforce falls within the younger age bracket or the younger generation. This could have implications for the company's overall culture and dynamics. Younger employees might bring a fresh perspective and be more adept with technology, but they may also have less work experience.

In terms of gender, almost half of the employees were female with 49 or 47.6% followed by male with 47 or 54.6% and the least were LBTQ+ with 6.8%.

The organization exhibits a degree of gender diversity, with both male and female employees being well-represented. Gender diversity can bring different perspectives and experiences to the workplace, which can be beneficial for creativity and problem-solving.

With regards to the length of service, more of the most employees were working only for less than 6 months with 39 or 37.9% followed by 6 to 10 years with 26 or 25.2% and the lowest were 6 months to 1 year with 3 or 2.9%.

As to type of employment, majority of them were full-time with 91 or 88.3% while part-time were only 12 or 11.7 percent.

Full-time employment is often associated with greater job stability. Employees in full-time positions typically have regular work hours, job security, and more comprehensive benefits.

In terms of the type of ownership, the majority of the employees were working in a quick service restaurant that was franchised with 72 or 69.9 percent while only 31 were working in a company-owned QSR.

Most of the fast-food. restaurants in the province are franchised. In 2022, there were 1,204 Jollibee stores nationwide, of which 768 were franchised and 436 were company-owned (PSE, n.d.).

With regards to the number of days of shift missed, 42 or 40.8 % missed their shifts 1-2 times followed by 5-6 times with 29 or 28.2% and the lowest 13 times with 12.6%.

The fact that most of the employees missed their shifts 1-2 times means that this is a common occurrence. Missing a shift occasionally is generally considered within the range of normal absenteeism and can be attributed to various reasons, such as illness, personal emergencies, or unforeseen circumstances.

Table 2 Mental Well-being of Employees in Terms of Well Being

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	4.00	Often	4
2. I've been feeling useful	3.98	Often	5
3. I've been feeling relaxed	3.54	Often	7
4. I've been dealing with problems well	3.74	Often	6
5. I've been thinking clearly	4.16	Often	2
6. I've been feeling close to other people	4.27	Often	1
7. I've been able to make up my own mind about things	4.15	Often	3
Composite Mean	**3.98**	**Often**	
Legend:4.50-5.00=All the time;3.50-4.49=Often;2.50-3.49=Sometimes;1.50-2.49=Rarely;1.00-1.49=Never			

Table 2 presents the mental well-being of employees in terms of well-being with a composite mean of 3.98 rated as often. I've been feeling close to other people (4.27) ranked first followed by I've been thinking clearly (4.16) and third, I've been able to make up my own mind about things (4.15).

This means that QSR employees have been experiencing a strong sense of camaraderie and connection with their colleagues in the workplace. This feeling of closeness is not only limited to professional interactions but also extends to personal connections and rapport that have developed over time. It's a positive and supportive atmosphere where we work well together, communicate effectively, and genuinely care about each other's well-being. This sense of closeness has contributed to a more pleasant and productive work environment, fostering collaboration and teamwork.

In the research by Hanners and Redden (2021), employees highlighted team-oriented values that fostered support and camaraderie, which helped maintain their dedication to restaurant work and fostered a sense of belonging. The concept of teamwork was seen as a discourse within the organization, which could be conveyed through training. Participants emphasized the importance of local and interpersonal aspects of teamwork.

Meanwhile, the statements I've been feeling useful (3.98), I've been dealing with problems well (3.74) ranked low and, I've been feeling relaxed (3.54) as the lowest.

This result means that QSR employees are feeling relaxed in doing their task which can be a result of a combination of factors, including familiarity with my role, a supportive work environment, effective time management, and a balanced approach to work and life. This relaxation enhances overall job satisfaction and the performance of employees.

This is supported by the study of Bani-Melhem, et al., (2018) wherein happy employees are more positive, relaxed, and motivated, leading to increased productivity, better relationships, and a more harmonious workplace.

Table 3 Mental Well-Being of Employees in Terms of Psychological Distress

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
During the last 31 days, about how often did you feel			
1. I am feeling nervous	2.68	Sometimes	3
2. I am feeling hopeless	2.46	Rarely	4
3. I am feeling restless or fidgety	2.73	Sometimes	2
4. I am so depressed that nothing could cheer me up	2.21	Rarely	6
5. I feel that everything was an effort	2.86	Sometimes	1

6. I am worthless	2.30	Rarely	5
Composite Mean	**2.54**	**Sometimes**	
Legend:4.50-5.00=All the time;3.50-4.49=Often;2.50-3.49=Sometimes;1.50-2.49=Rarely;1.00-1.49=Never			

Table 3 shows the mental well-being of employees in terms of psychological distress with a composite mean of 2.54 rated as sometimes. I feel that everything was an effort (2.86) got the highest mean followed by I am feeling restless or fidgety (2.73) and third, I am feeling nervous (2.68).

This means that employees sometimes felt that working in a Quick Service Restaurant has been a challenging and demanding experience where every task and responsibility requires a significant amount of effort. QSR is known for its fast-paced and high-pressure work settings because of the need to serve customers quickly, especially during peak hours, which can make every task feel like a constant rush.

This is supported by the study of Khuong & **and** Linh (2020) wherein workers experience varying levels of stress, with high levels often arising when their job demands consume a significant portion of their time, leaving them with minimal opportunity for personal and daily life activities. Consequently, employees frequently find themselves in a state of stress and anxiety due to their limited time for activities beyond work.

However, I am feeling hopeless (2.46), I am worthless (2.30) and I am so depressed that nothing could cheer me up (2.21), interpreted as rarely.

The result means that in rare occasions QSR employees experience such deep feelings of depression while working. However, this emotional state can be challenging to manage, especially in a fast-paced and demanding environment. These depressive feelings may stem from a combination of work-related stressors, long hours, limited breaks, and the demanding nature of customer service. It's crucial for both employees and employers to recognize the potential impact of these factors on mental health and to promote strategies for stress management, coping, and seeking support when needed. Creating a supportive work environment that values employee well-being is essential in addressing these challenges effectively.

The study conducted by Van Eerd, et al., (2021) revealed that both interview and focus group data supported workplace practices that foster awareness regarding depression, address psychological hazards, foster a positive workplace culture, integrate flexible strategies, enhance communication regarding procedures, and facilitate collaboration with external resources.

In the study of Thisted (2020) employers may need a wider understanding of depression and the importance of the work environment influencing work disability due to depression

Table 4 Mental Well-Being of Employees in Terms of Absenteeism

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. I am absent due to sickness	2.33	Rarely	2
2. I am absent due to mental health issues	1.78	Rarely	4
3. I am absent due to emotional issues	1.81	Rarely	3
4. I am contacted by my manager when I was absent.	2.72	Sometimes	1
Composite Mean	**2.16**	**Rarely**	
Legend:4.50-5.00=All the time;3.50-4.49=Often;2.50-3.49=Sometimes;1.50-2.49=Rarely;1.00-1.49=Never			

Table 4 reveals the mental well-being of employees in terms of absenteeism with a composite mean of 2.16 rated as rarely.

I am contacted by my manager when I was absent (2.72) ranked highest but rated as sometimes, followed by I am absent due to sickness(2.33) but rated as rarely.

This means that supervisor or manager are extending their effort to contact their employees whenever they are absent. This is usually a common and standard practice in many workplaces especially in QSR to know the status and whereabouts of the employees if they are not filing for a leave of absence. It ensures that the workplace remains functional, policies are followed, and employees receive the support they may need during their absence. Additionally, it reflects a

commitment to maintaining a safe and productive work environment.

Meanwhile, I am absent due to emotional issues (1.81) and I am absent due to mental health issues (1.78) rated as rarely.

The result is a good indication because employees are rarely absent because of mental health issues. This means the QSR employees are in good mental health condition and they can handle their jobs with very few problems. Promoting mental health awareness, providing support, and creating a positive workplace culture remain crucial even when absenteeism rates appear low. This helps ensure that employees have the resources and support they need to maintain good mental health and well-being in the long run.

The result is in contrast with the research conducted by Zhang, et al. (2020), wherein in his study it resulted that the hospitality industry exhibits a high incidence of mental health challenges, with employee stress being identified as the primary cause for concern.

Table 5 Management Support in terms of Supervision Support at Work

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
My Supervisor			
1. … pays attention to my feelings and problems and notices if I'm not feeling so well]	3.74	Often	7
2. … shows that they appreciate the way I do my job]	4.01	Often	6
3. … supervisor helps me with a certain task if necessary]	4.27	Often	2
4. …. gives me advice on how to handle things if necessary]	4.18	Often	4
5. … would be someone I would speak to if I was experiencing workplace stress]	3.66	Often	9
6. … is considerate when managing team members]	4.22	Often	3
7. … involves me in decision making]	3.70	Often	8
8. … is accessible and approachable to people in the team]	4.29	Often	1
9. … remains objective when an issue between staff members arise]	4.16	Often	5
Composite Mean	**4.03**	**Often**	
Lgend:4.50-5.00=All the time;3.50-4.49=Often;2.50-3.49=Sometimes;1.50-2.49=Rarely;1.00-1.49=Never			

Table 5 shows the management support in terms of supervision support at work with the composite mean of 4.03, rated as often. My supervisor is accessible and approachable to people in the team (4.29) topped the list followed by my supervisor helping me with a certain task if necessary (4.27) and third, my supervisor is considerate when managing team members (4.22). rated as often.

This means that QSR employees recognize and appreciate having an accessible and approachable supervisor. Having such characteristics of a supervisor can have a positive impact on the overall work environment and team dynamics. In addition, team members are more likely to feel comfortable discussing their concerns, ideas, and questions, knowing that their supervisor is receptive and willing to listen.

This is supported by the study of Berkovich & Eyal (2018) wherein social support in the workplace is deemed valuable for addressing stress related to one's job, with emotional support from supervisors being identified as the most impactful form of support in this context.

Meanwhile, pays attention to my feelings and problems and notices if I'm not feeling so well (3.74), my supervisor involves me in decision-making (3.70) and the lowest, my supervisor would be someone I would speak to if I was experiencing workplace stress (3.66) ranked as the lowest but still rated as often.

The result means that in the QSR supervisor can easily speak with if their subordinates are experiencing workplace stress. This support of the supervisor is an important and valuable resource. Their understanding of the work environment, access to resources, and ability to advocate within the organization can make them valuable allies in managing and alleviating stressors. Open and honest communication with supervisors can lead to solutions that can improve overall work experience and well-being.

The study of Horan, et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of enhancing supervisor support for stress management as a complementary component of intervention strategies. Giving more consideration to the extent of stress management support offered by supervisors could enhance the development and implementation of interventions that are better received by employees.

Table 6 Management Support in Terms of Work Engagement

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. I look forward to going to work	4.42	Often	1
2. I am enthusiastic about my job	4.26	Often	2
3. Time passes quickly when I am working	4.22	Often	3
Composite Mean	**4.30**	**Often**	
Lgend:4.50-5.00=All the time;3.50-4.49=Often;2.50-3.49=Sometimes;1.50-2.49=Rarely;1.00-1.49=Never			

Table 6 presents the management support in terms of work engagement with the composite mean of 4.30 rated as often.

I look forward to going to work (4.42) ranked the highest followed by I am enthusiastic about my job(4.26) and the lowest time passes quickly when I am working (4.22), all rated as often.

The result means that employees of QSR are enthusiastic and are looking forward to going to work because of the support they have from the management. This is a positive and desirable attitude that many people aspire to have in their professional lives. It reflects a sense of enthusiasm, motivation, and satisfaction with one's job and workplace.

Looking forward to going to work is often the result of a combination of factors, including the nature of the job itself, the workplace environment, personal fulfillment, and the overall sense of purpose and satisfaction that one derives from their work. When these elements align positively, work becomes more than just a necessity; it becomes a source of joy and fulfillment in one's life.

This is supported by the study of Bhatti et al., 2021) where the non-physical environment can motivate employees to become enthusiastic and employees always like to go to work due to intangible factors such as support from superiors, effective communication with superiors and colleagues, the perception of fairness in financial matters, and others.

Table 7 Management Support in terms of Psychological Safety Climate

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. In my workplace management acts quickly to correct problems/issues that affect employees' psychological health	4.04	Agree	3
2. Management acts decisively when a concern of an employees' psychological status is raised	3.96	Agree	6
3. Management shows support for stress prevention through involvement and commitment	3.98	Agree	5
4. Psychological well-being of staff is a priority for this organization	4.03	Agree	4
5. Management clearly considers the psychological health of employees to be of great importance	4.14	Agree	2
6. Management considers employee psychological health to be as important as productivity	4.15	Agree	1
Composite Mean	**4.05**	**Agree**	
Legend:4.50-5.00=Strongly Agree;3.50-4.49=Agree;2.50-3.49=Moderately Agree;1.50-2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree			

Table 7 presents the Management Support in terms of Psychological Safety Climate with a composite mean of 4.05 and rated as agree.

Management considers employee psychological health to be as important as productivity (4.15) ranked the highest followed by Management clearly considers the psychological health of employees to be of great importance (4.14) and third, In my workplace management acts quickly to correct problems/issues that affect employees' psychological health (4.04)

The results mean that management for quick service restaurants recognizes that employees' mental and emotional well-being is not only a moral imperative but also directly impacts their productivity and the overall success of the quick service restaurant. When employees feel that their psychological health is valued by the management, they are more likely to be engaged at work. Engagement leads to higher productivity as engaged employees are more committed to their tasks and the organization's goals.

Promoting employee health and well-being through psychologically healthy workplace initiatives can enhance organizational performance and productivity. Investing in employee health can lead to reduced healthcare costs, absenteeism, and injury rates, while also improving overall performance and productivity within the organization. (Kelly, 2019)

The psychological well-being of staff is a priority for this organization (4.03), management shows support for stress prevention through involvement and commitment (3.98) ranked low and the lowest, management acts decisively when a concern of an employee's psychological status is raised (3.96), but still rated as agreed.

This means that creating a supportive and healthy work environment is a crucial aspect in the quick service restaurant because it demonstrates a commitment to employee well-being, fosters trust, and can help prevent more serious issues from arising. When management acts decisively in response to concerns about an employee's psychological well-being, it allows for early intervention. Addressing issues at an early stage can prevent them from escalating into more severe mental health problems that might require extended leave or treatment.

According to Hu, et al (2020) psychological interventions aimed at alleviating feelings of nervousness and fostering a shift away from negative coping mechanisms. These interventions involve therapeutic approaches and strategies designed to help individuals better manage their anxiety and promote healthier, more constructive ways of dealing with stress and adversity.

Table 8 Difference of Responses on Mental Well-being When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variables	H/U	p-value	Interpretation
Age			
Well Being	0.084	0.959	Not Significant
Psychological Distress	6.791	0.034	Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	3.931	0.140	Not Significant
Work Engagement	10.922	0.004	Significant
Gender			
Well Being	3.810	0.149	Not Significant
Psychological Distress	1.377	0.502	Not Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	1.788	0.409	Not Significant
Work Engagement	3.800	0.150	Not Significant
Length of Service			
Well Being	5.478	0.242	Not Significant
Psychological Distress	14.028	0.007	Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	8.445	0.077	Not Significant
Work Engagement	5.291	0.259	Not Significant
Type of Employment			
Well Being	479.500	0.492	Not Significant
Psychological Distress	476.500	0.474	Not Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	338.000	0.031	Significant
Work Engagement	383.500	0.086	Not Significant
Type of Store Ownership			
Well Being	652.500	0.001	Significant
Psychological Distress	799.500	0.022	Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	1026.000	0.514	Not Significant
Work Engagement	1047.500	0.613	Not Significant
Number of Days of Shift Missed			
Well Being	13.201	0.004	Significant
Psychological Distress	3.881	0.275	Not Significant
Absenteeism/Presenteeism	25.415	0.001	Significant
Work Engagement	4.095	0.251	Not Significant
Legend: Significant at p-value<0.05			

Table 8 presents the difference of responses on mental well-being when grouped according to profile. There was a statistically significant difference of responses on psychological distress when grouped according to age because the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. Post hoc test showed that there was a significant difference of responses between 21 – 30 years old and 31 – 40 years where the respondents belong to 31 – 40 years old had higher assessment on psychological distress.

The result means that age is associated with varying levels of psychological distress, with individuals in the 31 to 40-year-old age group reporting higher distress. Age group 31-40 years of age are assumed to be married and with families. Because of fear that they might contract the virus and spread it among family members caused higher psychological distressed. This observation highlights the importance of considering age-specific factors when addressing and mitigating psychological distress.

There was a statistically significant difference of responses on psychological distress when grouped according to length of service because the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. Post hoc test showed that there was a significant difference of responses between 6 – 10 years and less than 6 months , and between 6 – 10 years and 1 – 5 years. Based on the results, those respondents have served for 6 – 10 years and have lesser assessment on psychological distress.

This result suggests that individuals with 6-10 years of service tend to have a more positive assessment of psychological distress. This indicates the need for targeted strategies to support employees with varying levels of service tenure and to promote psychological well-being, especially among those who are relatively new to the organization.

There was a statistically significant difference of responses on absenteeism/presenteeism when grouped according to type of employment because the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. It shows that there was a significant difference of responses between full time and part time. Those respondents belong to part time category had higher assessment on absenteeism.

This highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing the unique factors that contribute to absenteeism among part-time workers and implementing strategies to reduce absenteeism for the benefit of both employees and the organization.

There was a statistically significant difference of responses on wellbeing and psychological distress when grouped according to type of employment because the obtained p-values were less than 0.05. It shows that there was a significant difference of responses between company-owned and franchise. Those respondents who belong to the company-owned category have a higher assessment of well-being and psychological distress.

The result indicates a complex relationship within the "company-owned" category. While these individuals report higher well-being, they also experience elevated levels of psychological distress. Company owned stores are known to have better human resource management system compared to franchised stores in terms of benefits and compensation package. Employees of company owned stores are more secured in terms of benefits hence they feel that their well being are being looked into by the management.

There was a statistically significant difference of responses on well-being and absenteeism when grouped according to the number of days of shift missed because the obtained p-values were less than 0.05. Post hoc test showed that there was a significant difference of responses on well-being between 7 – 8 days and 3 – 4 days, between 7 – 8 days and 1 – 2 days, and between 7 – 8 days and 5 – 6 days while there was a significant difference of responses on absenteeism/presenteeism between 1 – 2 days and 3 – 4 days, between 1 – 2 days and 7 – 8 days, and between 5 – 6 days and 7 – 8 days.

Based on the results, those respondents have lesser number of days shifted missed have higher assessment on well-being while those respondents have greater number of days shifted missed have a higher assessment of absenteeism/presenteeism.

Table 9 Difference of Responses on Management Support When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variables	H/U	p-value	Interpretation
Age			
Supervision Support at Work	11.260	0.004	Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	0.998	0.607	Not Significant
Gender			
Supervision Support at Work	0.016	0.992	Not Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	0.329	0.848	Not Significant
Length of Service			
Supervision Support at Work	3.144	0.534	Not Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	1.906	0.753	Not Significant
Type of Employment			
Supervision Support at Work	417.500	0.185	Not Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	474.000	0.452	Not Significant
Type of Store Ownership			
Supervision Support at Work	916.000	0.149	Not Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	969.500	0.285	Not Significant
Number of Days of Shift Missed			
Supervision Support at Work	0.721	0.868	Not Significant
Psychological Safety Climate	1.117	0.773	Not Significant
Legend: Significant at p-value<0.05			

Table 9 presents the difference of responses on management support when grouped according to profile. There was a statistically significant difference in responses on supervision support at work when grouped according to age because the obtained p-values were less than 0.05. Post hoc test showed that there was a significant difference of responses on supervision support at work between 31 – 40 years old and 21 – 30 years old while there was a significant difference in responses on work engagement between less than 20 years old and 21 – 30 years old, and between 31 – 40 years old and 21 – 30 years old. Based on the findings, those respondents belonging to the age bracket of 21 – 30 years old have a higher assessment on supervision support at work and work engagement.

The result means that the age group of 21 to 30 years old generally had more positive assessments of both supervision support at work and work engagement. This also means that individuals in this age bracket may feel more supported by their supervisors and be more engaged in their work compared to other age groups, which could have important implications for workplace management and employee satisfaction.

Table 10 presents the action plan that will help the QSR employees with improved mental well-being. It is based on the indicator's lowest mean result per table on wellbeing.

Table 10 Proposed Action Plan for an Improved Mental Well-Being of QSR Employees

Key Result Area/ Objectives	Strategies	Expected Outcome
Mental Wellbeing To become relaxed in doing their job.	Use techniques such as prioritization, setting clear goals, and creating schedules to manage tasks efficiently.	Employees will be more relaxed in the conduct of their duties.
Psychological Distress. To lessen the feeling that working is a hard effort.	Use technology and automation tools to streamline repetitive tasks and save time.	Employees will be psychologically managed.
Absenteeism To lessen/address the absences due to emotional issues.	1. Provide training and workshops to raise awareness about mental health issues, and reduce stigma. 2. Help employees recognize signs of emotional distress in themselves and their colleagues. 3. Organize stress management programs or workshops that teach employees effective coping strategies	Lessen Employee Absenteeism
Supervision support at work To have someone I would speak with when experiencing workplace stress.	1. Foster open and honest communication with colleagues. 2. Develop trusting relationships with coworkers who can provide support and lend a sympathetic ear when feeling stressed. 3. Choose a work "buddy" or friend with whom employees can regularly check in and discuss workplace stress.	Reduce workplace stress
Work Engagement To let the time pass when working.	1. Start the workday by setting clear goals and priorities 2. Engage with colleagues by having short conversations or collaborating on projects.	Employees will continue to be more productive

V. CONCLUSIONS

- The majority of the QSR employees are 20-30 years old, female, working for less than 6 months, in a full-time category, in a franchised restaurant with 1 to 2 days missed shifts in 28 days or 1 month.
- The mental well-being of the QSR employees is stable because they are able to feel often that they are close to other people, only sometimes experience that working is an effort, during their absence, they are contacted by their manager or supervisor and their supervisor is accessible and approachable to the people in the team and when working they felt that time pass quickly. This means that

they are still happy and satisfied with their job during the new normal.
- The responses of the QSR employees with regard to well-being differ when grouped according to profile. Assessment of psychological distress differs in terms of age, length of service, and type of ownership while for absenteeism the assessment differs in terms of types of employment and number of days missed.
- As management support only the assessment of QSR employees differs in terms of supervision at work and work engagement when grouped according to age.
- An action plan was proposed to give QSR employees a more stable mental well-being

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The QSR manager may organize an Emotional Intelligence (EQ) workshop which will focus on developing emotional intelligence, which involves understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others. It can cover topics such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and effective interpersonal communication.

- The QSR management may also organize Stress Management and Resilience. This seminar on stress management can provide techniques for handling stress, building resilience, and promoting mental well-being.

- The proposed action plan may be implemented to have a more improved well-being of the QSR employees.

- Future studies may be conducted with regard to the satisfaction of QSR employees in terms of salary, promotion and environment.

REFERENCES

[1]. Arroyo, A. L. T., Carandang, K. J. S., Casapao, A. M. B., Dauis, A. R. C., Magtibay, S. E., & Apritado, J. M. (2020). Mental Wellbeing and Management Support to Restaurant Employees in Batangas City. Asia Pacific Journal of Academic Research in Business Administration, 6(1).

[2]. Bhatti, M. K., Soomro, B. A., & Shah, N. (2021). Work environment and performance among nurses: a significant way to overcome violation of human rights in the health sector. International Journal of Human Rights in Healthcare. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJHRH-03-2021-0064

[3]. Bani-Melhem, S., Zeffane, R., & Albaity, M. (2018). Determinants of employees' innovative behavior. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 30(3), 1601–1620. doi:10.1108/ijchm-02-2017-0079

[4]. Beard, G. (2018). Caring for the psychological health of your employees. Worklogic. Retrieved from http://www.worklogic.com.au

[5]. Berkovich, I., & Eyal, O. (2018). Help me if you can: Psychological distance and help-seeking intentions in employee–supervisor relations. *Stress and Health*, *34*(3), 425-434.

[6]. Bufquin, D., Park, J.-Y., Back, R. M., Meira, J. V. de S., & Hight, S. K. (2020, December 1). Employee Work Status, Mental Health, Substance Use, and Career Turnover Intentions: An Examination of Restaurant Employees during COVID-19. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 93

[7]. DiPietro, R., & Bufquin, D. (2018). Effects of work status congruence and perceived management concern for employees on turnover intentions in a fast casual restaurant chain. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *17*(1), 38-59.

[8]. Everymind (2018). Understanding mental health and wellbeing. Retrieved from: http://everymind.org.au

[9]. Fujihara, S., & Tabuchi, T. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 on the psychological distress of youths in Japan: A latent growth curve analysis. *Journal of affective disorders*, *305*, 19-27.

[10]. Gravetter & Forzano (2018). Research methods for the behavioral sciences. Retrieved from: Retrieved from: https://www.worldcat.org/

[11]. Hanners, K. A., & Malvini Redden, S. (2021). Communicating Values to Cultivate Sustainable Occupational Identity: How Restaurant Workers Resist Service Work Stigma. Sustainability, 13(15), 8587.

[12]. Horan, K. A., Moeller, M. T., Singh, R. S., Wasson, R., O'Brien, W. H., Matthews, R. A., … Barratt, C. L. (2018). Supervisor support for stress management and intervention process. International Journal of Workplace Health Management. doi:10.1108/ijwhm-12-2017-0113

[13]. Hobbs, J. E. (2020). Food supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic. Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics/Revue canadienne d'agroeconomie, 68(2), 171-176.

[14]. Hu, Q., Dollard, M. F., & Taris, T. W. (2022). Organizational context matters: Psychosocial safety climate as a precursor to team and individual motivational functioning. *Safety science*, *145*, 105524.

[15]. Italian Bar & Kitchen (2018). How Happy Employees Make Happy Customers. Retrieved from: https://www.forbes.com

[16]. Kelly, R. K., & Snow, S. (2019). The importance of corporate wellness programs for psychological health and productivity in the workplace. *Creating Psychologically Healthy Workplaces*, *411*.

[17]. Khuong, M., & Linh, U. (2020). Influence of work-related stress on employee motivation, job satisfaction and employee loyalty in hospitality industry. Management Science Letters, 10(14), 3279-3290.

[18]. Miksen, C. (2019). How to Manage Restaurants Employees. from:https://smallbusiness.chron.com

[19]. Petrie, K., Gayed, A., Bryan, B. T., Deady, M., Madan, I., Savic, A., ... & Harvey, S. B. (2018). The importance of manager support for the mental health and well-being of ambulance personnel. PLoS One, 13(5), e0197802.

[20]. Preston, C. (2017). Promoting employee happiness benefits. https://www.forbes.com/

[21]. Thisted, C. N., Labriola, M., Nielsen, C. V., Jul Håkonsen, S., & Bjerrum, M. B. (2020). Understanding depression as a workplace issue: Clarifying employers' attitudes to manage employees with depression. *Work*, *65*(4), 857-868.

[22]. Van Eerd, D., Cullen, K., Irvin, E., Le Pouésard, M., & Gignac, M. (2021). Support for depression in the workplace: perspectives of employees, managers, and OHS personnel. *Occupational Health Science*, *5*(3), 307-343.

[23]. Wesolowski, A. (2016). Serving up stress: Perceived stressors and coping mechanisms of front of house restaurant employees. *Journal of Undergraduate Studies at Trent (JUST)*, *4*(1), 113-122.

[24]. Zhang, J., Lu, H., Zeng, H., Zhang, S., Du, Q., Jiang, T., & Du, B. (2020). The differential psychological distress of populations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Brain, behavior, and immunity, 87, 49.