How to Implement Employee Assistance Programs in Higher Education: A Literature Review

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Abstract. Higher education leaders need to establish Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) by understanding the challenges faced by the higher education based on strategies to effectively meet the needs to achieve better employees' performance in their field. The EAPs in higher education focuses on the unique challenges of employee assistance service delivery in a university setting. This paper discussed the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the EAPs in higher education through a framework of the EAPs application in a higher education institution. This insight was expected to provide insight to university leaders who wished to effectively implement the EAPs in their higher education in the face of changing labour demand and competition challenges in the labour market.

Keywords: the EAPs, employee, higher education, preparation, implementation, evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Currently, higher education institutions are required to improve the quality of graduates to compete in the global market and contribute to developing science and technology that suits the needs and demands of the industry (Cardona & Bravo, 2012; Chui, Ahmad, Bassim, & Zaimi, 2016; Gow & McDonald, 2000; Guimón, 2013; Hénard & Roseveare, 2012; Markovic & Markovic, 2012; Narasimharao, Wright, Prasad, & Joshi, 2017; Pheko & Molefhe, 2016; Sari, Firat, & Karaduman, 2016; Srinivasan, 2014). These demands certainly pressure the faculty members in college (Brennan, King, & Lebeau, 2004; Change, 2016; Dougherty, Jones, Lahr, Natow, Pheatt, & Reddy, 2016; Phillips & Bostian, 2011; Prince, Felder, & Brent, 2007; Temple, Callender, Grove, & Kersh, 2014; Van Valey, 2001; West, 2006). Those who can keep up with the demands of job market do not have a problem, but those who feel pressured by the burden of their responsibilities leave them stressful due to uncomfortable and unpleasant the work environment (Addison & Yankyera, 2015; Arnold & Bowie, 2003; Bahrami, 2010; Borg, Verdonk, Dauwerse, & Abma, 2017). This condition has not been added to their domestic family problems that may occur (Anderson, 2014; Lander, Howsare, & Byrne, 2013). If these conditions continue, these problems will create an unpleasant academic atmosphere in the college environment because it decreases the faculty members' performance (Adolphus, Lawton, & Dye, 2013; Ahamed & Sunderasan, 2016; Osabiya, 2015; Schneider, Gruman, & Coutts, 2011; Woo & Postolache, 2008).

An excellent college leader needs to respond quickly to human resource conditions (Marsden, Caffrey, & McCaffery, 2013; Ouye, 2011; Walsh, Sturman, & Longstreet, 2010). The leader must identify the issues that occur to the employees, such as work, personal, and family issues, because these could cause their performance to decrease (IAFC, 2011; Kutilek, Conklin, & Gunderson, 2002; Taina & Sari, 2011; Yoder-Wise, 2014). Competitive work life can lead to competition, pressure, stress and personal greed, and can lead to loss of motivation and job satisfaction in the workplace (Bell, Rajendran, & Theiler, 2012; Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010; Yadav & Yadav, 2014). Furthermore, issues such as task types switching and workplace positions and the perceived economic strain in the workplace can adversely affect the psychological health of employees. So many factors such as loss of office, increased workload, prolonged working hours, declining wages may have an

impact on workers (Lai, 2011; Yildirim, Abukan, & Oztas, 2017). Also, discrimination in the workplace negatively affects the mental health of workers. It has also been reported that the decline in mental health outcomes is substance abuse (Grund & Schmitt, 2013; Maclean, Webber & French, 2015; Xu, Gail & Jensen, 2012; Yildirim, Abukan, & Oztas, 2017).

Based on the above problems, Bruce (2011) and Chuang (2013) mentioned that a leader needs to provide support and motivation to create skilled and competitive human resources in their work environment. For example, is to apply Employee Assistance Programs (the EAPs) in the college environment (Cocciarelli, 1985; Grosch, Duffy, & Hessink, 1996; Pogue, 1997; Sandys, 2015). The psychological problem has a more significant influence than physical issues (Altuntas, 2010; Gül, İnce, & Özcan, 2011) that is often ignored by a leader because it is perceived as a personal matter (Csiernik, 2005). One of the main problems is burnout syndrome (Chlan, 2013; Suñer-Soler et al., 2014; Trindade et al., 2010; Weber & Jaekel-Reinhard, 2000). Burnout closely relates to the working conditions (Metlaine et al., 2017; Seidler et al., 2014). Human resources may feel tired and emotionally exhausted when appropriate working conditions are not provided. This situation causes the emergence of emotions such as psychological stress and weakness (Yildirim, Abukan, & Oztas, 2017). Common sources of stress can be listed as several issues: uncontrolled demands associated with excessive workload, monotonous and repetitive tasks, workplace machine noise, negative attitudes at work, role conflict and workplace ambiguity (Csiernik, 2005). Efforts aimed at eliminating these sources of stress are critical in many countries, where utmost care is given to live human lives through the EAPs. This program has been implemented in many countries such as USA, Canada, UK, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Southeast Asia, Russia, South Korea, China, Japan and South Africa (Burgess, Lennox, Sharar & Shtoulman, 2015; Cekiso & Terblanche, 2015; Choi, Lee & Park, 2015; Csiernik, 1999; Compton & McManus, 2015; Haring, Hudson, Erickson, Taualii & Freeman, 2015; Lapham, Mcmillan & Gregory 2003; Li, Sharar, Lennox & Zhuang, 2015; Murphy, 1995; Muto, Fujimori & Suzuki, 2004; Vansteenwegen, Sommer, Antonissen, Laneiro & Nunes, 2015).

The EAP program has been proven to help employees in industry, business, and universities in many developed countries. However, many university leaders, especially in developing countries, do not understand how to implement the EAPs in their higher education. In this paper, the author would explain the stages that need to be done to implement the EAPs to help to better the faculty members' performance.

METHODS

Literature review from international journal papers and books were used in this study to find the required stages to implement the EAPs to help to better the faculty members' performance in higher education. They were analyzed to obtain results and support in this paper. Finally, this study grouped them in the theoretical framework that the implementation of the EAPs in higher education consisted of the preparation stage, implementation stage, and evaluation stage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Higher education leaders are people who play a significant role in implementing the EAPs in their institution environments (Attridge et al., 2010; Balatbat, 2010; Gillett, 1996; Kukk, Moors, & Hekkert, 2016; Wilson, 2005). They need to be responsible for implementing the EAPs starting from the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the performance program. All stages of the process need to be communicated by the leaders to all the human resources in the University. The goal is to understand that the offered the EAPs fit the needs (Van Den Bergh, 2012). These stages are illustrated by a framework of the EAPs application in higher education in Figure 1.
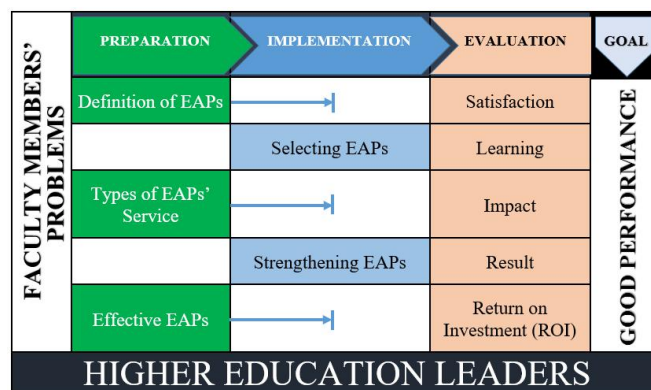
Figure 1. A Framework of The EAPs Application in Higher Education.

Figure 1 shows that the process of applying the EAPs in higher education needs to be done gradually and cautiously by leaders in the top, middle, and bottom levels in to avoid misunderstanding and reduce the risk may have occurred. A detailed explanation of each stage of the process is described as follows.

Preparation Stage

Implementation of the EAPs requires an exact preparation stage. This stage is the process to understand all human resources, or faculty members, in higher education. Generally, the three recommended components by experts understand the definition of the EAPs, types of EAP services, and effective the EAPs (Buon & Taylor, 2007; Govender, 2009; Jacobson & Attridge, 2010; Jacobson & Jones, 2010; Sharar, 2009; Sieberhagen, Pienaar, & Els, 2011). All comprehension needs to be prepared by the joint leadership with the EAPs team that has been established previously (Gillett, 1996). This team consists of leaders from the upper, middle, and lower levels of each college.

Definition of The EAPs

The EAPs constitutes a job-based intervention program designed to identify and assist workers of higher education in resolving their problems that may affect their performance at their job, such as problems of marriage, finance or emotion, family, or substance (HEAL, 2010; Jacobson & Attridge, 2010; Matlhape, 2003). Bickford (2005) and Van Wyk (2011) stated that the EAPs help to integrate services from leaders to their workers to alleviate psychological, psychosocial, and work-related behavioural problems which impact on their job, wellbeing, and productivity.

Types of The EAPs' services

Higher education leaders can begin using EAP services in a variety of ways, namely: (1) Self-referral, meaning the employees contact the EAP directly (Attridge et al., 2009b); (2) Informal, meaning a friend or colleague suggests the EAP to the employee and recommends its use (Inzer & Crawford, 2005); and (3) Formal, meaning based on observation, a leader urges the EAP to an employee (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010) such as a referral may be mandatory due to poor performance or disciplinary actions. A formal referral based on discipline or performance creates specific legal considerations for higher education (Falcone, 2010).

Effective The EAPs

The EAPs constitute cost-effective tools to mitigate risks for human resources (Carter & Robinson, 2000; Hughes & Kinder, 2007; Meyer, Roodt, & Robbins, 2011; World Bank, 2006). The EAPs could help to reduce employee absenteeism, compensation claims, health care costs, accidents,

grievances, and others (Lee, 2000; Leon, 2012; Masi, 2011). In the other hand, it can identify employee performance problems to improve employee productivity and engagement (Wachter & Yorio, 2014).

The higher education leaders who consider whether the EAPs is right for their institutions to learn about the basics of the EAP services, how leaders make the contract with the EAP provider and critical requirements that accessible to followed by employees who want access an EAP service.

Attridge et al. (2009a) described that components of the EAP services are (1) professional, short-term counselling, with referral and case management, (2) management consultations to address job-related, behavioural issues, (3) organizational and team interventions, and (4) complete reporting to assess program penetration effectively and to guide the development of employee preventive strategies. In the implementation, the EAPs services may consist of the assessments of employees' needs such as job problems, referrals for diagnosis and treatment of mental health, substance use or other issues and consultation services for top managements and middle managements (Levy Merrick, Volpe-Vartanian, Horgan, & McCann, 2007). The EAPs also provide training to teach middle managements to recognize and possibly resolve performance issues related to behaviour, health or job (Blum, 2005; HEAL, 2010).

When establishing an EAP program, high educational leaders have several options for every aspect of service. Several EAP delivery models that the most commonly used are as follows:

- Management-sponsored EAPs (Kurzman & Maiden, 2013). These are in-house programs, and the organization directly employs the EAP staff. Large organizations often offer this form of EAP.
- Fixed-fee contracts (Hartwell, 1996). Leaders contract various services such as counselling, referrals and supervisory training with fees based on the number of employees, regardless of their actual EAP use.
- Fee-for-service contracts (Attridge et al., 2009b). Leaders contract the EAP provider directly, paying only when the service is used.
- Consortia (Bogardus, 2009). Small organizations join together to contract for EAP services, lowering the cost per employee.
- Member assistance programs. Provided by other organization, member assistance programs offer services ranging from prevention and problem identification to referral and counselling activities for employees and their family members.
- Peer assistance programs (Attridge et al., 2009a). Sponsored by leaders or other organization, peer assistance programs (PAPs) train peers to work with troubled employees to address substance abuse and other problems within predetermined rules and limits.
- Mixed-model programs (Hendriksen, Snoijer, de Kok, van Vilsteren, & Hofstetter, 2016). These are used by leaders and other organization with multiple worksites that have different needs and resources.

Furthermore, regarding critical EAP requirements, the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (2010) guidelines said that the EAPs must have written policies ensuring client confidentiality, an adequate number of trained employee assistance professionals, and formal procedures for following up with or monitoring people who use the EAP. The Employee Assistance Professionals Association (2010) recommends organizations to adopt a written policy defining the EAP's relationship to the organization and stating the scope and limitations of services. A written policy statement intends to provide a clear definition of the EAP's function and to make sure that all parties understand the EAP and that the EAP is used consistently throughout the organization. The policy statement should not be confused with operating procedures or contractual agreements. Because operating procedures may need to be adjusted in response to emerging needs, they should not be incorporated into a policy document that may be difficult to modify.

Summerfield and Van Oudtshoorn (1995) explained the EAP's standards that need to be understood by higher education leaders to apply include (1) an advisory process that involves representatives from all parts of the higher educational organization, including top management, middle management, and faculty members, (2) the ability to meet changing needs by adding services, (3) crisis intervention services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, (4) procedures for determining when to provide short-term problem resolution services within the EAP and when to refer a client to professional or community resources outside the EAP, (5) training for the organization's leaders, so those leaders learn to recognize issues and can intervene by referring employees to the EAP, and (6) trained professionals who maintain and upgrade their skills. Other components of a comprehensive EAP program are responsive account management, legal and regulatory compliance, policy development, communication, training, quality local services that are sensitive to language and culture, particularly during emergencies, critical incidents and when training is needed, quality and access as priorities over cost, mainly when expatriate services are involved, varied methods of service delivery such as phone counselling, electronic services, robust websites and promotional materials customized to language and culture, as well as customized data reporting (Employee Assistance Professionals Association, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011; Kruk, 2010).

Implementation Stage

After preparation, the second stage is implementation through selecting the EAP provider and managing the EAPs. These will help higher education leaders to reveal which program is the best fit for their needs. Attridge et al. (2009a) mentioned that several vital elements to select the most appropriate of the EAPs services are as follows.

1. Kinds of the EAPs services that are needed at higher education. These include individual, managerial, organizational, and administrative services.
2. Models of the EAPs service to deliver the program with best for higher education include internal, external, and blended model.
3. Levels and types of the desired EAP utilization that should be evaluated, such as the use of clinical cases, service users, and all activities used at higher education.
4. Kinds of functioning that are best for the EAP services at higher education: personal and work functioning.
5. Ways of the EAP program to deliver its services such as orientated on worker performance, focused on individual issues, development, and renewal available human resources from inside and outside at higher education promoted to give awareness the EAP on top leaders, middle leaders, and bottom leaders and their role in the EAP services.
6. Levels of professionalism from the EAP organization such as having program accreditation, individual certification to the job field, and its services' licensure.

Meanwhile, strengthening the EAPs can be undertaken by higher educational leaders through setting up and promoting the EAPs so that it ready to be used (Attridge et al., 2009a). This process is started with the planning of the EAP services supported by costs, reports, and employee data in current higher education to guide the EAP implementation. Then, identification, engagement, and collaboration are conducted by EAP organization with higher education leaders to implement the EAP (Attridge et al., 2010). Specific purposes, assessment indicators, and critical performance should be developed in the areas of management specifically (Eckerson, 2009). These results should be measured and reported to be used as the basis for making improvements and changes in EAP services in the next programs (World Bank, 2012).

Implementing the EAP services is an essential last step to give assistance and program for worker selected (Attridge et al., 2009a, 2009b, 2010). Based on the initial review and records from the EAPs

resources, these programs need to be promoted in higher education with supported by leaders (Azaroff, Champagne, Nobrega, Shetty, & Punnett, 2010). To update the EAP better in the higher education institution and easing it, it also needs the leader's policy and other specific materials (Employee Assistance Professionals Association, 2006). To give optimal benefits, higher education should set targets for the EAP services through emphasizing components of its program. In the other side, communication is needed in the higher educational society. (Attridge et al., 2009a). One of the ways to promote the EAP is to use the internet and social media (Anderson, Boyles, & Rainie, 2012). The endorsement of leaders in each department in higher education is vital to create EAP services successfully.

Evaluation Stage

An evaluation stage needs to be carefully evaluated (Phillips & Phillips, 2016; Rooney, Videto, & Birch, 2015; Winston, Creamer, & Miller, 2013). The objective is to obtain data results that have an optimum impact on the programs being implemented to the user in the higher educational environment (Langbein, 2016; Ulum, 2015; Wall, 2014; White, Wells, & Butterworth, 2014). Similarly, evaluation of the EAPs in college as service programs, these need to be evaluated too. The EAPs' services in higher education should be assessed by leaders, faculty members, staffs, and students.

Many types of evaluation tools can be used to evaluate such as the Kirkpatrick, Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP), Training Validation System (TVS), and Inputs, Process, Output, and Outcome (IPO) (Bradley, Kelly & Edward, 2013; Dahiya & Jha, 2011; Rehmat, Aaltio, Agha, & Khan, 2015; Tiantong & Tongchin, 2013; Topno, 2012; Wang, 2010). In this evaluation, the author suggests using Kirkpatrick's evaluation.

The Kirkpatrick model consists of four levels: satisfaction, learning, behaviour, result, and return on investment (Tamkin, Yarnall, & Kerrin, 2002; Wang, 2009). The explanations are as follows.

Satisfaction level

This level measures how satisfied the users with the EAPs' services. Higher education leaders want them to feel that the EAPs' services give a valuable experience, and leaders want them to get benefit from it, so they feel satisfied with help the EAPs' service. It is important to measure satisfaction because it helps leaders understand how well the EAPs' services were received by higher educational society. It also allows leaders to improve and develop it for the future.

Learning level

Learning is defined as an attitude change derived from the knowledge and skills learned by users. At level 2, leaders measure what users have discovered after using the EAPs' services. How much has their knowledge increased to solve their problems using the EAPs' services? It is essential to measure this because knowing what higher educational society are learning and what they are not will help leaders improve and develop the EAPs' services in future.

Behavioural level

Behaviour is defined as the extent to which changes in the former users and in at the time after users use the EAPs' services. This level is essential to realize that behaviour can only change if these services are used to solve their problems, so their performance becomes better.

Result level

A result is defined as the extent of the impact of The EAPs' implementation to the improved the quality of human resource in higher education. At this level, higher educational leaders analyze the

results of The EAPs' services. This includes outcomes that top leader has determined to use it for helping problems of leaders, faculty members, staffs, and students in the higher educational environment.

Return on investment (ROI)

ROI, in this case, constitutes the benefit of an investor resulted from an investment of resources in the EAPs' implementation in higher education. To measure the EAPs performance, ROI can be used to evaluate program efficiency from an investment carried out and compare different of the efficiency from the number of investments from year to year to consider profits to capital invested. The ROI estimate of the EAPs could be calculated by using a standard utility analysis with data derived from EAP users. According to Flanagan and Ots (2017), the estimation to calculate the benefit of EAP could be used as a formula: $\Delta U = dt \times SDy$. Where ΔU is the dollar value of EAP intervention, dt is the difference in The EAPs productivity. The EAP intervention is 0.145, and SDy is the standard deviation of work performance in dollars with 40% of annual salary.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of EAP services is not only applied to company employees but can also be used to human resources in college. Implementation of the EAP serves to overcome personal and work problems that affect the performance of human resources in universities.

To implement it, higher education leaders should involve the whole community of higher education, including leaders at all levels, faculty members, staffs, and students supported by consistent policy, funding and commitment. All stages of the EAP process should be done through a hierarchical approach, namely preparation, implementation, and evaluation. Hopefully, the optimal target of this program will improve the achievement of human resource and higher education service performance in line with the demand of the competence of college graduates to compete in the global job market and develop the science and technology needed by industries.

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