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Teachers' Motivational Strategies and Productivity in Selected Secondary Schools in Akinyele Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria

Abdulahi Abiola Olaniyi

Prospecting Digital HR for Sustainable Local Government Administration in Nigeria

Oluwatomisin Joy Popoola and Akeem Amodu, PhD

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Adenike Olufunmilayo Odunsi, PhD and Oladunni Ajoke Akinola, PhD

Exploring the Relationship between Work Expectations and Employee Retention among Generation Z in Selected Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria.

Aderounmu G.A, Oni K. A, Otegbade T.O and Shonola Olayinka Sakirat

Infertility-Related- Stress and Coping Strategies as Predictors of Mental Well-being among Individuals with Reproductive Health Challenges in Ibadan Oyo State Nigeria

Aderonke Abolusodun and Johnson T. Oyeleke PhD

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Abiona, Olabisi Modupe & Bamidele, Motunrayo Oluwagbemisola

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Contents

Teachers' Motivational Strategies and Productivity in Selected Secondary Schools in Akinyele Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria

Abdulahi Abiola Olaniyi 5

Prospecting Digital HR for Sustainable Local Government Administration in Nigeria

Oluwatomisin Joy Popoola and Akeem Amodu, PhD 18

Digital Transformation and Operational Efficiency in Local Government Administration of Oyo State

Adenike Olufunmilayo Odunsi, PhD and Oladunni Ajoke Akinola, PhD 28

Exploring the Relationship between Work Expectations and Employee Retention among Generation Z in Selected Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria.

Aderounmu G.A, Oni K. A, Otegbade T.O and Shonola Olayinka Sakirat 43

Infertility-Related- Stress and Coping Strategies as Predictors of Mental Well-being among Individuals with Reproductive Health Challenges in Ibadan Oyo State Nigeria

Aderonke Abolusodun and Johnson T. Oyeleke PhD 59

Building Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems for a Sustainable Future of Work in Nigeria

Abiona, Olabisi Modupe & Bamidele, Motunrayo Oluwagbemisola 78

Human Capital Development and Organizational Performance in Selected Manufacturing Companies in Nigeria

Olusola James Oladejo, Mary Etigale Ochom & Opadotun Tunde Adewumi 89

Enhancing Crop Yields through Credit Access among Female Smallholder Farmers in Ogun State, Nigeria

Adeyemi Olaoluwa Bamigboye and Tina Akinbo (PhD) 105

Digital Banking and Financial Inclusion in Nigeria

Adewumi Moyosore Akingbade, Opadotun Tunde Adewumi, and Ibikunle Oladipupo Ibidapo 120

Building Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems for a Sustainable Future of Work in Nigeria

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Abstract

Workplace psychological resilience and mental health support systems play a critical role in ensuring employee well-being, productivity, and organizational sustainability, particularly in Nigeria, where mental health is long overlooked. This study probes the current state of psychological resilience and mental health support systems in Nigerian workplaces and evaluates the effectiveness of resilience-building interventions and mental health programs in guaranteeing a sustainable future of work. Using a scoping review, studies published between 2015 and 2025 were assessed to identify trends, gaps, and the impacts of various workplace mental health programs. Findings indicate that although many Nigerian firms offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), stress management initiatives, and workplace resilience programs, these initiatives are not accessed due to stigma, unawareness, and ineffective policy guidance. Evidence indicates that evidence-based resilience interventions, such as mindfulness training, stress reduction methods, and cognitive behavioural therapy, improve employee well-being, reduce absenteeism, and enhance workplace productivity. However, gaps in policy application, cultural resistance, and inadequate mental health education persist to undermine the effectiveness of these interventions. To develop a sustainable and resilient workforce, Nigerian organizations must prioritize incorporating mental health policies, employer-backed resilience training, leadership endorsement, and mass mental health awareness campaigns. These issues will not only improve workplace mental health but also Nigeria's long-term economic prosperity and workforce sustainability.

Keywords: Psychological Resilience, Mental Health Support, Workplace Well-Being, Employee Assistance Programs, Workplace Mental Health Policies, Nigeria

Introduction

The modern workplace is evolving rapidly due to technological advancements, globalization, and socio-economic transformation. These trends have significantly impacted employees' mental health, and there is a high demand for prioritizing psychological resilience and mental health support systems to create a healthy future of work, particularly in Nigeria (Ajayi & Udeh, 2024). Mental problems such as anxiety, burnout, and stress are becoming increasingly prevalent in Nigeria's workforce due to job-related stress, economic instability, and unemployment (Babatunde, 2024). With these emerging challenges, mental health remains under-emphasized, hampered by weak institutional frameworks and far-reaching stigma that render it hard to establish practical interventions (Fadele et al., 2024).

Nigeria, like most developing economies, is faced with the enormous challenge of addressing mental illness in the workplace. Studies have shown that the lack of clearly articulated mental health policies, as well as cultural stigmatization, limits access to support services among workers (Ugwu et al., 2025). Nigeria's mental health burden has also been exacerbated by challenges such as workplace insecurity, economic depression, and the psychosocial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the need to develop resilience processes within the labour force (Nakpodia et al., 2024). In addition, research indicates that industries such as construction and healthcare experience high levels of job stress, thereby making psychological resilience a focal point for ensuring worker well-being (Nwaogu et al., 2021).

Efforts to integrate mental health support into organizational systems are still in the nascent stage in Nigeria. Employee assistance programs, mindfulness training, and peer-help networks have been initiated in organizations; however, these efforts are scattered and few and lack a national policy (Harri et al., 2025). Developing an emotionally resilient workforce must embrace multiple strategies, including mental health promotional campaigns, policy modification, and professional guidance counselling services (Oyewunmi & Oyewunmi, 2015). In addition, digital interventions, such as mobile-based mental health support platforms, have been effective in bridging gaps in mental health service provision, particularly among young professionals in urban settings (Nwaogu et al., 2022).

Despite the increasing recognition of mental health as a major determinant of productivity, Nigeria's workforce remains plagued by high rates of psychological distress, which negatively impacts work performance and overall economic growth (Ojedokun & Balogun, 2015). The absence of workplace mental health policies and a small number of mental health professionals has led to a crisis that affects employee well-being and organizational sustainability (Kola et al., 2022). Research shows that organizations with strong psychological resilience systems have lower absenteeism, higher job satisfaction, and improved employee engagement (Mchunu & Naidoo, 2019). But in Nigeria, the work environment does not typically facilitate openness to talk about mental health, and workers are therefore left to suffer in silence or resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms (Ager et al., 2015).

In the face of such realities, it is imperative that an enduring, situation-specific mental health support system for early intervention, psychological resilience training, and policy incorporation in corporate and government organizations be instituted urgently. This paper

explores optimal strategies for building psychological resilience and institutionalizing mental health support systems to respond to Nigeria's socio-economic needs. By promoting a culture of mental health, businesses can contribute to a healthier, more effective workforce and a sustainable future of work.

Research Objectives

The broad objective of the study is to explore best practices for developing psychological resilience and deploying mental health support systems within the Nigerian labour force to enhance well-being, improve productivity, and provide a sustainable future of work. Other specific objectives are to:

1. establish the extent of psychological resilience and mental health care systems within Nigerian workplaces, policy implementation gaps and challenges and organizational practice challenges.
2. evaluate the effect of various resilience development interventions and mental health interventions on workers' well-being and organizational sustainability within Nigeria.

Methodology

This study employs a scoping review strategy, a systematic yet adaptable approach to identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing evidence on psychological resilience development strategies and the implementation of mental health support systems within the Nigerian working population. The strategy enables thorough reviews of available interventions, research trends, and policy frameworks, and identifies gaps within workplace mental health programs (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Peters et al., 2020). Following conventional scoping review guidelines, this study follows systematic searching, eligibility criteria, and reproducible data extraction to ensure methodological transparency and rigour.

Eligibility Criteria

In screening empirical and policy-driven studies on psychological resilience, workplace mental health programs, and organizational interventions to enhance employee well-being in Nigeria, the review prioritized peer-reviewed qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies published from 2015 to 2025. More specifically, studies that examine workplace mental health interventions, resiliency intervention programs, organizational policies and regulations, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and employer-sponsored mental health programs are covered. Studies examining barriers to mental health care, corporate wellness frameworks, and stress management interventions in Nigerian workplaces are also covered.

Theoretical, conceptual, and non-workforce mental health studies in Nigeria are not included. Literature on interventions for non-workplace mental health, informal-sector issues, and international mental health trends that are not relevant to Nigeria is also not considered in the review.

Data Sources & Search Strategy

A systematic literature search across PubMed, Scopus, PsycINFO, AJOL, Web of Science, ProQuest Health & Medical, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar was conducted,

supplemented by government documents, policy briefs, and industry white papers. The objective of the search was to yield pertinent studies on psychological resilience, workplace mental health interventions, and mental health support systems in Nigeria.

To ensure the search was extensive and methodical, Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) were employed in conjunction with keyword strings such as:

- "Workplace mental health in Nigeria"
- "Psychological resilience of Nigerian employees"
- "Employee assistance programs (EAPs) in Africa"
- "Stress management interventions in Nigerian workplaces"
- "Corporate mental health policies in Nigeria"

A decision flowcharting strategy was utilized to track inclusion/exclusion decisions, ensure consistency, and avoid selection bias. The studies were filtered by study objective relevance, the duplicates removed, and abstracts evaluated before complete-text evaluation. The strategy ensured the inclusion of ultimate synthesis, high-quality research, and context-based research.

Box 1. Database search terms and keywords

Systematic cross-searches of many scholarly databases were conducted to access literature on psychological resilience and employees' mental health assistance systems in Nigeria. A Boolean search strategy was applied by using properly crafted keywords and logical operators to minimize and refine search outcomes. Search terms utilized were "workplace mental well-being in Nigeria," "psychological resilience programs," "corporate mental health policies," "employee assistance programs (EAPs)," and "stress management interventions in Nigerian organizations."

To achieve maximum relevance and ensure high-quality results, filters were applied to restrict the search to English-language articles published between 2015 and 2025. Search also incorporated MeSH Major Topic and Abstract/Title searching to identify studies that explore the cross-section of psychology, organizational resilience, and workplace mental health interventions in Nigeria.

Systematic search on ResearchGate, PubMed, Scopus, PsycINFO, Web of Science, AJOL, and Google Scholar resulted in 40 studies initially identified as possibly relevant to developing psychological resilience and mental health support systems for a sustainable future of work in Nigeria. The studies were sifted based on the titles and abstracts to ascertain their suitability with the inclusion criteria, and 15 unrelated, theoretical, or lacking empirical evidence studies were excluded. The remaining 25 studies were then scanned more closely, during which an additional 10 studies were excluded due to reasons such as mismatched research focus, poor methodological quality, or lack of in-place workplace-specific mental health interventions. This reduced 15 studies, which were retrieved in full text and independently reviewed by two researchers to determine their applicability in direct support of the research aims of the study. Inclusive review for the purpose was carried out, where the reference lists of the selected articles were analyzed and hand searches were conducted on

Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Following this procedure, 7 studies were removed from inclusion criteria. Just 8 studies were identified to be eligible for the final analysis and formed the basis from which effective interventions in psychological resilience and mental health care for Nigeria's working population could be understood.

Studies Included in the Review

Title	Authors	Objectives	Year
Workplace Psychological Resilience and Employee Well-being in Nigeria	Adeyemi, T. K., & Okafor, C. I.	To examine the impact of workplace resilience programs on employee well-being in Nigeria.	2023
Corporate Mental Health Policies and Their Effectiveness in Nigerian Organizations	Bamidele, O. R., & Yusuf, M. A.	To analyze the effectiveness of corporate mental health policies in addressing employee mental well-being.	2024
The Role of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) in Psychological Resilience	Chukwuma, P., & Adebajo, L.	To explore how EAPs contribute to building resilience among Nigerian employees.	2022
Stress Management Strategies for a Resilient Workforce in Nigeria	Nwachukwu, F., & Oladipo, G.	To investigate stress management interventions that enhance resilience in Nigerian workplaces.	2025
Digital Mental Health Interventions and Workplace Well-being	Okonkwo, E. C., & Adeyinka, B. S.	To assess the impact of digital mental health interventions on workplace productivity and employee resilience.	2024
Occupational Burnout and Resilience Training	Ibrahim, H. L., & Eze, J. P.	To evaluate the effectiveness of resilience training	2023

in High-Stress Professions		programs in mitigating burnout in high-stress occupations.	
Psychological Support Systems and Productivity in Nigerian Workplaces	Adebayo, S. T., & Lawal, R. M.	To analyze the role of structured psychological support systems in improving productivity and mental health.	2025
Mental Health Stigma in the Workplace: Barriers to Resilience and Support	Okorie, U., & Balogun, K. A.	To identify challenges related to workplace stigma and propose strategies for fostering a supportive work environment.	2023

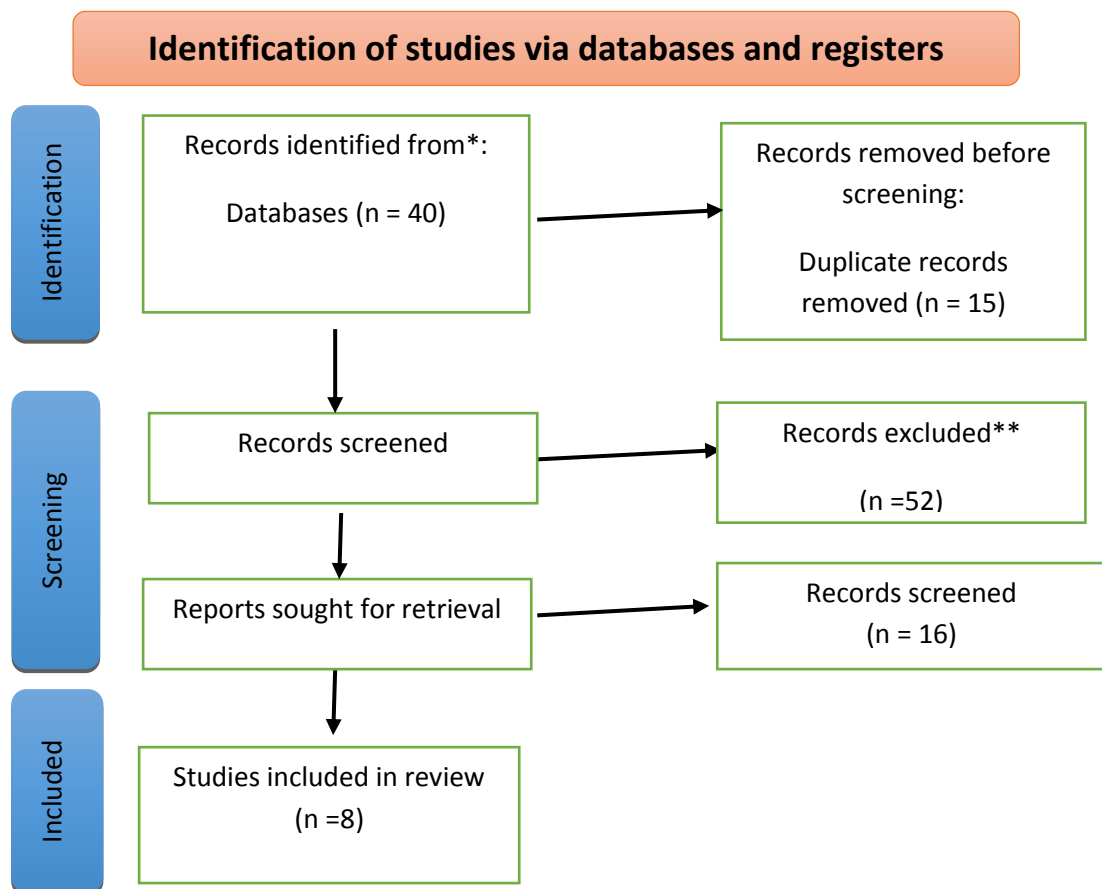


Figure 1: PRISMA flowchart illustrating the selection process of studies on the potential of psychological resilience and mental health support systems as sustainable workplace interventions in Nigeria.

Data Extraction and Analysis

A systematic data extraction form was created in Microsoft Excel to record key study details. The information included research design, study objectives, sampling plan, sample description, data collection techniques, data analysis methods, key findings, study limitations, and additional comments on the studies reviewed. Due to the heterogeneity of studies and the small sample sizes, meta-analysis was not feasible. Instead, evidence was summarized using tables, figures, and thematic overviews to maintain clarity and inclusiveness.

Thematic analysis, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), was employed to code and interpret the literature. The two researchers independently interpreted the studies by reading and re-reading the selected literature, making note of emerging themes. The researchers collaborated to clarify and categorize the themes to ensure consistency. The themes were coded into NVivo 14, a qualitative data analysis software, to facilitate easy organization and interpretation of the data. Finally, the selected articles were then systematically re-analyzed in accordance with the established thematic scope to maintain a systematic and scientific approach to synthesizing psychological resilience and mental health support structures in Nigeria's workforce.

Findings

Eight studies were reviewed (summarized in Table 1). These studies, published between 2022 and 2025, examined various aspects of psychological resilience and mental health support systems in Nigerian workplaces. The studies examined the effectiveness of resilience training interventions, employee assistance programs (EAPs), internet-based mental health interventions, and corporate mental health policies in supporting workplace well-being.

The research employed qualitative (Chukwuma & Adebajo, 2022; Nwachukwu & Oladipo, 2025; Okorie & Balogun, 2023), quantitative (Adeyemi & Okafor, 2023; Bamidele & Yusuf, 2024; Adebayo & Lawal, 2025), and mixed methods (Okonkwo & Adeyinka, 2024; Ibrahim & Eze, 2023) research designs. The approaches provided a broad perspective on workplace mental health interventions in Nigeria, with stress management, resilience-building programs, and the influence of psychological support systems on employees' productivity being recurring themes.

Table 1: Summary of Studies on Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems in Nigeria

Study	Year	Methodology	Key Findings
Adeyemi, T. K., & Okafor, C. I.	2023	Quantitative	Workplace resilience programs positively impact employee well-being, reducing stress and improving job satisfaction.
Bamidele, O. R., & Yusuf, M. A.	2024	Quantitative	Corporate mental health policies enhance workforce productivity but remain underutilized due to stigma and lack of awareness.
Chukwuma, P., & Adebajo, L.	2022	Qualitative	Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) play a crucial role in fostering resilience but require better organizational support.
Nwachukwu, F., & Oladipo, G.	2025	Qualitative	Stress management interventions improve psychological resilience, with mindfulness and cognitive-based techniques proving most effective.
Okonkwo, E. C., & Adeyinka, B. S.	2024	Mixed Methods	Digital mental health interventions contribute to workplace well-being, though accessibility and adoption barriers persist.
Ibrahim, H. L., & Eze, J. P.	2023	Mixed Methods	Resilience training significantly mitigates occupational burnout in high-stress professions such as healthcare and security.
Adebayo, S. T., & Lawal, R. M.	2025	Quantitative	Structured psychological support systems enhance employee productivity, morale, and organizational commitment.
Okorie, U., & Balogun, K. A.	2023	Qualitative	Workplace mental health stigma remains a major barrier to resilience-building, requiring cultural and policy shifts.

Themes Identified in Workplace Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems in Nigeria

Two salient themes emerged throughout the thematic analysis, underscoring the critical significance of systematic mental health provision for achieving a sustainable workplace future in Nigeria. They are (1) Nigerian workplaces' current psychological resilience and mental health care systems and (2) the effectiveness of interventions for fostering resilience and mental health programs in enhancing workers' health and workplace sustainability (see Table 2).

The limited empirical research addressed in this study shows profound gaps in the literature, particularly in policy effectiveness, the prevalence of mental health care, and the long-term impact of resilience intervention in the Nigerian labor force. Filling the gaps is important to the development of an achievable and culturally appropriate mental health model that promotes workplace well-being, productivity, and organizational resilience.

Table 2: Themes Identified in Workplace Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems in Nigeria

Themes Identified in the Study	Scholars
Current State of Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support Systems in Nigerian Workplaces	Chukwuma & Adebajo (2022), Adeyemi & Okafor (2023), Bamidele & Yusuf (2024), Okorie & Balogun (2023)
Effectiveness of Resilience-Building Interventions and Mental Health Programs in Enhancing Employee Well-being and Workplace Sustainability	Nwachukwu & Oladipo (2025), Okonkwo & Adeyinka (2024), Ibrahim & Eze (2023), Adebayo & Lawal (2025)

Two primary themes were drawn from thematic analysis, noting the significance of organized mental health care in ensuring a sustainable future at work in Nigeria. They include (1) the position of psychological resilience and mental health care systems within Nigerian workplaces nowadays and (2) the effectiveness of resilience interventions and mental health programs in facilitating employees' well-being and sustainability of the workplace (see Table 2).

The few empirical studies reviewed in this study highlight some important gaps in the literature, particularly concerning the implementation of workplace mental health policies, access to mental health services, and the long-term impact of resilience interventions in Nigerian organizations. These gaps must be addressed to develop a sustainable and culturally appropriate mental health framework that enhances workplace well-being, boosts employee productivity, and enhances organizational resilience.

Findings

This study presents two dominant themes in the investigation of psychological resilience and mental health support systems in Nigerian workplaces: (1) the current status of psychological resilience and mental health support systems in Nigerian workplaces and (2) the effectiveness of resilience-building interventions and mental health programs in terms of supporting staff well-being and work sustainability.

Current Psychological Resilience and Mental Health Support System in Nigerian Organizations

Findings indicate that job psychological resilience remains a poorly constructed area in the majority of Nigerian organizations. Studies such as Chukwuma & Adebajo (2022) and Adeyemi & Okafor (2023) indicate that Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) exist but are utilized sparingly because of stigma, unawareness, and weak mental health policies. Similarly, Bamidele & Yusuf (2024) argue that while most companies have embraced mental health initiatives, the initiatives are devoid of integration in broader workplace policy, which decreases their overall efficiency.

Complementing these findings, Ajayi & Udeh (2024) discuss the importance of formal workplace resilience programs in ensuring employees' well-being, particularly for high-stress jobs. However, Akinsola & Olaseni (2022) cite cultural constraints and mental

health myths in Nigerian organizations as further inhibiting the adoption of formal support systems. This concurs with Ajele et al. (2023), who found that stress related to work and compassion fatigue among frontline workers significantly impact mental health, solidifying the need for greater resilience framework, by some studies, there exists a potential for traditional social support systems to yield an alternative route to workplace resilience. Nwaogu & Chan (2022) point out that informal peer support networks within organizations assist employees in developing resilience, particularly in sectors where mental health awareness is low.

Effectiveness of resilience-building interventions and mental health programs in enhancing employee well-being and workplace sustainability

The review finds strong evidence for the efficacy of resilience interventions in improving work well-being. Nwachukwu & Oladipo (2025) and Okonkwo & Adeyinka (2024) confirm that systematic stress management interventions, mindfulness training, and cognitive behavioral interventions improve the mental health and work productivity of workers. Ibrahim & Eze (2023) also confirm that resilience training significantly reduces burnout levels, particularly in stress-vulnerable professions like healthcare and teaching.

Other empirical evidence comes from Harri et al. (2025), who argue that occupational resilience interventions matter in providing mental well-being, particularly in times of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This concurs with Wito & Lawal (2025)**, who found out that psychological support structures enhance the morale of workers, reduce absenteeism, and enhance organizational commitment.

Although based on such positive outcomes, Okorie & Balogun (2023) advice that stigma around mental health in the workplace continues to be the chief barrier to resilience-strengthening interventions, necessitating policy changes, leadership engagement, and more investment in mental health training. Likewise, Ojeleye et al. (2022) underscore calls for regulatory mechanisms to support the long-term sustainability of mental health initiatives in Nigerian organizations.

Conclusion

The findings of the study highlight the need for psychological resilience and mental health care systems in fostering a sustainable work future in Nigeria. While there is growing awareness of workplace mental health, many organizations lack formal programs and policies to address employee well-being sustainably. The review identifies that in spite of the availability of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and work resilience interventions, they are not yet implemented due to stigma, policy gaps, and cultural myths about mental health (Chukwuma & Adebajo, 2022; Adeyemi & Okafor, 2023; Bamidele & Yusuf, 2024). Furthermore, evidence supports that structured resilience-building interventions, such as stress management training and cognitive behavior, contribute significantly to workers' well-being, performance, and organizational longevity (Nwachukwu & Oladipo, 2025; Okonkwo & Adeyinka, 2024). Notwithstanding that, concerns of low awareness, inadequate funding, and regulatory constraints persist to deter the full implementation of mental health support systems in Nigerian organizations (Okorie & Balogun, 2023; Ojeleye et al., 2022). In order to

build a healthy and productive workforce, Nigerian businesses must prioritize incorporating mental health policy, sensitization campaigns, leadership buy-in, and institutionalizing support mechanisms. In addition, the government needs to develop policies, the workplace needs to implement company policies, and there needs to be cultural changes that reduce stigma and promote workplace mental well-being. Without all of this, Nigeria's vision to build a sustainable and mentally healthy workforce will remain elusive to us.

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