RCMOS – Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal of Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

Year I, v.1 2021. | submission: 08/11/2021 | accepted: 08/13/2021 | publication: 08/15/2021

Corporate Financial Education as a Tool for Quality of Life at Work

Corporate Financial Education as a Tool for Quality of Work Life

Author: Tamires Fernandes de Oliveira

Graduated in Human Resources Management, from Nove de Julho University (UNINOVE)

Summary

This article investigates the relationship between corporate financial education and quality of work life (QWL), considering the contributions of economic psychology and behavioral finance. The objective is to analyze how financial education programs, promoted by Human Resources departments, positively impact employees' financial, emotional, and productive well-being. The research is based on theoretical reviews, case studies, and secondary data that demonstrate the correlation between financial literacy and improvements in organizational performance indicators. The results indicate that the inclusion of financial education initiatives in the corporate environment not only reduces employees' financial stress but also boosts productivity, talent retention, and job satisfaction.

Keywords: Financial education; Quality of life at work; Economic psychology; Behavioral finance; Human resources.

Abstract

This article investigates the relationship between corporate financial education and quality of work life (QWL), considering contributions from economic psychology and behavioral finance. The aim is to analyze how financial education programs, promoted by Human Resources departments, positively impact employees' financial, emotional, and productive well-being. The research is based on theoretical reviews, case studies, and secondary data that highlight the correlation between financial literacy and improved organizational performance indicators. The results show that introducing financial education initiatives into the corporate environment not only reduces employees' financial stress but also enhances productivity, talent retention, and job satisfaction.

Keywords: Financial education; Quality of work life; Economic psychology; behavioral finance; Human resources.

1. Fundamentals of Financial Education in the Corporate Environment

Financial education in the corporate environment is a strategic tool that aims to develop employees' skills related to the conscious management of their financial resources. According to Lusardi and Mitchell (2014), financial literacy is essential for individuals to make more informed decisions aligned with their life goals. In the corporate context, this translates into greater emotional stability, with positive impacts on productivity and job satisfaction.

RCMOS – Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal of Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

In addition to developing technical skills, financial education in the workplace allows employees to understand the impact of their financial decisions on both their family and professional environments. According to Atkinson and Messy (2012), the inclusion of financial education programs can reduce debt and increase employees' psychological security, essential elements for a healthy organizational culture. This becomes even more relevant in times of economic instability, when financial stress becomes a limiting factor for individual and collective performance.

The Human Resources department plays a crucial role in this process. Its role is not only to identify employees' specific needs but also to facilitate the implementation of training initiatives aligned with the workforce's real needs.
These initiatives can include workshops, lectures, personalized consulting, and even digital tools to support personal financial management. As noted by Fernandes, Lynch, and Netemeyer (2014), engagement in these types of initiatives tends to be higher when the content is applied to the participants' real-life situations.

One of the strongest arguments in favor of corporate financial education is the prevention of emotional distress associated with economic hardship. The International Labor Organization (ILO, 2019) recognizes financial health as one of the pillars of occupational well-being, alongside physical, mental, and social health. Therefore, it is not just a training strategy, but an integrated policy of valuing human beings in the workplace.

Companies that invest in this type of training generally experience a significant reduction in problems such as absenteeism, turnover, and presenteeism—when employees are physically present but psychologically absent. These indicators are relevant for measuring the effectiveness of HR performance and the quality of the organizational climate. Therefore, financial education needs to be understood as part of the QVT ecosystem, and not as an isolated action.

Therefore, investing in corporate financial education represents a practice aligned with the principles of human and economic sustainability. It recognizes that financial well-being is a legitimate and necessary component for the flourishing of people within organizations. By embracing this vision, companies strengthen their commitment to internal social responsibility and consolidate more equitable and resilient cultures.

2. Economic Psychology and Financial Behaviors at Work

Economic psychology contributes significantly to understanding individuals' financial behavior in the corporate environment. This field of knowledge, which developed from the contributions of authors such as Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1979), explores how psychological, emotional, and social factors influence economic decisions. In particular, it investigates deviations from rationality that occur even when individuals have all the information necessary to make a logical choice.

RCMOS – Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal of Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

In the workplace, these cognitive distortions directly affect how employees manage their salaries, savings, and investments. One example is the immediate gratification bias, which leads many workers to choose to consume in the present over the future. This behavior, extensively documented by Laibson (1997), compromises financial planning ability and increases the risk of chronic debt, with direct impacts on emotional stability and professional performance.

The relationship between financial well-being and productivity has been the subject of recent research. According to studies by Kim and Garman (2003), workers facing financial difficulties experience higher levels of stress, which can reduce their ability to concentrate, increase the incidence of errors, and generate interpersonal conflicts.

In this sense, corporate financial education proves to be an effective tool to mitigate such effects and promote a healthier and more balanced work environment.

Another relevant aspect of economic psychology is the influence of social and cultural norms on financial decisions. According to Thaler and Sunstein (2008), individuals' choices are often shaped by behavioral patterns perceived as normal or expected within a given group. This means that by fostering an organizational culture that values financial planning, a company can encourage significant changes in its employees' attitudes and habits.

Furthermore, the inclusion of economic psychology in financial education programs allows for a more humanized and empathetic approach, recognizing individuals' cognitive and emotional limitations. This perspective increases the effectiveness of HR initiatives by considering not only the content delivered but also how it is received and internalized by participants. As Ariely and Wertenbroch (2002) point out, simple interventions, such as the use of reminders and automatic goals, can generate lasting changes in financial behavior.

Therefore, understanding the fundamentals of economic psychology is essential for designing more effective financial education programs tailored to the realities of employees. By integrating this approach, HR expands its ability to promote significant transformations in employees' lives, contributing to a more fair, productive, and sustainable corporate environment.

3. Behavioral Finance and Employee Decision Making

Behavioral finance deepens the study of financial choices based on cognitive biases and heuristics, revealing systematic patterns of error in economic judgments.
According to Kahneman (2011), people often make decisions influenced by emotions, overconfidence, and loss aversion. These factors directly impact how employees manage their personal budgets, investments, and debts, influencing the organizational climate and team performance.

One of the central concepts of behavioral finance is prospect theory, which states that individuals assign different values to gains and losses, even when the outcomes

RCMOS – Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal of Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

are equivalent. This type of behavior can lead to procrastination on important decisions, such as paying off debt or building an emergency fund.
In the corporate environment, this translates into accumulated stress, lack of focus, and reduced commitment to organizational goals.

Financial education based on behavioral finance principles seeks to minimize these effects by providing workers with practical tools to organize their finances rationally and sustainably. According to Fernandes, Lynch, and Netemeyer (2014), programs that consider individuals' cognitive limits yield more effective behavioral changes than purely informative approaches.

This suggests the need for a pedagogy adapted to the real psychological needs of professionals.

In a company context, HR plays a crucial role in articulating this knowledge and transforming it into concrete practices. This can include using technology to automate savings, encouraging financial planning through visual goals, or even providing personalized financial advice. By reducing the negative impacts of financial irrationality, such measures contribute to employees' subjective well-being and motivation.

Studies by Netemeyer et al. (2018) indicate that financial well-being is positively correlated with job performance, reinforcing the importance of considering this factor as an integral part of strategic people management. When workers feel in control of their finances, they demonstrate greater engagement, initiative, and a sense of responsibility.

Therefore, behavioral finance offers a valuable lens for designing more effective and realistic financial education programs. Integrating this field into the daily routine of organizations is a relevant step toward developing a corporate culture focused on financial health and holistic human development.

4. Quality of Life at Work and Financial Health

Quality of working life (QWL) is a multidimensional concept encompassing physical, emotional, social, and economic factors that affect worker well-being. According to Walton (1973), a healthy work environment should provide not only adequate physical conditions but also opportunities for growth, recognition, and economic security. In this sense, financial health emerges as a critical factor, often overlooked by organizational policies.

Several studies indicate that financial difficulties are among the main sources of stress among workers. According to a 2017 survey by the American Psychological Association, more than 60% of American workers reported money worries as their primary cause of anxiety. This reality is no different in developing countries.

developing countries, such as Brazil, where debt and lack of financial planning significantly affect the mental health of workers.

Including financial education as a component of QWL policies represents an effective strategy for mitigating these impacts. By providing knowledge, tools, and support for personal financial management, the company directly contributes to alleviating economic stress, improving work-life balance. This has positive repercussions on indicators such as productivity, organizational climate, and talent retention.

Furthermore, the relationship between QWL and financial health reinforces the notion that employee well-being should be viewed holistically. Initiatives focused on physical and emotional health lose effectiveness if the worker is immersed in financial concerns that compromise their stability. As DeNisi and Griffin (2008) state, motivation and performance at work are directly linked to the perception of control and security that the individual has in their daily life.

Companies that want to stand out for their excellence in people management should consider financial education as an integral part of their QVT programs. This includes not only educational initiatives but also fair salary policies, savings incentives, and benefits that promote economic stability. Such practices contribute to a more ethical, fair, and humane organizational environment.

Therefore, promoting quality of life at work requires a broad and strategic approach that includes financial health as a fundamental pillar. By doing so, organizations strengthen their commitment to human development and increase their competitiveness in the market through healthier, more motivated, and more productive teams.

5. The Strategic Role of HR in Corporate Financial Education

The Human Resources (HR) department plays a central role in implementing and managing corporate financial education programs. Traditionally focused on people management, modern HR must act as an agent of transformation, promoting initiatives that enhance employee well-being and performance. In this context, financial education emerges as a strategic tool for aligning organizational objectives with human needs.

One of HR's functions is to assess employees' financial literacy levels, identifying knowledge gaps and risky behaviors. Based on this assessment, personalized action plans can be developed that consider employees' different profiles and life stages. According to Schuchardt et al. (2009), successful programs are those that offer relevant, accessible, and applicable content to the target audience's daily lives.

In addition to offering content, HR must create an environment that fosters learning and engagement. This includes providing digital materials, holding interactive workshops, and encouraging employee experience sharing.

RCMOS – Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal of Knowledge.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo-SP.

Building a culture of financial well-being depends on the example of leadership, which must support and value such initiatives in a visible and continuous manner.

Another important aspect is measuring results. The impact of financial education can be assessed through indicators such as reduced tardiness and absences, increased productivity, greater talent retention, and improved organizational climate. These metrics allow for ongoing program adjustments and demonstrate to senior management the return on investment.

In a corporate world marked by rapid change and economic uncertainty, HR's strategic role in financial education becomes even more important. By empowering employees to deal with the financial challenges of contemporary life, HR contributes to building more resilient and adaptable organizations.

Therefore, HR's role in promoting financial education goes beyond fulfilling an institutional obligation: it is an ethical and strategic responsibility that can positively transform the relationship between employees and their work, generating lasting benefits for everyone involved.

6. Long-Term Organizational Impacts of Financial Education

The impacts of financial education on organizations go beyond immediate improvements in productivity and employee satisfaction. In the long term, these initiatives shape more conscious, supportive, and sustainable development-oriented corporate cultures. This is because financial knowledge tends to spread informally, influencing collective behavior and promoting more rational management of human and material resources.

When employees develop financial skills, they begin to adopt more proactive attitudes toward their future, such as career planning, investing in continuing education, and building a private pension plan. These behaviors reverberate throughout the corporate environment, creating a virtuous cycle of self-development and engagement. As Hilgert, Hogarth, and Beverly (2003) point out, financial education strengthens autonomy and a sense of individual responsibility, which contributes to more mature and self-managing teams.

Furthermore, organizations that offer financial education programs demonstrate greater concern for their employees' well-being, which strengthens their institutional reputation. This positive perception improves employer branding and attracts talent aligned with an ethical and humane organizational culture. In increasingly competitive markets, this differentiator can be crucial for retaining qualified professionals.

Another relevant aspect concerns the reduction of labor and financial risks.
Financially stable employees tend to make more prudent decisions, avoid impulsive behavior, and are less prone to fraud or misconduct.

This improves internal governance and reduces costs related to labor liabilities and disciplinary actions.

Finally, the results of financial education should be understood as part of an organizational development strategy. They not only optimize people management but also contribute to the sustainability of the company as a whole. As Huselid (1995) argues, effective human capital management practices are directly associated with the financial performance and market value of corporations.

Therefore, by adopting financial education as part of their organizational culture, companies invest in their own future. It's a long-term policy that promotes not only economic growth but also human and social development, solidifying the organization as an agent of transformation in society.

Conclusion

Analyzing the effects of corporate financial education from the perspective of quality of work life reveals the complexity and relevance of this topic in the contemporary context. In a scenario marked by economic instability, digital transformation, and growing emotional challenges, the financial health of employees emerges as an essential dimension of organizational well-being. The integration of financial education, economic psychology, and behavioral finance offers a robust framework for formulating more effective, responsive, and transformative HR policies.

The data presented throughout this study demonstrate that financial education in the corporate environment is not just a technical training tool, but also an instrument of human development. Its implementation directly impacts employee engagement, productivity, talent retention, and mental health. Furthermore, it fosters a culture of responsibility, planning, and solidarity that strengthens interpersonal and institutional bonds within the company.

HR's role as a strategic agent in promoting this agenda is a determining factor in the success of these initiatives. The ability to diagnose, plan, implement, and evaluate financial education initiatives requires technical skills and human sensitivity. When well-managed, these initiatives have a positive impact at all levels of the organization, fostering a virtuous cycle of well-being and performance.

By considering financial health as a pillar of quality of life at work, organizations adopt an ethical, innovative, and socially responsible stance. This is a commitment to the wholeness of the human being, which goes beyond the contractual relationship and reaches deeper dimensions of existence. This humanized and systemic approach responds to the challenges of the contemporary world of work, offering concrete and sustainable solutions.

It is therefore concluded that corporate financial education must be understood as a permanent, cross-cutting, and strategic institutional policy. Its effectiveness depends on interdisciplinary approaches, leadership involvement, and active listening to needs.

of workers. Only then will it be possible to build truly healthy, productive organizations committed to the full development of their employees and the society in which they operate.

References

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. Stress in America: Coping with Change. Washington, DC, 2017.

ARIELY, D.; WERTENBROCH, K. Procrastination, Deadlines, and Performance: Self-Control by Precommitment. Psychological Science, vol. 13, no. 3, p. 219–224, 2002.

ATKINSON, A.; MESSY, F. Measuring Financial Literacy: Results of the OECD/INFE Pilot Study. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2012.

DENISI, AS; GRIFFIN, RW Human Resource Management. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

FERNANDES, D.; LYNCH, JG; NETEMEYER, RG Financial Literacy, Financial Education, and Downstream Financial Behaviors. Management Science, vol. 60, no. 8, p. 1861–1883, 2014.

HILGERT, MA; HOGARTH, JM; BEVERLY, SG Household Financial Management: The Connection between Knowledge and Behavior. Federal Reserve Bulletin, vol. 89, no. 7, p. 309–322, 2003.

HUSELID, MA The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance. Academy of Management Journal, vol. 38, no. 3, p. 635–672, 1995.

KAHNEMAN, D. Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.

Kim, J.; GARMAN, ET Financial Stress and Absenteeism: An Empirically Derived Model. Financial Counseling and Planning, vol. 14, no. 1, p. 31–42, 2003.

LAIBSON, D. Golden Eggs and Hyperbolic Discounting. Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. 112, no. 2, p. 443–477, 1997.

LUSARDI, A.; MITCHELL, OS The Economic Importance of Financial Literacy: Theory and Evidence. Journal of Economic Literature, vol. 52, no. 1, p. 5–44, 2014.

NETEMEYER, RG et al. How Am I Doing? Perceived Financial Well-Being, Its Potential Antecedents, and Its Relation to Overall Well-Being. Journal of Consumer Research, vol. 45, no. 1, p. 68–89, 2018.

SCHUCHARDT, J. et al. Financial Literacy and Education Research Priorities. Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning, vol. 20, no. 1, p. 84–95, 2009.

THALER, RH; SUNSTEIN, CR Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

WALTON, RE Quality of Working Life: What Is It? Sloan Management Review, vol. 15, no. 1, p. 11–21, 1973.