

WELLNESS PROGRAMMES IN ORGANIZATIONS: A TIP & TAP

Snigdharani Mishra¹, Himali Chakraborty² & Preeti Narendra³

¹*Professor & HOD, HRM, ITM Business School, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India*

²*Research Scholar, HRM, ITM Business School, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India*

³*Assistant Professor, HRM, ITM Business School, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India*

Received: 04 Jul 2018

Accepted: 18 Jul 2018

Published: 31 Jul 2018

ABSTRACT

Wellness is not only limited with the health of a person, it even leads to change in the perception of human being to achieve the set goal. In this century, change is the only thing which remains constant. Wellness programs make too indispensable contributions.

- *Wellness programs are an essential mechanism through which many jobs are created.*
- *They are an integral part of the renewal process*

Wellness programs within organization play a crucial role in the change in lifestyle and growth in productivity.

This research paper aims at understanding how the organizations contribute towards the employee wellness programs and what is critical for same.

KEYWORDS: *Wellness Programs, Organizational Venture, Employees Transforming*

INTRODUCTION

Wellness is the way to enact whether a person is totally engaged physically and mentally in a work he/she is doing and how well that person is able to truly implement its benefits towards themselves and in the surroundings. Mainly, the definition of wellness could be –

“ Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of drastic changes happening in the environment along with time and making choices towards leading a healthy and fulfilling life. It is more than being from illness, it is the dynamic process of change and growth as well”.

Nowadays, wellness programs have also implemented in the organizations. They believe that ‘ Wellness means more than simply not being ill; it focuses on keeping the body in good condition, so that it runs more efficiently and effectively in every phrase of their work and stay well longer. True wellness is proactive; it also indicates whether the person has physical, mental and social needs to operate at high functionality.

IMPORTANCE IN ORGANIZATIONS

In organizations, the wellness program is implemented to improve the health of the labor force, by providing mandatory staff training, employee seminars or even by operating through a third party with a range of programs – For ex

'Health screenings, Health & fitness education & fitness programs'.

The main challenges of health screenings is to point out the accurate problem of the employees under consideration –

It is basically the visit of the medical professionals at their work either annually or semi-annually to screen employees. Such testing can include blood pressure checks, comprehensive blood work, and prostate checks.

Health & Education (Wellness) Program –

Comprehensive education programs provide employees with information on the importance of weight loss, smoking cessation proper diet and nutrition.

Facilities – Such programs can include arranging to have speakers give presentations at the worksite.

Fitness (Exercise or Stretching Programs)

It involves fitness activities and opportunities and commonly on-site exercise facilities and stretching programs.

Another importance is through these wellness programs is mainly to reduce the health insurance plans of the employees.

Corporate wellness programs are basically designed based on the health and diet status of the employees. It is also designed to nurture the wellness regarding the work environment. It could also be found in factories, corporate offices, large corporations and small corporations as well.

Points to mainly focus while organizing the wellness programs –

- All the employees must be aware much before the implementation of the wellness programs within the organizations.
- The wellness programs must be beneficiary and pocket-friendly for all the employees.
- Don't create programs that exclude some employees.
- Being the food police must be avoided.
- Sometimes, wellness programs are managed in isolation to everything else that is going within an organization. When budget cuts happen and then they will stand-alone departments and programs will be some of the first ones to get eliminated.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the research is to –

Identify the key importance of wellness programs for the benefits of an organizational venture –

Mainly, to analyze the beneficiary aspects of the wellness programs if they are implemented within the organizations. On the basis of the performance of both employers & employees, turnover, absenteeism and the health care expenses.

Analyze the potential benefits of these programs so that they could meet with the physical, mental and social needs of the employees.

The **physical needs** of the employees – The required expectations regarding health related-problems, gentle relief from them. It includes their lethargic problems, day to day effects in interacting, depression from works.

The **mental needs** of the employees – Enthusiasm of doing the work, inner persuasion etc.

The **social needs** of the employees – Self-respect, confidence, the decrease from turnover.

Understanding the benefits of the external sources required by the organizations focusing on the wellness programs.

Here, the external sources refer to the health center's, screening and yoga center's. It literally means, the kind of health programs which the organizations adopted for the wellness of their employees. The following companies which adopted them are –

Clackamas Bakery – it offers the annual bonus of \$350 if employees and their spouses reach definite health goals.

Coors Brewing Co. - Offers wellness seminars, promotes cancer screening.

IBM Corp – provides a voluntary assessment service that offers a variety of educational exercise and first aid courses.(**Employee Benefit Plan Review; New York, 1993**)

Focus on the challenges before the implementation of the wellness programs.

The challenges would be –the budget of the programs, whether it would have positive effects on every employees etc.

To understand the adaptation style of which and how many companies taking into consideration the organizational outlook.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is primarily based on secondary data. For this research project, information was collected. A systematic review of the collected literature would be done in detail.

This research paper presents preliminary findings on the importance of the employers and employees wellness programs for the success of the organizational venture. The research covers the detailed study of the wellness programs and the area and scale of operation of their venture.

Due efforts have been taken up to ensure that the research is unbiased.

Evaluation Criteria of Wellness Programs –

The 4 Elements of the program are –

- Providers
- Receivers
- Consumers

- Researchers

Major Entities of Work in the Present Market –

- Hospitals
- Companies & Organizations
- Insurance Companies
- Specialty wellness business
- The Government
- Employees

Scale of Operation – Small, Medium and Large

- Roles & responsibilities
- Delegations
- Knowledge of the third party

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Wellness in Companies

A survey by the **National Association of Professional Employer Organizations** found that 41.7% of employers believe the cost of healthcare is the most serious challenge to their bottom line. As predicted by other organizations regarding the health care costs would rise significantly each year. **Price Waterhouse Research Institute** has predicted that employer health care costs increased by 9.9% in 2008 and 9.6% in 2009 (**Carpenter 2008**). Whereas, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, each year health care – costs would increase by 5-6% (**Cohn, 2008**).

Numerous industry experts have done the employee survey program to understand the main reasons behind to promote the employee wellness programs. And, it has been found that eating a balanced diet has a lot to do with being productive at work. Also, there is a link between being in good physical health. Employees productivity and those employees who think that company's wellness plan has nothing to do with that is also related with eating a balanced diet) (**Kumar, Sameer & Eric, 2009**).

Somehow, employers can play an important role in promoting healthy lifestyles and providing options to overcome overweight and obesity. But still, among all the organizations in the US, 80% of employees believe that healthy lifestyles/weight management programs belong in the workplace.

The real appeal of the wellness program is that they enhance or support corporate objectives, which transcend the bottom line. (**Haughie, Glenna E, July 1993**).

Challenges

One of the most important challenges for a company is designing its wellness program. The top management people should tap information of the bottom line and employers through an employee survey should know that how many

employees have each of the significant risks factors to target in its wellness program. A high level of the operational framework is presented to determine when an employer-sponsored wellness programs are appropriate for employees to offer.

According to **Blue Cross** ltd (Oct 21,2008), in Carolina, the main challenges for the organizations are –

To maintain the schedules as per the desired criteria –

Paid time off for doctor's visit to the organizations – **78%**

Healthy café or vending options – **67%**

Offering the ability to participate in physical activity during working hours – **67%**

Causes

Employee wellness programs include what many causes need to be considered to be traditional efforts to maintain costs, including on-site programs (**2009**). According to Steven A. Burd, Chairman, President and CEO at the grocery company Safeway, health care costs are a solvable problem with 70% of costs driven by behavior. Further, any company can lower its health care costs by at least 15%, if it has a behavior driven health care strategy.

Some companies contend that wellness programs pay off in lowered health care costs, reduced absenteeism, increased productivity and high morale) (**Haughie, Glenn E**) (**July 1993**).

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

In 1959, Herzberg proposed a two-factor theory or the motivator – hygiene theory, which suggests there are certain factors in the workplace that can cause job satisfaction and can separate a set of factors that can cause dissatisfaction. If management wants to increase employees job satisfaction, they should be concerned with the nature of the work itself – the opportunities present employees for gaining status, assuming responsibilities and achieving self-realizing.

For that, it is very essential to promote the employee wellness programs.

JOB SATISFACTION ⇔ **Achievement**

⇔ **Work itself**

⇔ **Advancement**

⇔ **Growth**

- **Achievement:** Achievement, within employee's deals not only with the rewards or any bonus but also with the appreciation which they get while working. Employees, mental status become more stubborn to maintain the position and even the fear of losing from the achievement. So, in order to recover from this, it is advisable to have a monthly one to one wellness session with every employee, so that they could analyze their problems and have a nice recovery.

- **Work Itself:** If any employee, does any monotonous work then getting pressurized for them is a very genuine matter. As there would be no helping hands. So, to reduce the workload, the organizations could provide them part-time tea breaks, interacting sessions or T.V sets.
- **Advancement:** Advancement, within the employees is related to how well they could enroll themselves with the changes in the organizations. The employee wellness programs led the companies to implement the gym, fitness centers, and swimming pools. If they are regular within the programs, then it indicates their advancement.
- **Growth:** The more the growth of the employees, the more work burden would increase leading to them become physically and mentally ill. So, for that mental and physical relaxation is very important. Weekly yoga sessions for every employee would help to boost their mind and would energize their stamina during working hours.

Suggested Model

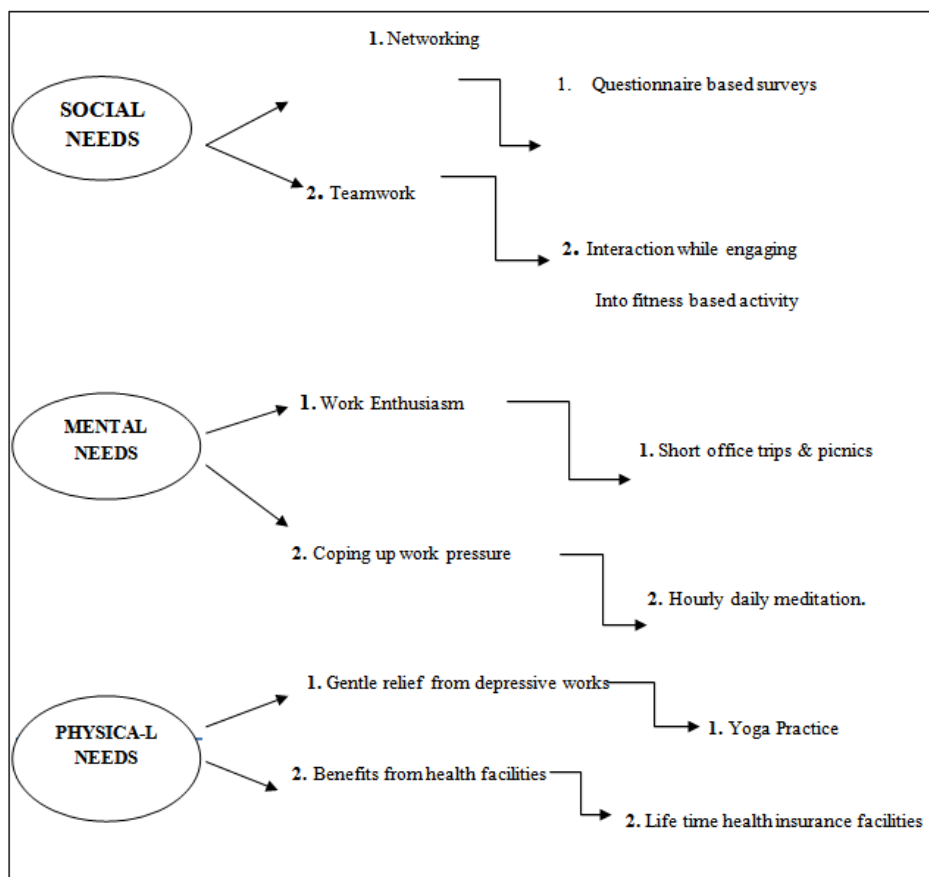


Figure 1

Interpretation

The model shows the basic needs of the employee's i.e – physical, mental and social. These needs deal with the expectations that the employees have within the organization and also from the organization. Here;

Social needs are the basic needs which refer to the need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance.

Mental needs refer to the health needs

Physical needs refer, to the need of beneficiary.

1st part refers to the types of needs that every employees have.

2nd part refers to the needs examples.

And 3rd part – It refers to, what could the organizations provide to satisfy the needs of the employees.

CONCLUSIONS

Employee wellness encompasses the knowledge of the workers, needs of the employees and the working style that would help the organizers direct the venture towards its objectives.

It is observed that there is a direct link between the wellness of the employees along with the organizational success. Employee wellness programs are more related to the transformational change of the employer and employees. It also indicates the total level of work dedication, communication, their importance to organizational values and the healthy food and working time habits. These changes focus on revolutionizing the day to day basis operations. This helps the employees to identify a unique solution to their health needs and making the best use of the opportunity.

From this research, we understand the importance of developing the wellness programs; it also includes the need for power, achievement & affiliation and the importance of voluntary wellness programs including wellness education and disease inoculation.

Upon researching the employee wellness and organizations from various sections the following results were gathered –

Health Insurance Strategy

A variety of strategies have been tried by various employers including the health habits along with the healthcare expenses, over the past years in an effort to reduce healthcare-associated costs for their employees.

In other attempts to control costs, employers provide wellness to their employees in the hopes of reducing future health care costs.

- Most of the organizations rank high on EAP (**Employee Assistance Program**). These programs often are offered through the phone – leased consultation and completely independent of the sponsoring employer.
- Above 90% of employers have added monetary incentives for workers who enroll in the wellness plan, participation rates increased dramatically.
- Wellness programs that with an **Employee Assistance Program** (EAP) can address the underlying issues of the unhealthy states; e.g. – depression and to structure a wellness program for depression –
The sleeping patterns, Lack of interest, Nervousness, Restlessness need to be asked.
- According to Herzberg's two-factor theory, employee wellness programs are related with their – Achievement, Work itself, Advancement and Growth.

Table 1: Wellness Programs Types over the Years

Years	Program types	Characteristics Exhibited
1981	IBM's voluntary assessment program	It was a health education program for employees throughout the U.S.
2001	Carolina Mills monthly activities based on themes	Jan – National Eye care month Feb – National Heart Month Mar – Nutrition Month Apr – Women's Health Month May – National Fitness Month Jun – National Safety Month July – Children's Health Month Aug – Men's Health Month Sep – National Healthcare Month Oct – National Family Health Month Nov – Flu Awareness Dec – Health & Safety month
2003	American District Telegraph (Six Sigma)	The program saved ADT more than \$186 million in cost efficiencies.
2003	Mytycohr.com	This website's primary function was to apply for health benefits and to check ADT policy.
2008 (Oct)	Tyco (30 minutes questionnaire)	Employees are rewarded with \$200 paycheck bonus.
2008	The Smoking Cessation Program.	This program allows those employees who are addicted to tobacco the opportunity to get on an employee sponsored, 100% free program to quit.
2009	On – site fitness centres, health assessments.	To influence the organizational culture to ensure the workplace has a strong wellness culture.
2009	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	Helps employees manage a full spectrum of behavioral health issues.
(2009-10)	Financial Incentives	Drawings for a cash prize, gift cards or reduction of \$100.

REFERENCES

1. Atkinson, W. (2001). *Wellness Programmes : Fit employees are inexpensive employees. Textile World*, 68.
2. Bob, C. (March 2006). *Wellness Programs are well positioned to identify depression. Employee Benefit plan Review*, 9.
3. Haughie, G. E. (Jul 1993). *Corporate Wellness Programs : Are they A Cost- Effective Benefit ? Pension World*, 14.
4. Kumar, S., & Mc calla, E. (2009). *Operational Impact of Employee wellness programs : A business case study. International Journal of Productivity & Performance Management*.
5. Montvale. (1989). *How companies are making wellness a family affair ? Business & Health, vol 7, ISSUE 9*.