

A STUDY ON AN ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE WELLNESS INTERVENTIONS IN IT/ITES SECTOR

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Abstract

The term wellness intervention connotes the programs that help the employees in understanding the life risks and these interventions can be the ways to reduce such risks and lead healthy lifestyles. These programs are the various initiatives taken by the companies in order to promote and make employees aware about the better lifestyles by minimizing various health associated risks. The scope of the wellness interventions is very massive. The companies now designing and implementing such programs as various researches have shown positive results. The research paper thrown a light on the concept of wellness at the workplace and also studies its impact on the lifestyles of the working people. The samples taken for carrying out this study is the working people in the IT/ITES sector. The objectives of the research paper are to study the wellness interventions and analyze its effect on the lifestyles of the employees. It also has studies the likelihood of the participation among the employees. The structured questionnaire has been used by the researcher for collecting the data. The samples taken for the study is 108. The results of the study show that the wellness interventions have a role in developing better lifestyles and thus have a direct impact on the health of the employees. The wellness programs can help employees in understanding their life risks that can cause degradation of the health. The study also shows that the employees are willing to participate in the program even the employer do not have any incentive schemes for attending such programs.

Keywords: *employee wellness, health risks, wellness interventions.*



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1.1.Introduction:

Employee health and wellbeing is now becoming a priority at the workplaces and organizations are investing on it more and more. A survey has been done on these topic and

around 90% organizations practice wellness programs comprises of simple biometric screenings that may include blood tests, cancer screening, exercise programs and even programs on nutrition and diet (Medical Billing and Coding 2012). Also companies are conducting the health habits survey and arrange the training on keeping healthy lifestyles. There is a growing rate of obesity, diabetes and the other health issues related to sedentary work culture and such issues reflected on employer-sponsored health insurance and absenteeism^{1&2}. The healthy employees are more productive and are well motivated. The survey on occupational health says that the employer lost their productivity and increases absenteeism costs when working while employees feel sick³. The wellness programs are widely becoming a strategic policy to maintain the health of the employees. The firms in United States, spent \$8 billion for wellness programs, in 2018, out of which 82% are of large firms and 53% are of small ventures⁴.

It is found that the organizations having employees who are at high health risk; that might include tobacco usage, physical inactivity, and obesity; incurred a higher cost against healthcare⁵. Thus the organizations need to target such critical and high health risk lifestyles to improve upon the lifestyles of employees and thus ultimately results in better healthy workforce and has direct impact on the productivity. The wellness programs are much benefited when the organizations are successful in targeting the high risk behaviors. These programs should appear to the individual in a more holistic manner.

The wellness intervention can be of primary screening and disease control. In the primary screening the programs can be designed for the employees with high health risks and then they are targeted for managing their lifestyle for better health. The disease control intervention can includes physical activities, limiting sugar content in the meal, yoga exercises etc. Such programs can be designed for both, those who are at high risks and those who are suffered from certain kind of disease. However, the wellness is a vast concept and the interventions can vary as per the need and work culture.

The benefit both to employee and employer still a vague and no clear picture is taken place with respect to the outcomes of such programs. It is now becoming an essential thing to discover the outcomes through an extensive research on the said programs; since companies are now investing huge funds and valuable time in such programs.

2.1 Literature Review:

Eaton et al (2007), studied on the wellbeing programs and they have concluded that employees of US institutions have a good influence on their health due to such programs and also their services quality increased as an impact of these programs.⁶

Goetzel et al (2007), studied on the health practices at the university and also found out the relation between such practices and job satisfaction with due considerations for the factors of turnover intentions. They also concluded that the various health practices have a positive influence on the level of the satisfaction among the working class.⁷

Boyd (1997) has undertaken the research on wellbeing in the workplace and concluded that employees having poor health, may be less productive and may make the poor decisions and thus they tend to be absent from the work.⁸

Bahaudin et al (2013) carried out a research on health and wellness programs. The researchers have found out that there is a direct impact of such programs on the employees' productivity. These programs enrich the habits associated with their health among the people working in the organization. In the closing conclusion they said that the open culture that improves the health habits among the employees is important to reduce the stress among the employees.⁹

Jason S. Swayze & Lisa A. Burke (2013) conducted a research on employee wellness programs. The researchers have evaluated the outcomes of these programs offered by the companies. They have concluded that the health care cost get increases when the organizations have more employees having unhealthy lifestyles and thus they said such programs are necessary to play as a catalyst in altering the lifestyles and habits related to health.¹⁰

Weldon K. Ngeno and Muathe (2014) reviewed on the wellness programs and studied its role in reduction in the absenteeism of the employees. The data generated through the study says that the service quality of the organization is directly related with the wellness programs that employees are getting at the workplace.¹¹

Hui Nee Au Yong (2011) has undertaken a research on promotion of health awareness as a factor for sustainable development of the organizations. The researcher concluded that in order to create a productive organization, the employees' health is the prime factor; and thus unhealthy cultures of the organization may affect the satisfaction among the employees and thus such employee think of quitting the job and thus increases the employee turnover.¹²

Beehr et al (2003) studied on the social support and concluded that such support plays a vital role in developing wellbeing at the workplace. The researchers basically studied on the social support and examined the importance of social support on wellbeing at the work.¹³

3.1 Objectives:

This research paper aims to highlight the concept of employee wellness programs and the objectives of the study are:

1. To study the employee wellness programs and its concept
2. To analyze the effect of employee wellness interventions on the lifestyles of the employees.
3. To study the likelihood of participation in the wellness programs offered by the companies.

4.1 Research Methodology:

4.1.1 Type of Research:

The type of the research is descriptive as well as analytical and it is based on the secondary and primary data.

4.1.2 Data Collection Methodology and tools used:

The types of used for data collection are secondary as well as primary. The primary data has been collected by the researcher using structured questionnaire which has been administered among the selected samples. The secondary data is collected from the available journals, published articles and related reports on the topic.

4.1.3 Sampling Technique and the sample size:

The technique used for the sampling is convenience sampling with the size of 60 respondents. The samples are from information technology and service sector.

4.1.4 Hypothesis of the study:

H_{alt} : There is a significant difference between the wellness interventions and the lifestyle of the employees.

H_{null} : There is no significant difference between the wellness interventions and the lifestyle of the employees.

4.1.5 Limitations of the study:

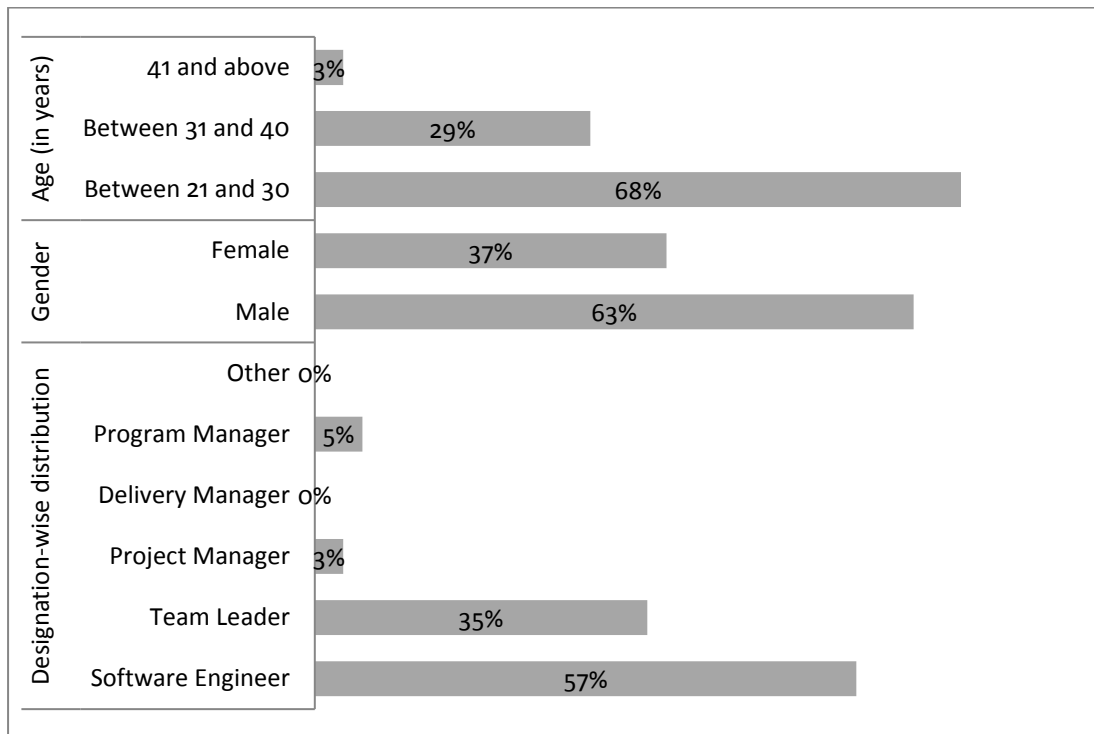
The samples in the study are confined with the IT/service sector only. The study has a scope of knowing about the wellness interventions and its likelihood of participation and also limited with the study of such interventions on the lifestyles of the working class. The

research was done with the few samples as a limited time and budget. The study also covers a restricted geographical area as Pune only and no other area or city has been covered or considered for study.

5.1 Data Analysis:

5.1.1 The demographic characteristics of the samples are given in the following table (Chart No. 5.1.1)

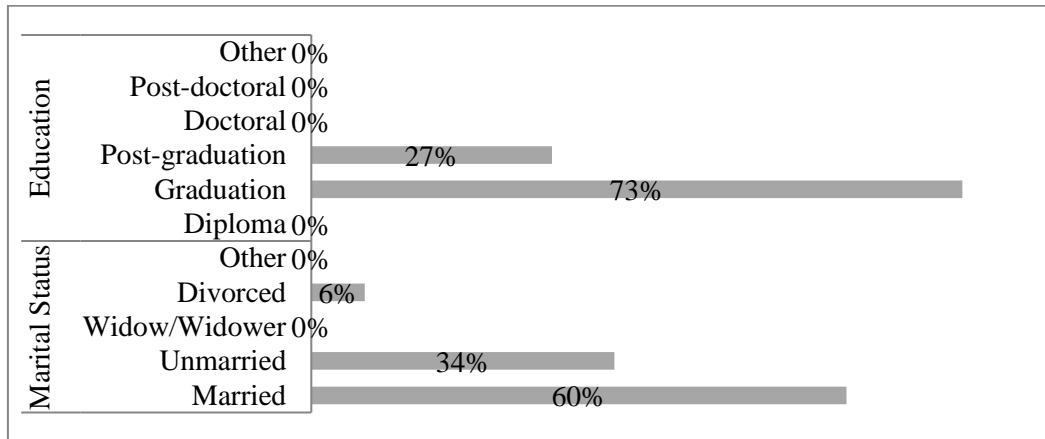
Chart No. 5.1.1 Distribution of the samples



The above chart (chart no.5.1.1) shows the distribution of samples based on various characteristics such as age, gender and designation. The maximum number of samples falls under the age group of 21 to 30 years i.e. 68% of samples. The 29% of the samples falls under the age group between 31 and 40 years. Out of 108 samples, 63% are of male and 37% are of female category. The 57% samples are working as software engineer, 35% working as team leader and only 3% samples are working at the project manager level and 5% among them are program manager.

The following chart (chart no. 5.1.2) shows the distribution of educational level and marital status of the respondents.

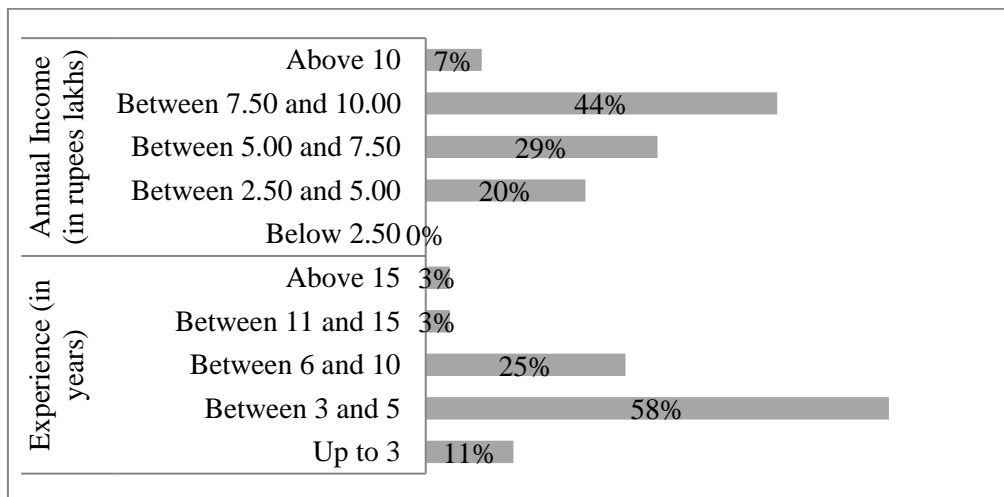
Chart No. 5.1.2. Distribution of the Samples



The 27% of the respondents are post-graduated and remaining are graduate. The 60% respondents are married, 34% are unmarried and 6% of the total respondents are divorced.

The below chart (chart no. 5.1.3) represents the sample distribution based on annual income and the experience of the respondents.

Chart No. 5.1.3. Distribution of the Samples

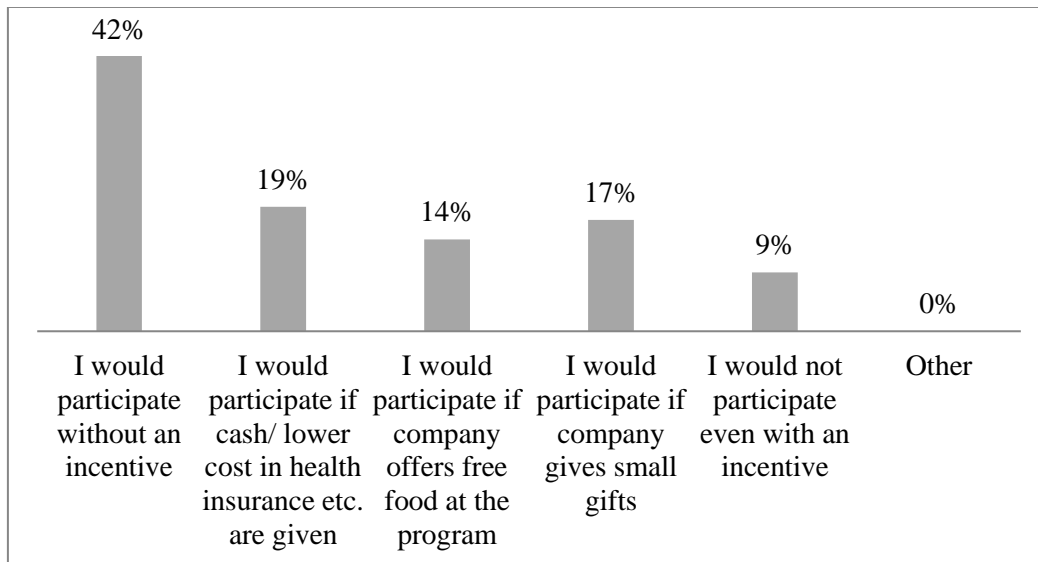


The maximum number of samples falls under the income group of Rs. 7.50 to 10.00 lakhs per annum. Only 10% of the samples are having a package above 10 lakhs per annum. The maximum experience level of the respondents falls under the category between 3 and 5 years.

Likelihood to participate in the Wellness Programs at the Company:

The below chart (chart no. 5.1.4) shows the likelihood of the participation among the employees. The larger portion of the samples (42%) says that they are ready to participate to such programs even there would be no incentives. However 19% suggested that there should be some cash or discounts in the health insurance premiums if employee joins the wellness events; while 14% expected that the companies should offer food at such wellness events, and 17% are willing to join if company gives small gifts in return. However 9% are not willing to join or participate in the wellness programs even the company offers the incentives.

Chart 5.1.4. Likelihood of Participation in wellness Programs



5.2 Testing of Hypothesis:

The question a1 and construct B is mapped for testing the hypothesis. The data has an independent variable as a categorical and the dependent variable is the interval type. The Cronbach’s alpha¹⁴ for the questionnaire tool is .876 (Table No. 5.2.1) and thus the tool is acceptable for the study and testing the hypothesis.

Table 5.2.1. Cronbach’s alpha

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.876	5

The hypothesis is to test the difference between the mean. The Table No. 5.2.2 (F-test Two-Sample for Variances) shows that $F > F$ Critical one-tail, thus, the variances of two populations are unequal. Therefore considering the t-test with unequal variances¹⁵ for testing of hypothesis.

Table No. 5.2.2

F-Test Two-Sample for
Variances

	<i>Wellness Interventions</i>	<i>Not Wellness Interventions</i>
Mean	3.489959839	2.24
Variance	0.975168969	0.984560185
Observations	83	25
Df	82	24
F	0.990461510	
P(F<=f) one-tail	0.464487618	
F Critical one-tail	0.60576131	

Table No. 5.2.3 t-test

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	<i>Wellness Interventions</i>	<i>Not Wellness Interventions</i>
Mean	3.489959839	2.24
Variance	0.975168969	0.984560185
Observations	83	25
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	39	
t Stat	5.527796993	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.17149E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.684875122	
P(T<=t) two-tail	2.34298E-06	
t Critical two-tail	2.02269092	

The above table (Table No. 5.2.3) shows that the t-stat value is 5.527796993 and is greater than the t-critical (two-tail) value i.e. 2.02269092 and thus the researcher can reject the null hypothesis. Thus the researcher can say that there is a significant difference between the wellness interventions and the lifestyles of the employees.

6.1 Recommendations:

The wellness interventions play an important role in developing a healthy workplaces. The companies need to understand why the employees need to join such programs. The data in the paper shows that collectively the people expecting certain incentives for joining such interventions and thus company need to understand what motivates the people to participate in such programs. The awareness of healthy lifestyle is much important to live a better life and thus organizations must design the awareness programs regarding the healthy lifestyle.

7.1 Conclusion:

The data gathered from the employees working in IT/ITes sector. The data shows that the likelihood of the participation in wellness interventions is high even the employers do not offer any type of incentives. However the company needs to analyze the motivation in joining such programs. The data analysis shows that the wellness interventions can have a direct impact on the lifestyles of the employees. The wellness interventions can play a role in improving consciousness about the probable health risks and thus can lead to the improvement in the lifestyle. Thus it can be concluded that the wellness interventions can build the healthy workplaces and can act as a catalyst in changing or improving the employees' lifestyles.

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