

Impact of Corporate Wellness Programs on Wellbeing of Women Employees in India

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Abstract

Corporate wellness initiatives are becoming increasingly popular in India lately. These programmes provide a number of advantages. The elements of employee wellness programmes might differ widely from one firm to the next, but the desired outcomes are often the same.

The study's goal is to comprehend the efficacy of employee wellness programmes and how Indian businesses gauge the success of their corporate wellness initiatives. In this article, we offer the first objectively based causal evidence that wellness initiatives and the resulting health benefits can boost employee productivity. Understanding workplace wellness objectives and difficulties, implementing wellness technology, and emphasising the use of data in gauging the success of corporate wellness initiatives were all included. The report includes both in-depth viewpoints from well-known HR executives and a poll that tried to evaluate bigger trends that are influencing the efficacy of employee wellness programmes in an effort to examine how the wellness programmes have changed. The report identifies the prevalent workplace wellness trends and highlights some of the major obstacles that HR experts believe must be overcome to increase the success of such initiatives.

Keywords:

Introduction

Companies are spending more money on the health and happiness of their workers. According to a recent poll, corporate wellness initiatives are used by almost 90% of businesses. Given increased rates of obesity, diabetes, and other health conditions, as well as the effects these disorders have on employer-sponsored health insurance and absenteeism, the ubiquity of such programmes is not surprising. Numerous studies in the domains of medicine, public health, and health economics demonstrate that the savings from corporate wellness programmes in terms of insurance expenses and absenteeism far outweigh their expenditures.

Companies who recognise that it may be more cost-effective to concentrate on keeping employees healthy than than paying for the expenses of treating the effects of poor health have created wellness programmes. The wellness movement represents a substantial improvement in employer-employee relations since it may open up the possibility of a whole new way of looking at health care. As a result, the health and wellness movement involves a significant paradigm shift from focusing on easing or minimising work-related disease to aiding employees in maintaining and improving their health status, with a particular emphasis on promoting positive behavioural changes. In light of their focus on enhancing human capital for long-term competitive advantage, health and wellness initiatives can be considered as an addition to existing strategic human resource methods.

Table 1 Specifying a degree of physical activity

Categories of physical activity	
High Active:	300+ minutes
Active:	150–299 minutes
Low Active:	60–149 minutes
Inactive:	1–59 minutes
Not Uploading:	No activity uploaded

Source: Jason S. Swayze MS a & Lisa A. Burke (2013)

Literature Review

According to Maslow (1943), there are five different categories into which human needs may be divided, and these categories can then be organised in a hierarchy of priority. These include the requirements for physical necessities, security, possessions, esteem, and self-actualization. He contends that a person's primary motivation is to satiate their physical demands. boost the workforce's efficiency and inventiveness in addressing certain organizational problems, which will eventually result in the achievement of greater performance levels and excellent service delivery in a company.

An analysis of the effectiveness of a 12-week walking programme in enhancing employees' health was conducted by Rancour et al. (2007).

The outcomes highlighted the favorable effects of the health promotion initiatives on staff welfare and service delivery.

When studying the relationship between various workplace practices, including safety and health practices, and employee commitment and intention to leave the company, **Grawitch et al. (2007)** found a positive relationship between health and safety practices and employee job satisfaction.

According to **Cutler and Song (2010)**, wellness initiatives typically return roughly \$3 for every dollar invested in medical costs and absence costs.

Flexible scheduling is a working arrangement that permits employees to plan their own working hours, according to **Menezes and Kelliher (2011)**. Flexibility in schedules is a perk offered to employees that helps to keep talent.

Miller (2012) Firms frequently provide incentives to get employees to participate; study results indicate that over 73% of employers utilize some kind of incentives to get staff members involved in health improvement initiatives.

Keys to Effective Health and Wellness Program Implementation

Leadership support and passion for the initiative are the most important factors in the success of an employee wellness programme. A company's strategic plan must incorporate wellness and articulate a goal for employee wellbeing. Before participating in the programmes, employees need to witness senior executives supporting wellness initiatives; otherwise, they will be seen as a "flavor-of-the-month," transient management fad. The following characteristics characterize effective employee health programmes: They start with health-risk analyses, provide a range of employee incentives, and measure quantifiable outcomes over a number of years in terms of turnover, absenteeism, claims data, and insurance costs.

Since workers who are most at risk for illness or disease are frequently unaware of their risk factors, implementing a health-risk assessment is a crucial first step in developing an employee wellness strategy. Employees are likely to find significant incentive from health-risk assessments to try to alter their habits and improve their health to the extent that they can better recognise the indicators of chronic illness.

Additionally, health-risk assessments provide businesses the ability to compile anonymized data on employee health and develop initiatives to lower the likelihood of undesirable consequences. They can help businesses have a better understanding of the developing health situations of their employees, enabling them to take action before serious health issues arise. The use of insurance claim data and experience rates to measure the overall effectiveness of wellness initiatives depends on this baseline data that has been collected and pooled.

Objective of the Study

To research the advantages from a business standpoint.

To understand ways to implement the wellness programs

Research Methodology

The majority of studies used a descriptive research strategy with specific target demographic samples. This was a very sophisticated approach since it looked at the establishment of wellness programmes in various firms and examined whether the programme was started by the employer or by health care professionals. Because the study used data from particular companies that have employee wellness initiatives, it was appropriate. The researcher has covered about 100 organizations for the study.

Types Of Employee Wellness Programs

Initiatives for employee health and wellbeing range from straightforward assessments of health risks to comprehensive on-site services. According to recent research by the Society for Human Resource Management, the following elements of workplace wellness initiatives are most frequently mentioned:

- Lowering insurance costs for people who have health checks
- Reducing non-smoker insurance costs

- Offering on-site fitness facilities or discounts to neighborhood fitness clubs Waiving and/or lowering deductibles and copays for preventative care
- Sponsoring on-site health fairs with free laboratory tests and health screenings; facilitating courses on wellness; providing flu vaccines; and supporting weight-management programmes.
- Supporting corporate health clubs by paying for or
- subsidizing on-site massages (walking, biking, hiking, etc.)

Possible advantages of staff wellness initiatives

Enhanced Staff Morale

Employee morale may be raised by demonstrating to them that the business genuinely cares about their needs. A strong signal that upper-level management is concerned about the health and wellbeing of their employees may be communicated through their support for employee wellness initiatives. Employee morale may rise as a result of this. It can be challenging for employees to build strong bonds of trust when their only interactions with one another revolve around routine job tasks. As a result, employee wellness programmes offer a chance to boost morale by having groups of employees set health objectives and collaborate to attain those goals. As a result, the organization's rules about and encouraging healthy lives ought to become clear.

More dedication to the organisation

Employees who are expected to provide their all-out effort on a daily basis by a corporation will expect the same level of dedication from the employer. One promise a business may make to its workers is to support and uphold their personal wellbeing. Employees that are devoted to their companies put in more effort, go further to assist coworkers, and provide more innovative suggestions for organizational progress, according to study. In fact, several firms, like Badger Mining Company, have started wellness programmes to, at the very least, somewhat increase engagement from workers.

Improved output from employees

Employees who are in better physical condition should be better able to endure daily stressors brought on by the usual workplace and resist weariness. Employees who can work effectively and consistently throughout the full workday will be more productive since they will be better able to manage stress and exhaustion in addition to being physically healthier. Simply said, one related advantage of wellness programmes that companies frequently seek for is higher worker productivity.

lower absenteeism

According to research, healthy workers tend to miss less days of work owing to sickness (Miller, 2010), and employers greatly respect this. Another related effect is that workers who train themselves to make wise choices in life may try to influence their families to follow suit. As a result, employees who are in better health may take fewer days off from work to care for ailing family members.

Reduction in Turnover

Turnover is expensive and typically happens when a business doesn't provide for the demands of its personnel. Having a wellness programme may help with employee retention because health is one of the most important demands of employees. Employee loyalty to a company that has made investments in their general well-being may also make it more difficult for them to quit; in fact, more loyalty results in reduced turnover.

Enhancing Safety Behavior

Given better employee health and well-being, one understudied possible effect of wellness initiatives is improved safety records at work. Healthy workers should be better able to concentrate on the task at hand and have fewer risk factors for harm than unhealthy workers. Employees should pay more attention to detail when creating job outputs if they are in good physical and mental health. Healthy workers should be in a better position to contribute more to the organization's desired objectives as they won't be under the stress and restrictions of illness. The literature has outlined the connection between employee health and safety.

Potential Organizational-Level Benefits

Decreased Health Care Costs

Put simply, healthy employees have fewer health-related problems thus reducing the costs of employee health care, a topic of extensive coverage in the popular media and practitioner literature. Many studies have been done in this area, and the majority of current analyses indicate that for every dollar spent on wellness programs, a company should expect to save anywhere from \$2 to \$6 in health care costs (Berry et al., 2010). This is the type of hard data that top managers want to know of before embarking upon a wellness initiative.

Decreased Workers' Compensation Claims

Workers' compensation claims can occur as the result of serious safety-related incidents. Because healthy employees have fewer risk factors, the chance of a serious safety-related event occurring can be reduced, thus minimizing the chance of having a workers' compensation claim filed. Furthermore, even if a workers' compensation claim does get filed, healthier employees typically recover more quickly, which could reduce the timeframe that the company will have to pay out disability benefits.

Enhanced Company Image

A lot of what creates the image of a company is how much it cares about and treats its own employees. As previously cited, the support of wellness programs is one way that a company can send a message that it cares about its employees, thus enhancing its image. That is, if employees are happy to work for a certain company, then this sends a positive message to the public, thus enhancing the company's representation in the prospective applicant pool and community at large. Consequently, this outcome could have positive effects when trying to recruit workers.

Potential Financial Benefits When spending money on employee wellness programs, companies want to see that their investment is generating positive returns. Indeed, more organizations are demonstrating positive return on investments (ROI) on wellness interventions than ever before, and the current literature on employee wellness programs is filled with many ROI studies from various companies.

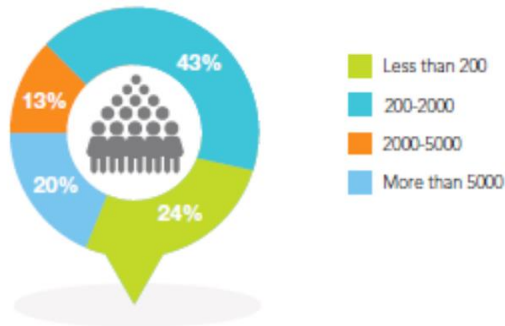
Analysis and Discussion

Figure 1.1 Type of Organization



Source: Primary data

Figure 1.2 No. of employees working the organization



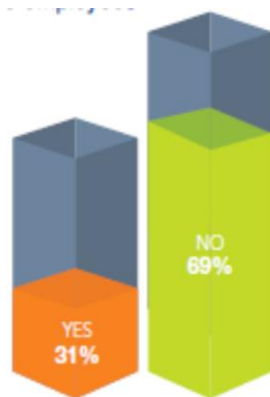
Source: Primary data

Figure 1.3 Respondent's fulfilment with the existing wellness programme



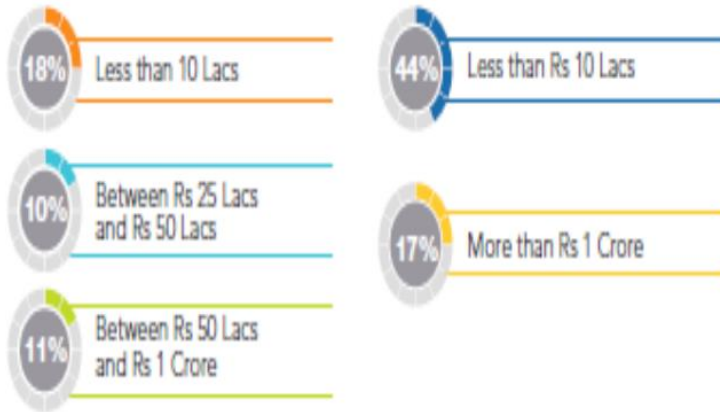
Source: Primary data

Figure 1.4 Benefitted by the employees by the employee wellness programme



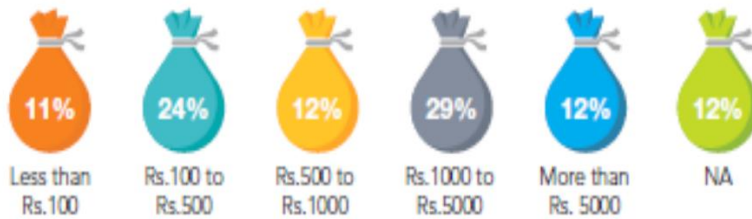
Source: Primary data

Figure 1.5 Expenditure incurred by the organization the employee wellness programme



Source: Primary data

Figure 1.6 Expenditure incurred by the organization per female employee



Source: Primary data

Figure 1.7 Challenges involved in implementing employee wellness program



Source: Primary data

- The key business priorities of organizations for the year 2022 is preparing workforce to be future-ready as 67 percent of the participating organizations said Learning & Development is the top priority for them in the year 2022.
- The workplace wellness programme also significantly improved a set of women employee health beliefs on average.
- Majority of the organizations responded that Employee Health and Wellness is a key focus area for them in this year.
- The survey suggests that while India Inc. appreciates the importance that a wellness program holds for business and its people, the employers are not very satisfied with the results of their ongoing employee wellness programs.
- India Inc. believes that a well-structured workplace wellness program can benefit the business by improving women employees' health; increasing employee engagement; and escalating productivity.
- Workplace wellness India has provided a strong foundation to build healthier workplace relationships with more adhesive teams. Resulting in a more professional and employee healthy environment and even reduced attrition rates, a win for both employers and employees.
- Very few organizations in Indian Inc. offer personalized health and wellness activities
- While Indian organizations are taking innovative approaches to promote women employees' wellness, Health Insurance is still prevalent among Indian Inc

Conclusion

The study results have highlighted current trends in workplace wellness objectives and challenges, adoption of wellness technologies, and the top wellness initiatives adopted by Indian Inc. In addition, the study also highlights the importance of data-driven insights and technology to ensure effectiveness of wellness programs. Limited budgets have been the top challenge for companies to drive workplace wellness initiatives. Interestingly, Indian Inc. can see the budgets for Employee Wellness Programs going up in 2019. On a scale of 1-5, Indian organizations rated their satisfaction with current wellness initiatives at 3, indicating the average results of wellness programs. Majority of companies do not offer personalized wellness activity resulting in less employee adoption and engagement. While most employees are using insights based on employee population to negotiate insurance premiums, there still lies a scope for improvement for Indian organizations to offer better insurance policies.

Consistent with published evidence, there is solid evidence that well-run programs operated by committed employers can meaningfully improve the health-related behaviors and health status of participating employees. However, it is not clear at this point whether improved health-related behavior will translate into lower health care cost, but there is reason to be optimistic.

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