

“A Study on Perception of Corporate Employees working in Bangalore City towards Corporate Wellness Programs offered by their Company”

Ms.Suma.T.S

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Commerce and Management,
MLA Academy of Higher Learning
Bangalore

Mr. Rajkumar Chavan

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Commerce and Management,
MLA Academy of Higher Learning
Bangalore

Abstract:

Concept of corporate wellness began few years ago with a special focus on physical health and safety of employees. Currently the definition of wellness has gone beyond the realm of physical health and safety of employees and has taken into its range a variety of programs aimed not only on physical health, but also aims to work on social and emotional health of employees which motivates the employees to perform better. Lot of innovative programs and tools have been designed to support both employees and employers and have proved to be successful in the areas of organizational culture, reduced absenteeism, attracting talented people to companies and also as a technique to save money. The challenge faced by organizations in the current scenario is about creating a cost effective and impactful wellness program. The purpose of this study is *to understand the various corporate wellness program offered by the companies, how it is perceived by their employees and understand their level of satisfaction towards such programs.* The study is descriptive and exploratory in nature. It is based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the information solicited through a survey of a sample of 100 respondents working in various corporate sectors in Bangalore city. The key findings' emerging from this survey focuses on determining the impact of corporate wellness programs on the employees of the company.

Key words: Corporate wellness, Healthy employee, Employee wellness, Work life, Engaged employee

Introduction

Background and significance:

In the field of human resources, wellness programs help companies contain health expenditures among their employees. A century ago, one of the first worksite-based recreation and fitness

programs were formed in Pullman Company in 1879. However, the growth of worksite recreation and fitness programs slower down for several decades until the National Employee Services and Recreation Association (NESRA) was formed in 1941 and spearheaded greater interest in employees' health. Currently, over half of all midsize and large American companies offer at least one type of corporate health promotion activity with a growing number of smaller employers catching on (Chenoweth, 1998). The contributions of corporate health promotions have been recognized by many companies in global market. Yet, result of this study need to be justified due to various differences between developed countries and developing countries.

Some researchers have been attempting studies on how wellness program could play its key role. For example, according to Johnson & Johnson studies (Janice, 1997), they indicated positive opportunity costs, business-unit-wide of health promotion programs. From his study, positive effects on wellness satisfaction, smoker quit rates and on an indirect measure of productivity. Besides that, Connors (Janice, 1997) also found that some companies have also enjoyed intangible benefits such as improved employee morale, health and productivity, employee attraction and retention, and improved image for corporations. (Effects of Wellness Programs on Job Satisfaction, Stress and Absenteeism between Two Groups of Employees (Attended and Not Attended) Dayang Nailul Munna Abg Abdullaha*, Oon Yin Leeb)

Literature Review:

1) A good example of a successful wellness program is the "Working Well" program. This was an employee wellness program specifically attempting to reduce cancer risk and was evaluated by Beiner et al (1999) using a randomized control design including 114 worksites. The study used employee surveys to assess changes in nutrition and exposure to smoking. This program focused on environmental changes, both physical and social, at work. The results showed workers at wellness intervention sites were more likely to indicate better access to fruits and vegetables as well as nutrition information. Participants in study groups also felt more social support for healthy nutrition choices and activities than those in control groups (Biener 1999).

Another example of a successful program reported in the literature is a recent study evaluating King County Washington's Healthy Incentives program looking at health outcomes through weight loss from 2006 through 2011 (Scoggins et al 2011). The study showed significant weight loss among first year participants as well as fifth year participants indicating that the program is able to support participants with weight loss over time and maintenance of weight loss. Scoggins used national survey data via the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) to act as a

comparison group. The study also showed that participants who were not overweight who participated in the program were at significantly lessened risk for becoming overweight.

2) Work Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health (WHO, 2005). According to Public Health Agency, (2009), health promotion is the process of enabling people to exert control over the determinants of health and thereby improve their health. Health promotion is a process directed towards enabling people to take action. Work Health promotion improves the health status of individuals, families, communities, states, and the nation, enhances the quality of life for all people, reduces premature deaths and also reduces the costs (both financial and human) that individuals, employers, families, insurance companies, medical facilities, communities, the state and the nation would spend on medical treatment. With improved health, workers are more productive, and the company is likely to increase in terms of financial stability (Grawich et al, 2006).

3) The most successful work health promotion programs can be found in companies where workplace health promotion is looked upon as a comprehensive issue, integrated into the company management and aligned with the companies' goals and strategy. Company performance is not only measured in financial terms but also other aspects such as the customer, internal business, innovation and learning factors are taken into consideration. The management therefore provides possibilities for identifying health promotion as an important business enabler that can push companies to perform better. The consequence of this is that it is less necessary to show which costs investment in workplace health promotion brings and more to indicate to what extent workplace health promotion can make a contribution to the achievement of company objectives (Kristein, 1982). At organizational level, a health promotion program leads to change by creating better working conditions, improving the social climate and the organizational process. On an individual level, a workplace health promotion program leads to greater health awareness, healthier lifestyle and to improved motivation and commitment. Implementing workplace health promotion programmes leads to success with regard to decreasing absenteeism rates, occupational accidents and disabilities. Reductions in absence from work are also observed to decrease. Health promotion generates an enhanced image and has a significant influence on the image of a company or organization. It also leads to improved human resources management (Spilman et al, 1986).

4) A working definition of mental wellbeing used by NICE (2009:6) citing the Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project (2008) is that: “Mental wellbeing is a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society” This definition captures the eudemonic approach to wellbeing and implies a strong link between wellbeing and both physical and mental health. In line with this definition, interventions focussed on wellbeing are often synonymous with health. Examples of the kinds of interventions that have been implemented to promote health and wellbeing include: counselling for issues such as alcohol, drugs, or other personal, behavioural or family problems; educational or behavioural interventions directed to stress management; fitness; health information and assistance. In contrast, hedonic approaches to wellbeing focus more on “the type of affective feelings that a person experiences (e.g. anxiety or contentment) and also on the adequacy of those feelings (e.g. whether the person is satisfied with certain aspect of their life)” (Bryson et al, 2014:12). While there are clearly differences between the eudemonic and hedonic approaches, there are also some points of convergence as evidenced by Faragher et al. (2005: 105) who find that “job satisfaction level is an important factor influencing the health of workers”.

Three main categories of health intervention have been proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and these are commonly used in the design and implementation of: primary health care, disease prevention and health promotion programmes. Primary health care incorporates all relevant sectors that are involved in addressing the main health problems in a specific community. The second category of health intervention relates to disease prevention, which can be operationalised at three levels (WHO, 2002): primary (prevention); secondary (addressing the severity of illness) and; tertiary (addressing the associated disability or incapacity). Figure 2 gives some examples of targets and interventions at these levels. Tertiary intervention for instance aims to reduce the incapacity associated with an illness and includes activities such as therapy, rehabilitation and return to work, education and social life (Tammy Boyce et al., 2010). Finally, the WHO has defined health promotion as the process of enabling individuals to “increase control over, and to improve, their health” and state that “To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to

identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment” (World Health Organization (WHO), 2009, p. 2).

5) Herman, Musich, Lu, Sill, Young, and Edington (2006) studied the effect of incentives for participation in an online virtual fitness center and whether or not that participation impacted the health status of employees at IBM Corporation, a large multinational company. IBM offered an incentive \$150 for participation in the online virtual fitness center. The online virtual center provides programs for enhancing physical fitness and provides tools for tracking physical fitness and activity (Herman et al., 2006).

The population studied was 126,372 IBM employees who were employed by the company in 2004 and were eligible for the virtual fitness center program. To qualify for the \$150 incentives employees were required to complete at least 20 minutes of physical activity three times a week and to log their activity online (Herman et al., 2006). Of the entire 126,372 population, 67,324 participated in the VFC program and 49,568 completed the requirements for and received the \$150 rebate. Males numbered 65.5% of VFC participants and 74.6% of nonparticipants. The age for participants was an average of 44.0 years and 45.2 years for nonparticipants (Herman et al., 2006).

6) Franklin, Rosenbaum, Carey, and Roizen (2006) studied the feasibility of using sequential e-mail messages in the workplace to promote healthy behaviors. E-mail and web-based components of corporate wellness can be used as low-cost communication methods as part of health promotion program. The setting for the study was a large insurance company located in New York State. The population of 960 employees was 76% female with an average age of 43. Most (90%) had access to a computer at their desk and the remainder were offered access in a central room or had the option to provide a personal e-mail address (Franklin et al., 2006).

Statements of Problem:

With reference to the wellness program in corporate sector the employees has more anxious to know the whether the corporate sector is conducting wellness program for male and female employees or not. Most of the MNC's companies in India have day and night shift of job which creates an unbalanced schedule of the life during the night shift of job. Especially for the female employees it's a major problem for her to manage the household task along with job task.

Objectives of Study:

1. To understand the various corporate wellness program offered by the companies.
2. To understand the perception and level of satisfaction of employees towards wellness program.
3. To understand the difference in perception between male and female employees towards corporate wellness program.

Research Methodology:

Methodology of Data collections

Methodology each work to be completed by following steps or methods continuously and effectively in order to get the preparation of the research. In order to pursue the effectively the data, the information has been collected from primary source through questionnaire, which includes 100 respondent.

Sources of Data Collection:

The data is completely purely collected from the primary source, since it is exploratory study.

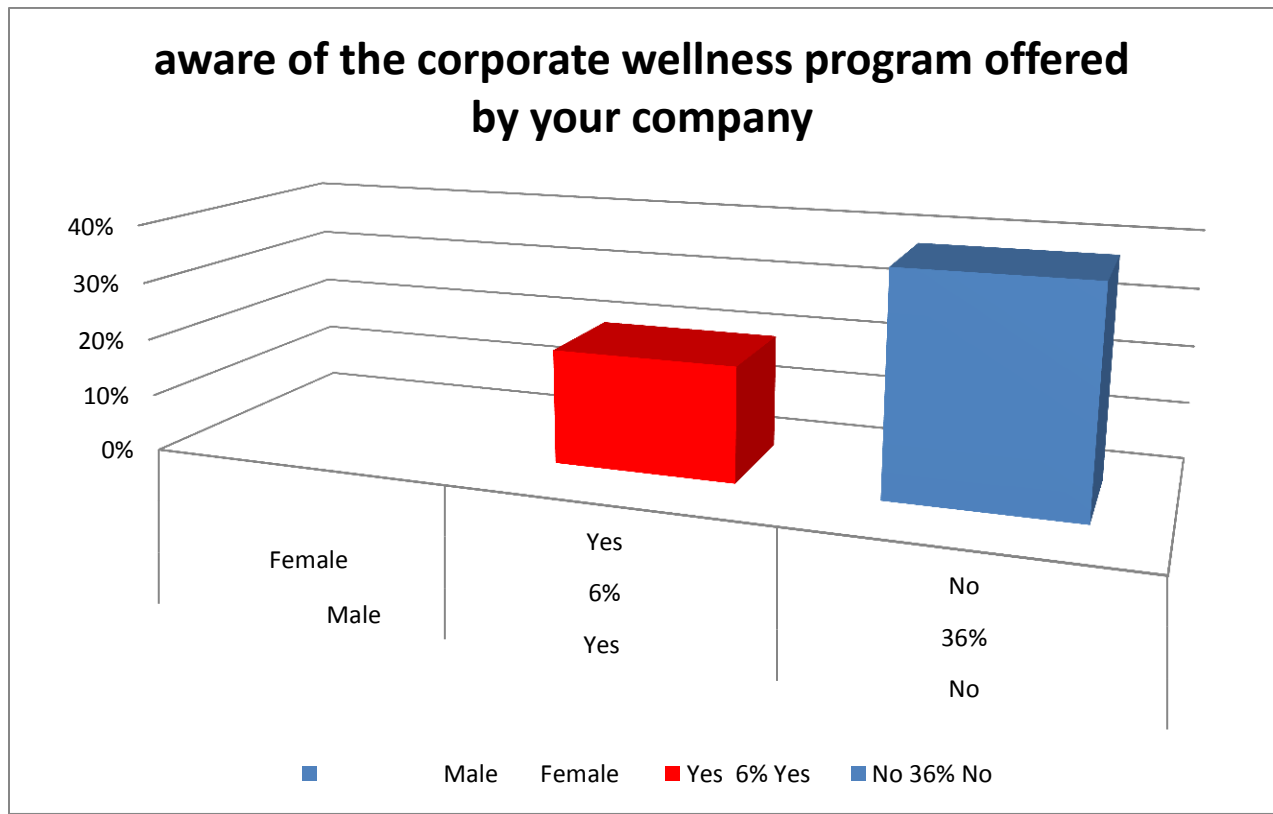
Limitation of the Study:

1. The study is only limited to Bangalore employees with the respondent of 100
2. The duration of the study is 1 month, where maximum data has been collected from the respondent.

Data Collections and Analysis:

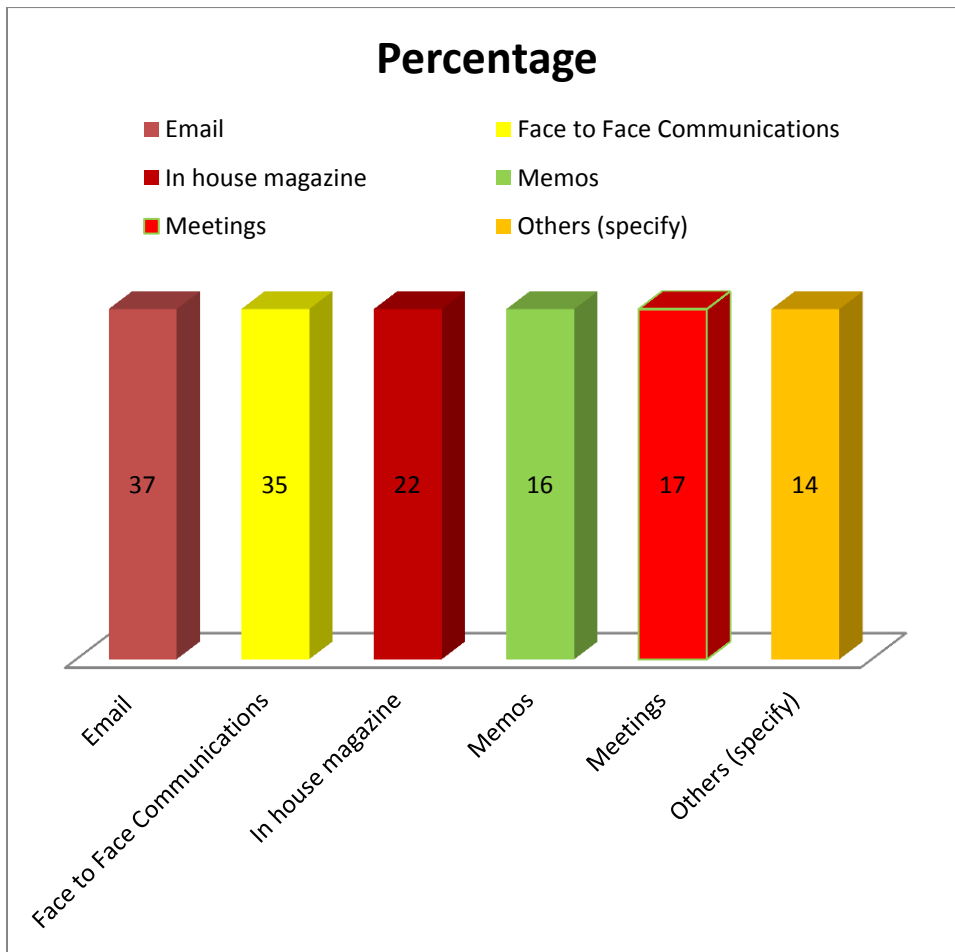
1. Are you aware of the corporate wellness program offered by your company?

Male		Female	
Yes	6%	Yes	20%
No	36%	No	38%



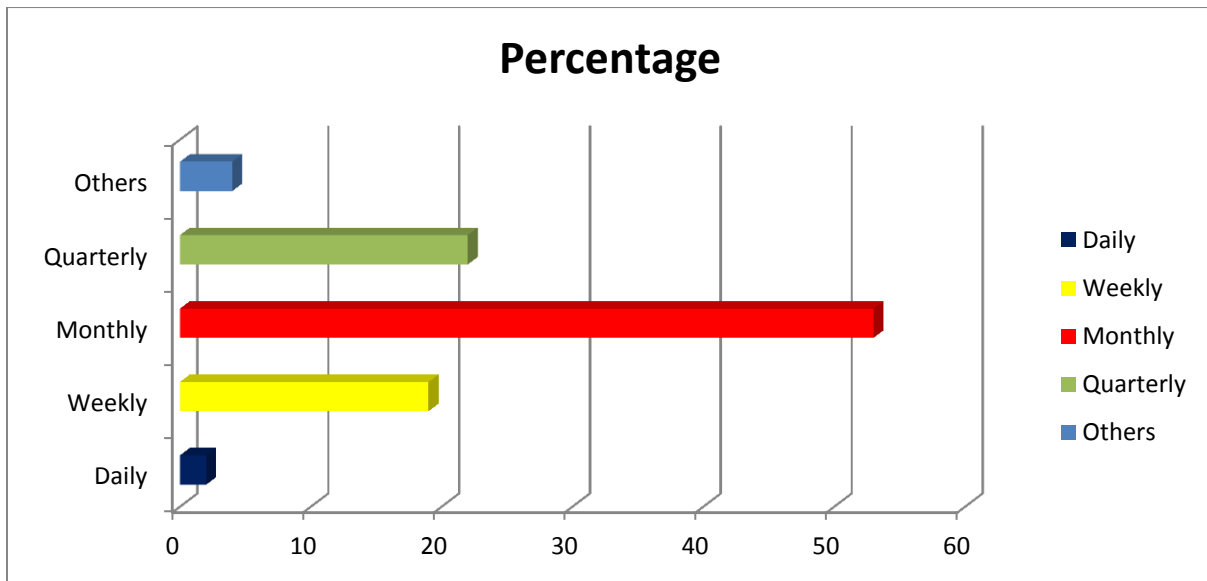
2. How is the information about corporate wellness program communicated to you?

Particulars	Percentage
Email	37
Face to Face Communications	35
In house magazine	22
Memos	16
Meetings	17
Others (specify)	14



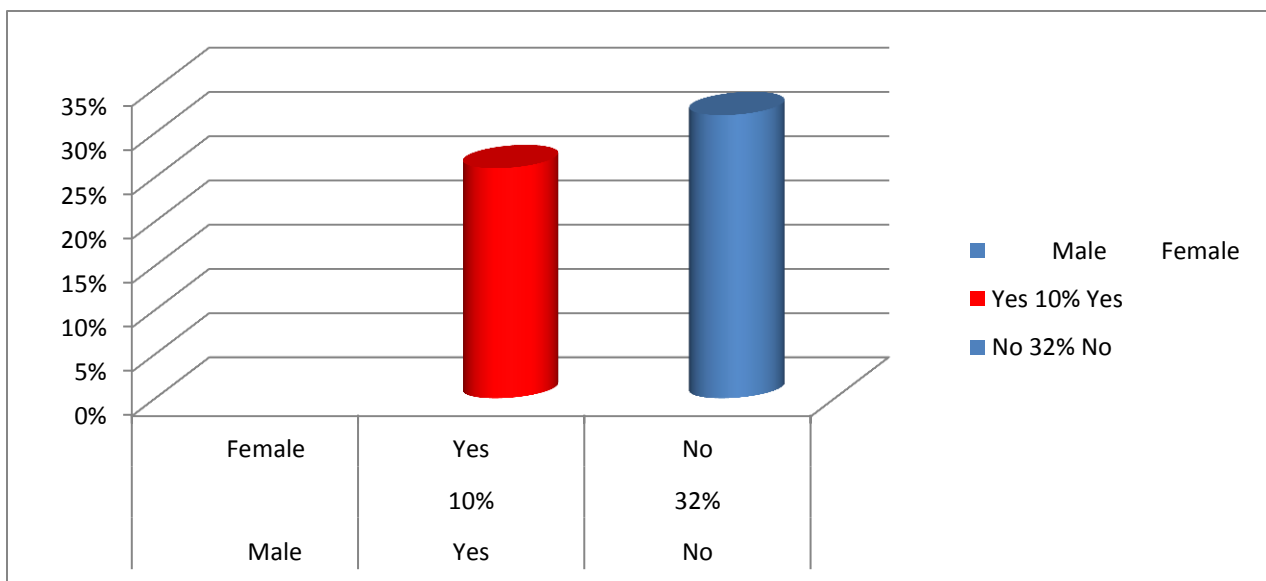
3. How often do you receive information about corporate wellness program?

Particulars	Percentage
Daily	2
Weekly	19
Monthly	53
Quarterly	22
Others	4



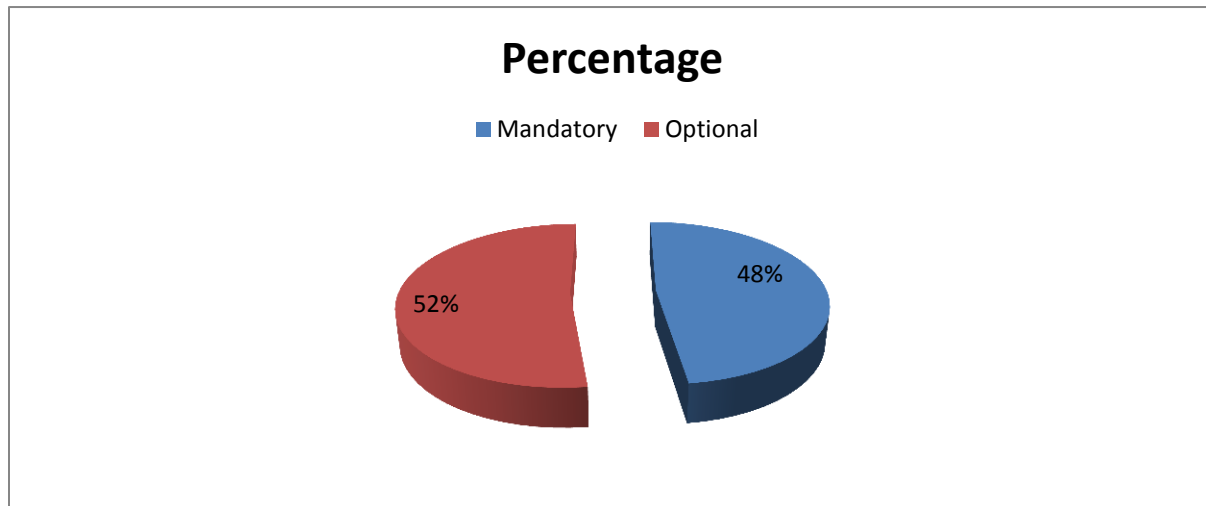
4. Have you ever attended any corporate wellness program?

Particulars	Male		Female	
	Yes	10%	Yes	26%
No	32%	No	32%	



5. Participation in corporate wellness program is:

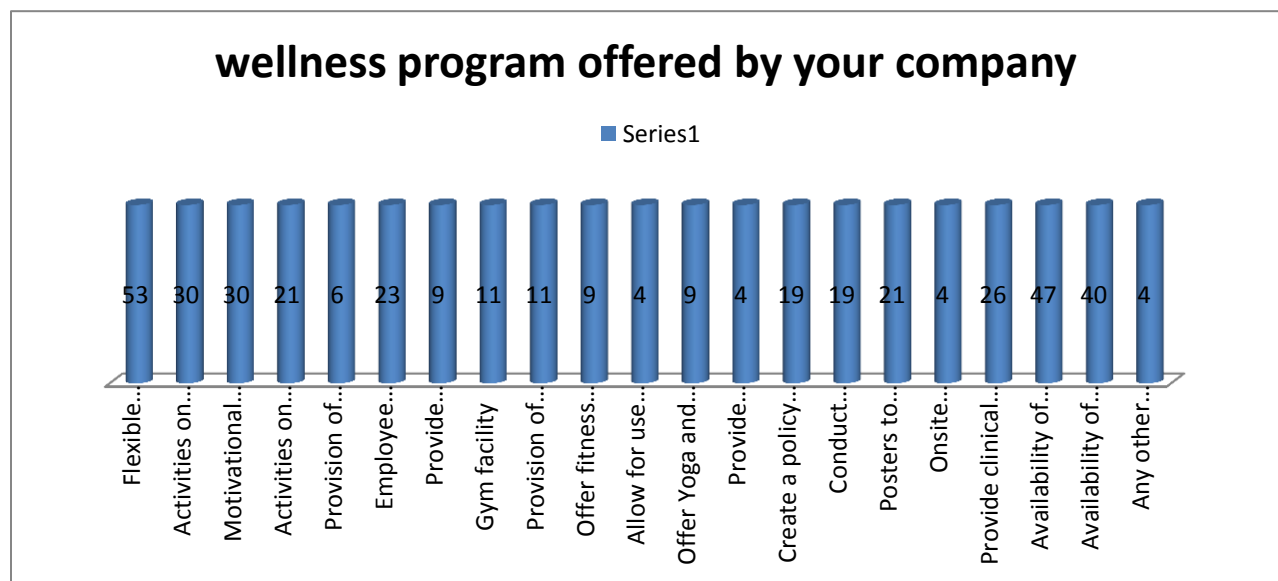
Particulars	Percentage
Mandatory	48
Optional	52



6. .Tick against appropriate wellness program offered by your company

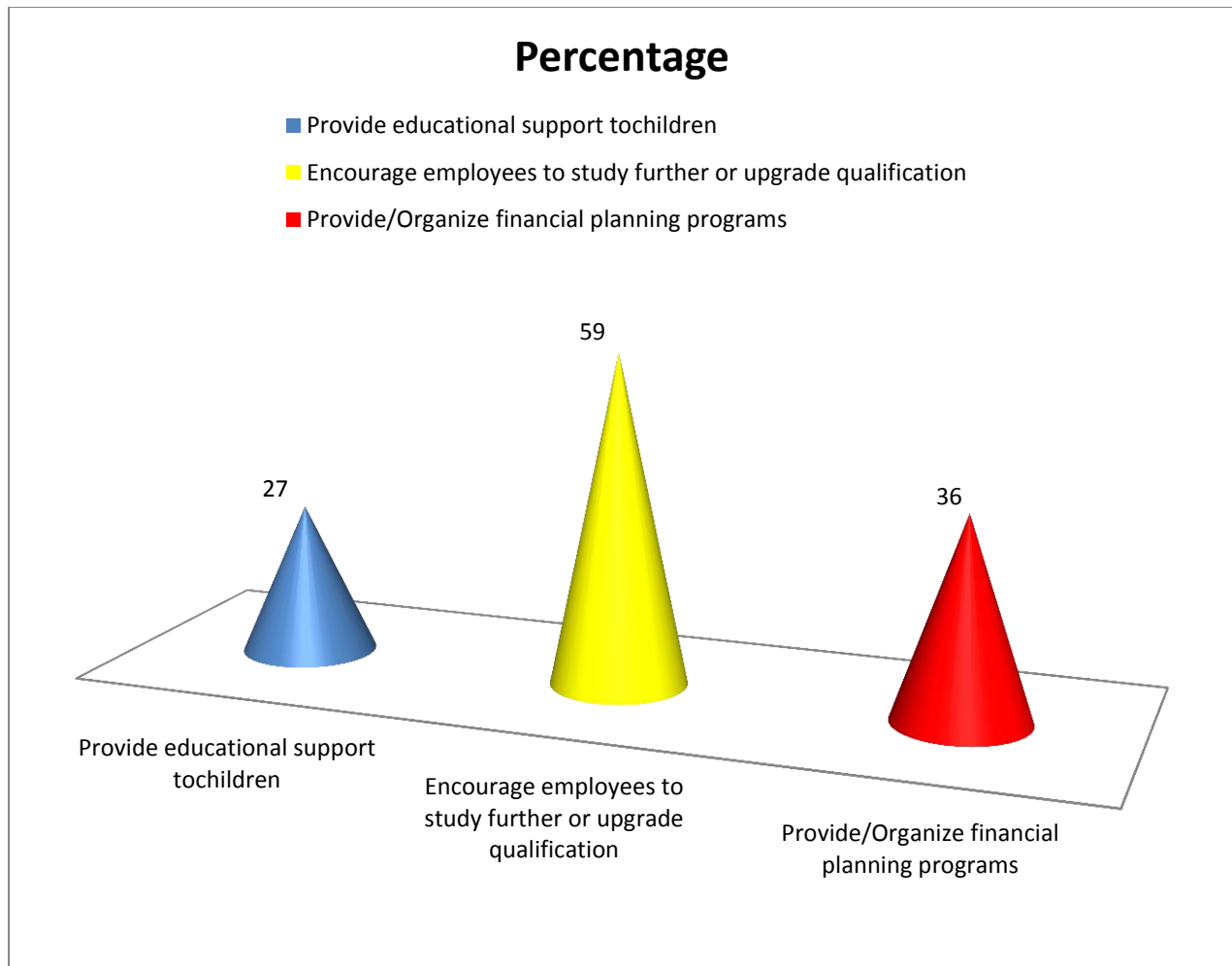
Particulars	Percentage
Flexible working hours	53
Activities on creating Motivational signs at elevators and escalators	30
Activities on creating awareness about physical fitness and mental wellbeing	21
Provision of outdoor exercise areas	6
Employee activity club (Eg: Walking Club, Bicycle club etc)	23
Provide subsidized memberships at local health clubs	9
Gym facility	11
Provision of incentives for participating in physical activities such as sports, games etc	11
Offer fitness training program	9

Allow for use of facilities outside of normal working hours	4
Offer Yoga and Meditation programs	9
Provide opportunities to participate in spiritual retreat programs	4
Create a policy prohibiting tobacco use in the company premises	19
Conduct awareness programs relating to ill effects of smoking and alcohol abuse	19
Posters to support no tobacco use policy	21
Onsite individual or group counseling for de addiction	4
Provide clinical screening tests or medical tests	26
Availability of on campus doctors	47
Availability of on campus counselors	40
Any other facility not listed above (please specify)	4



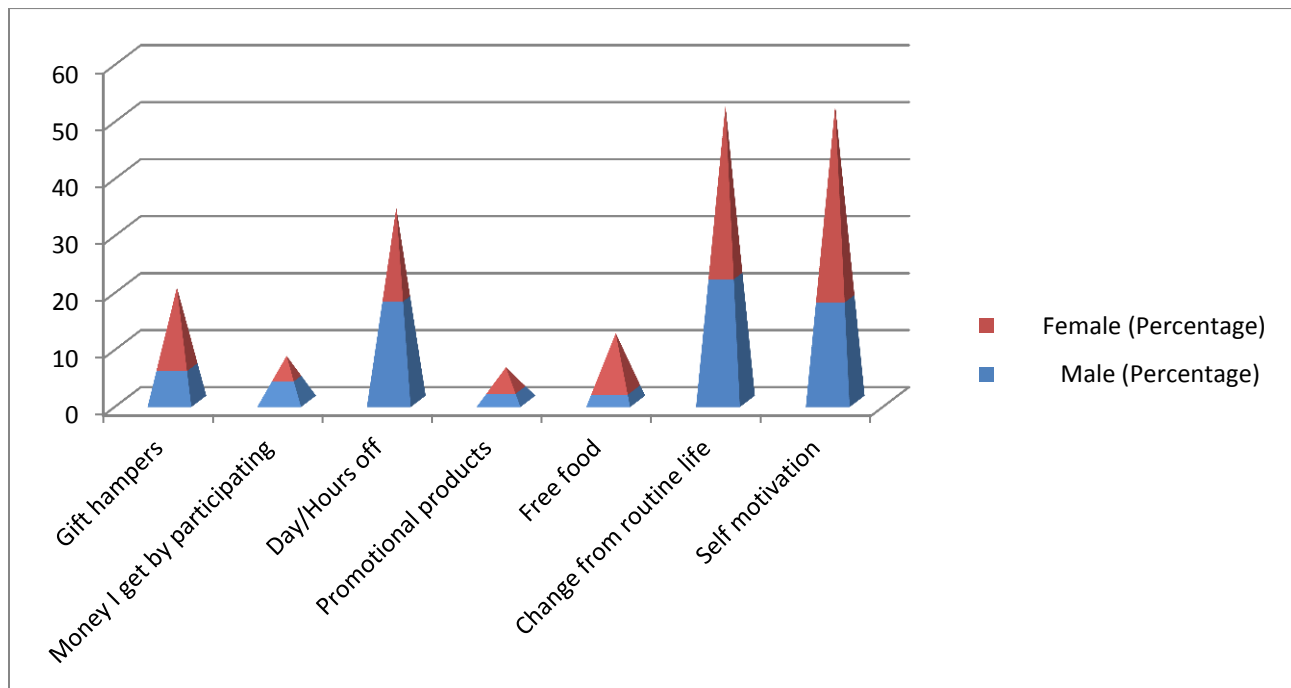
7. Other programs:

Particulars	Percentage
Provide educational support to children	27
Encourage employees to study further or upgrade qualification	59
Provide/Organize financial planning programs	36



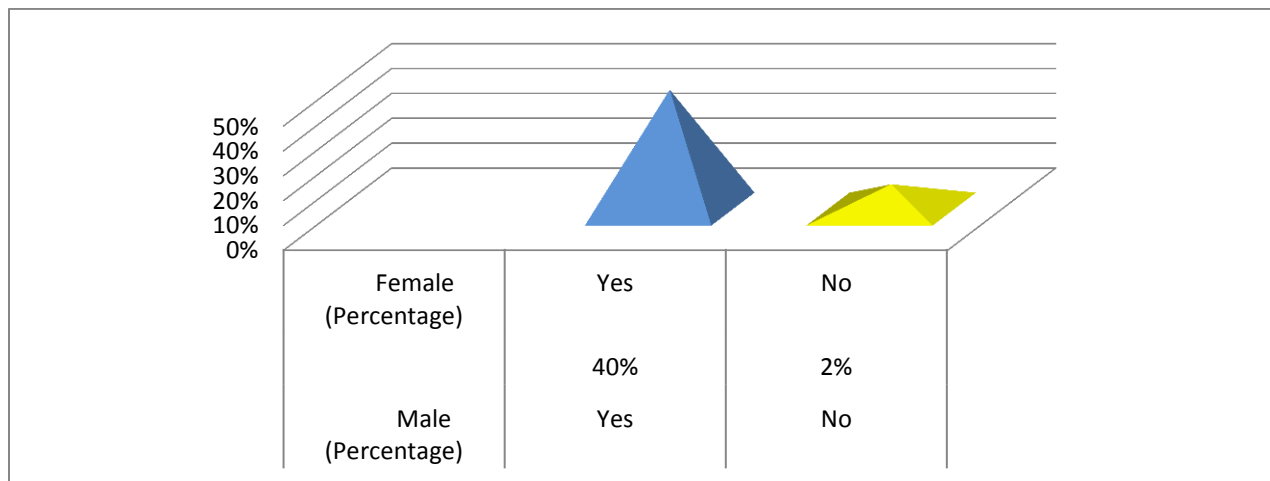
8. What motivates you to participate in the corporate wellness program?

Particulars	Male (Percentage)	Female (Percentage)
Gift hampers	6	14
Money I get by participating	4	4
Day/Hours off	18	16
Promotional products	2	4
Free food	2	10
Change from routine life	22	30
Self motivation	18	34



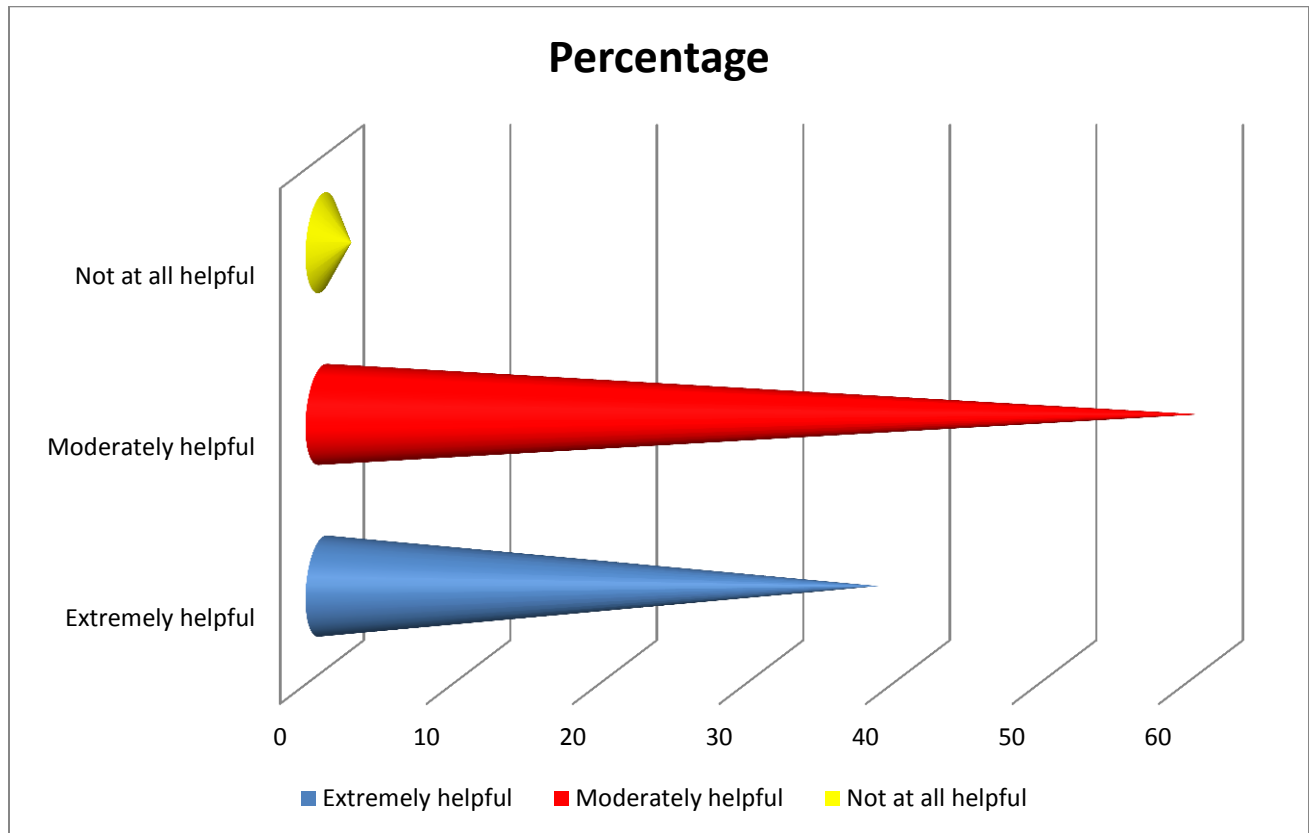
9. Has the program enhanced your knowledge on employee health/well being?

Particulars	Male (Percentage)		Female (Percentage)	
Yes	40%		48%	
No	2%		10%	



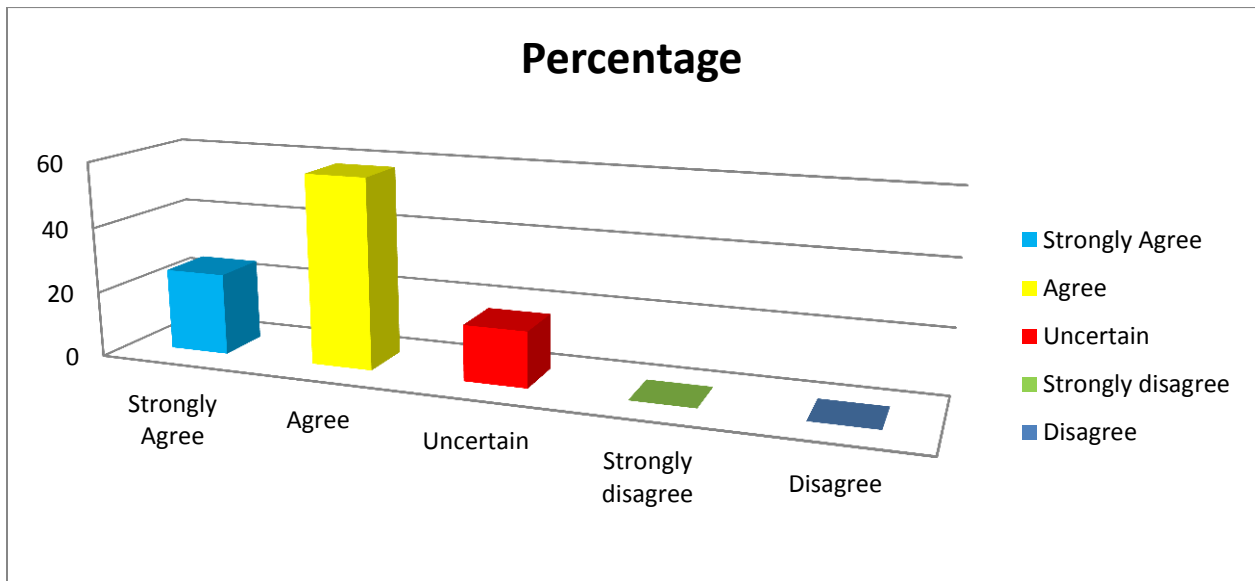
10. How helpful has the corporate wellness program been for you?

Particulars	Percentage
Extremely helpful	38
Moderately helpful	60
Not at all helpful	2



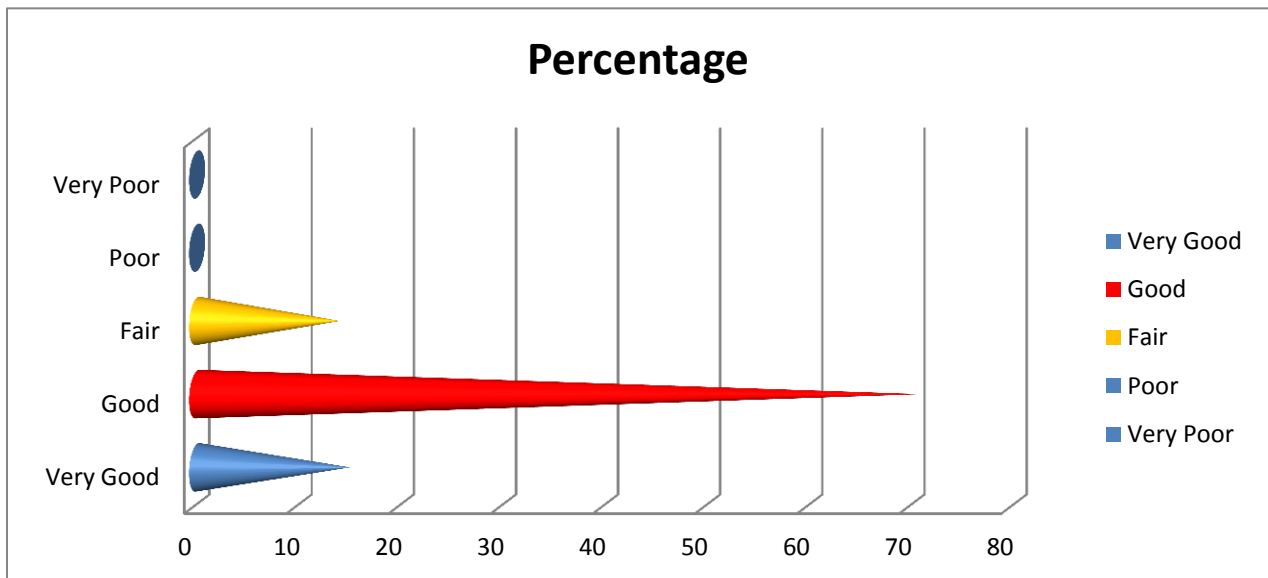
11. Do you think the use of services provided by the wellness program can help improve employee health and increase productivity?

Particulars	Percentage
Strongly Agree	25
Agree	58
Uncertain	17
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0



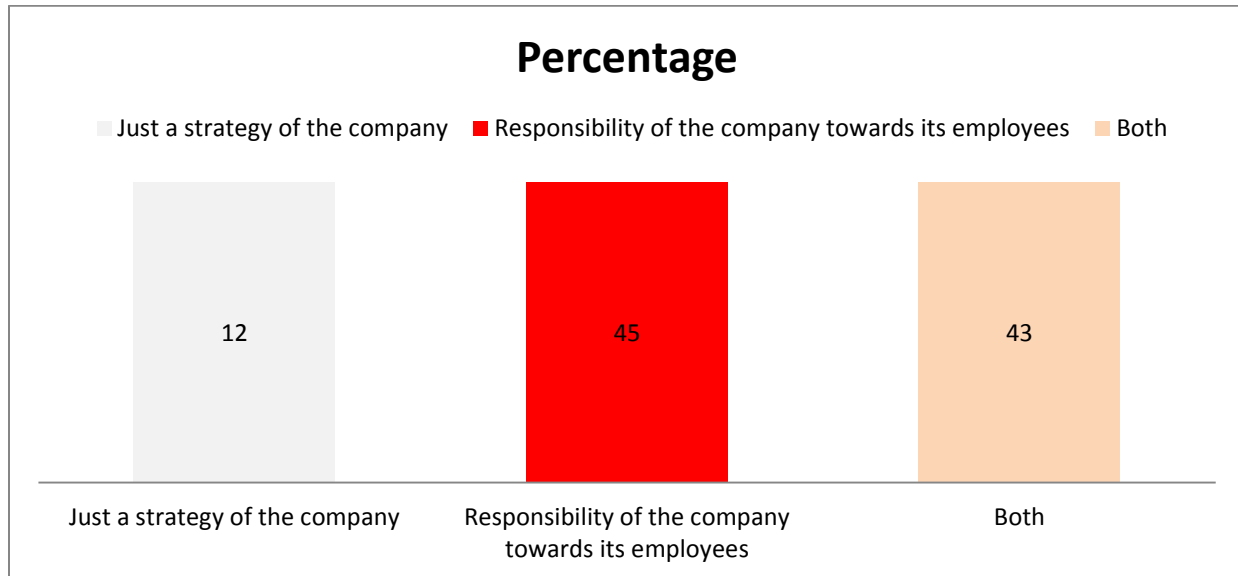
12. How would you rate the corporate wellness program?

Particulars	Percentage
Very Good	15
Good	71
Fair	14
Poor	0
Very Poor	0



13. According to you corporate wellness program is:

Particulars	Percentage
Just a strategy of the company	12
Responsibility of the company towards its employees	45
Both	43



Findings:

1. The women percentage is more in corporate wellness program as compared to female program i.e 20% of women are aware corporate wellness program in Bangalore.
2. The women have more percentage in attending the corporate awareness program as compared to men.
3. The women gets motivate in participate the awareness program when there is a change from routine life.
4. The self-motivation is high in female as compared to male in participating the wellness program.
5. 48% percentage of female feels that wellness program will enhance knowledge.
6. 42% of male feels that corporate wellness program will enhanced the knowledge.
7. 45% of respondent feels that corporate wellness program is responsibility of the company towards its employees.
8. 43% of respondent feels that it's just a strategy.

9. 71% of respondent responded good for corporate wellness program in an organization.
10. 58% of respondent feels that the service provided by the organization will increase the productivity in an organization.

Suggestions:

1. Long term goals are established such as top 10 healthiest workforce by 2025 and so on and then programs are established to achieve that and available to all.
2. Additionally, engage with local outreach groups to bring in people to talk about mental health, active life benefits etc.
3. Always an opportunity to drive more group collaboration and setup programs aligned to healthy eating as well eg., low carb, low fat, etc.
4. Motivating employees to participate by conducting interactive programs.
5. Through continuous monitoring of employees Mental & physical health.
6. Yoga/Meditation can be done in business organization for stress relief.

Conclusions:

Corporate wellness program will have more impact on the employees if the company takes the initiative to engage the employees in the wellness program which will definitely benefit the people those who are involved in the wellness program. Corporate wellness program acts tools for the growth and development of the worker and the employees. The growth and profits of the organization depends on the fitness and wellness of the employees and worker who gives the profit for the business. According to our research more employees feels that corporate employees will improve the productivity of the business organization. It has also enhanced the knowledge of the employees.

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