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## Effectiveness of Exercising During the Work Hours

### Introduction

The benefits of exercising during the work time are immense. Exercising helps improve different aspects of people's life including work effectiveness and productivity. A number of studies, carried out in this field, show that there are many benefits of exercising at the workplace.

If one wants to take up a physically challenging job it vital for them to be healthy and in shape. However, office workers have also started to pay greater attention to their health and physical condition. Exercising and maintaining healthy diet are the best ways to remain healthy (Jensen, 2007). The aim of this paper is to study the benefits of exercising during work hours.

The research questions are as follows:

- Is it beneficial to exercise at the workplace?
- What are the effects of exercising during work hours?
- Should employers allow their employees to exercise during work time?

### Methods

In order to get the data for analysis 25 participants were chosen for the interview and questionnaire. The participants were employees engaged in doing the job of various complexity including office workers, manual workers and others.

10 participants took part in the questionnaire. As a questionnaire may be completed with and without the researcher, it was decided to ask the respondents to give verbal answers to the questions. A questionnaire is an essential stage of the research process. Its preparation and administration require considerable professional expertise. It helps to obtain information about the defined problem. Questions used in the questionnaire are usually classified into two types including open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. We have used closed-ended questions which require strictly limited responses. The questionnaire included 15 questions with 4-5 answers each. The respondents were to choose the most appropriate answer. The questions covered the issues of exercising during the work time, its influence on their attitude to work, frequency of exercising, desire to work in the environment where employers permit the employees to exercise, the level of their physical fitness, a desire to improve it and others.

15 participants were interviewed. Interviewing is considered to be very flexible as it responds to the direction of an interviewee and adjusts to the research with the emphasis on the most important issues that might appear while interviewing. Interviewing is regarded to be an interchange between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. It helps see the centrality of human interaction (Kvale, 1996, p. 14). During the interview, the order of the questions was changed and some questions were even rephrased due to the answers of the participants to make them give full and precise answers as well as avoid biases caused by social desirability, conformity and other disinterest constructs (Hoyle, Harris & Judd, 2002, p. 144). The interview consisted of the same questions as the questionnaire. However, there were no answers provided.

As the success of an interview depends on the communication skills of the interviewer, his/her ability to listen, make pauses and clearly ask questions, the researcher lets the

respondents talk freely. The interviewees were given freedom to express their own views, and provide comparable and reliable data.

### Results

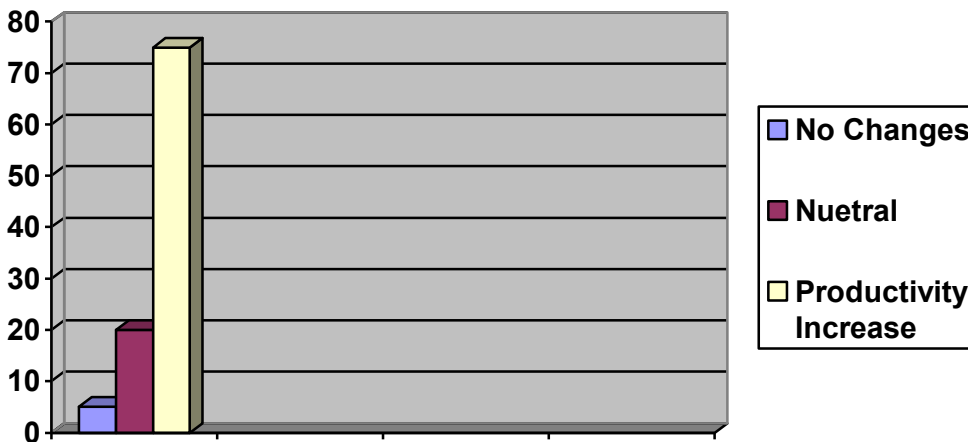
70% of participants were males. All of them were selected randomly. The age range was 25-60. Questionnaire and interview results show that people exercise from 1 to 5 times a week (see table below).

Table 1

#### *Frequency of Exercising*

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Frequency of Exercising</b>
25-30	1-2 times a week
30-40	3-5 times a week
40-50	2-4 times a week
50-60	1-3 times a week

However, 20% of participants did not exercise due to different reasons, such as poor health, overweight, lack of interest and others. Those who exercise claim that they have better production rates, better health which results in less absenteeism. 60% of respondents claimed that they would choose the employer who allows exercising at work whereas 20% do not find it to be a benefit. The figure below shows participants' ideas concerning the changes after the employers allow the employees exercise at work. 75% of participants claimed that productivity increases, 20 % have neutral attitude to it and only 5% claimed that there are no changes in the productivity.



*Figure 1.* Changes after exercising at work

In general, the majority of participants is convinced that their attitude to work is much better. The participants who worked as managers and team leaders believed that the employees who exercise show better production rates and an improvement in overall profits. They also need less time to complete the work. As a result, the company benefits from employees' exercising because it maintains the base of hardworking employees that can grow both the profits and its customer base.

### **Discussion**

Analysis of relevant literature and data received from questionnaires and interviews shows that exercising at work time positively affects employees' productivity and effectiveness. It was revealed that people who exercise during work hours are happier, more productive and suffer from stress less. 75% of respondents mentioned improvements in productivity and time management on the days they exercised compared to the days without exercising. They also spoke about better mental and interpersonal performance as well as better management of their workload.

A number of studies show that employees who spend at least 2-3 hours a week being physically active are more satisfied with the quality and quantity of their work, have increased work ability and take less sick leaves than those employees who do not engage in exercising. (McKenzie, 2012). By using work time for exercising, employees also have a splendid opportunity to improve their work-life balance.

### **Conclusion**

Employers should allow and even encourage their staff to exercise during work time as it has been proven to increase the productivity level. Research has shown that reducing work hours in favor of exercising leads to high efficiency and productivity. That is why employers should not be afraid to use work hours to encourage and promote their employees doing exercises for at least several hours per week. This will likely result in the performance improvement without using significant resources. In addition, businesses should take responsibility to improve physical fitness of their employees as this will also benefit their business in the long-term. It is advisable to provide the necessary facilities for employees to have an opportunity to exercise during work hours.

## References

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