Assessing Weekly Wellness Sessions: Cordillera Administrative Region's Social Welfare Impact

Shamah S. Ponasen
Graduate School student, Cordillera Career Development College, La Trinidad, Benguet, Philippines 2601
sicuanshamah@gmail.com
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Abstract:
This literature review examines the efficacy of workplace wellness initiatives, focusing on the Weekly Wellness Sessions (WWS) conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office Cordillera Administrative Region. The study evaluates staff participation rates, the effectiveness of wellness programs, and challenges encountered in availing the WWS. Primary and secondary sources materials were used in the analysis of this literature review. Casual observations were also integrated. Findings reveal coffee sessions as the most popular activity, while limited facilities and costs hindered participation in other activities. The WWS were perceived as highly effective across multiple dimensions of well-being, with minimal variation based on gender or age. However, differences in effectiveness were noted among different positions and offices/divisions. Common challenges included time constraints, financial limitations, and personal barriers. Recommendations include enhancing financial accessibility, tailoring interventions, offering flexible scheduling, promoting awareness, and cultivating a culture of health and wellness. Addressing these recommendations can optimize the impact of the WWS and contribute to a healthier, more productive workforce within DSWD FO CAR.

Keywords: Weekly Wellness Sessions, Staff Well-being, Effectiveness, physical fitness, positivity

INTRODUCTION

The promotion of wellness, especially in the workplace, has garnered global attention as organizations recognize the profound impact on employee health and overall productivity. This introduction aims to delve into the multifaceted dimensions of vocational health and wellness, drawing insights from a spectrum of worldwide, nationwide, and organizational perspectives.

Approximately half of U.S. employers offer wellness promotion initiatives, and larger employers are more likely to have more complex wellness programs. Programs often include wellness and screening and activities to identify health risks and interventions to reduce risks and promote healthy lifestyles. Assessing the effectiveness of weekly wellness sessions in
government settings involves evaluating various aspects of the program, including participation rates, employee feedback, health outcomes, and the alignment of the program with organizational goals. Case studies and semi-structured interviews with organizational leaders and employees can provide valuable insights into the implementation and impact of wellness programs in government agencies. We find that lifestyle management interventions as part of workplace wellness programs can reduce risk factors, such as smoking, and increase healthy behaviors, such as exercise. We find that these effects are sustainable over time and clinically meaningful. It confirms that workplace wellness programs can help contain the current epidemic of lifestyle-related diseases, the main driver of premature morbidity and mortality as well as health care cost in the United States. The breadth of employers’ workplace wellness strategies can vary substantially, from offering vouchers to join a gym to implementing multicomponent programs that combine screening, interventions, and changes to the overall benefit design. Additionally, workplace wellness programs and wellness incentive programs as part of those might be offered directly by an employer as a benefit for all employees or as part of an employer-sponsored group health plan for participants and beneficiaries. Early proponents of workplace interventions, such as Johnson & Johnson, developed their own programs. The emergence of a workplace wellness industry in recent years now allows employers to procure readymade programs and interventions and has contributed to the uptake of those programs, as they demonstrate favorable results (Mattke et al., 2013).

There is a large, positive correlation between employee well-being and aggregate, firm-level measures of performance across all types of industries. This relationship is particularly strong in terms of customer satisfaction and staff turnover-both of which drive overall profitability. Publicly traded companies with a happy workforce also perform better on the stock market. We estimate a positive correlation between employee well-being and productivity, and there is a growing evidence base documenting this being a causal effect. Recent experimental evidence suggests that a meaningful increase in well-being yields, on average, an increase in productivity of about 10%. Interventions aimed at raising employee productivity should target the key drivers of employee well-being. A good starting point are interventions identified in Krekel et al. (2019) that target (a) social relationships at work, especially with supervisors (for example, similar to the social recognition programme at LinkedIn or Butterfly AI’s managerial feedback system described in our case studies), (b) making jobs more interesting (for example, through job crafting), and (c) improving work-life balance (Krekel et al., 2019).

Wellbeing has been considered as a driver of higher levels of productivity and thus a means of solving the productivity puzzle. However, the relationship between productivity growth and wellbeing is complex and involves many moderating or mediating factors. (i) Wellbeing is linked to higher levels of labour productivity. Poor mental health appears to be more strongly linked with lost productivity through presenteeism (relative to absenteeism), as people are often reluctant to disclose that they are suffering from mental health problems. High levels of stress can lead to burnout and reduced labour productivity, but training resilience has been shown to produce positive effects on wellbeing and productivity. (ii) Certain factors may be able to explain the positive relationship between levels of wellbeing and labour productivity. Human
capital is an asset that is considered to enhance an individual’s or organisation’s productivity. At the same time, it can enhance wellbeing by facilitating the satisfaction of psychological needs, greater health status and greater social mobility. Social capital allows for voluntary cooperation and the effective sharing of human capital, thus heightening productivity. At the same time, it is considered to be a determinant of higher levels of wellbeing in the workplace and everyday life. Certain environmental factors have been linked to both greater wellbeing and greater labour productivity. These include air quality, greenery and temperatures. (iii) Productivity growth may have detrimental effects on wellbeing. The pursuit of productivity growth in the workplace can heighten a number of workplace factors such as job demands and job insecurity, both are associated with poorer wellbeing. Sustained productivity growth may increase carbon emissions, raise average temperatures, and deplete forms of natural capital that have been shown to be beneficial for wellbeing (Isham et al., 2020).

The decision to participate in worksite wellness programs is influenced by several individual, social, and organizational factors including perceptions of the impact of one's disability on health, the health habits of coworkers, and an organizational commitment to employee well-being. Study participants also indicated the importance of affordability, convenient times, and interest in the wellness activities being offered, as influencing participation decisions. These findings suggest that individual, social, and organizational factors all contribute to the decision to participate and suggest that social support from colleagues as well as easily obtained and understandable program information from the employer, may be especially useful in engaging employees with disabilities in wellness programs (Cook et al., 2016).

Research has explored the perspectives of Philippine organizations on building a culture of workplace wellness. Employers in the Philippines are recognizing the importance of prioritizing their employees' health and well-being. Initiatives to protect employees' mental health, such as life coaching, interest groups, and wellness trainings, are being implemented to address the holistic well-being of employees. The Mental Health Act mandates organizations and employers to have programs that activate Employee Assistance Programs to take care of psychological issues and concerns, emphasizing the importance of workplace wellness effort (Hechanova et al., 2018).

Workplace wellness takes advantage of employers' access to employees at an age when interventions can still change their long-term health trajectory (Mattke et al., 2013). Given the amount of time employees spend at work, the workplace is an important setting to promote health.

The presence of wellness support was associated with better outcomes, suggesting the value of initiatives to manage workload and support the well-being of surgical resident physicians (Bui et al., 2020). Also, findings indicate on the long-term impacts of the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) program on teachers' self-reported social and emotional competence and well-being shows that teachers who participated in mindfulness-based professional development through CARE reported both sustained and new benefits regarding
their well-being at a follow-up assessment almost one-year post-intervention compared to teachers in the control condition (Jennings et al., 2019).

The majority of large employers that offer health benefits today also offer at least some wellness programs in an effort to promote employee health and productivity and reduce health related costs. Workplace wellness programs vary in the services and activities they include, and about three-in-ten large employers use incentives to encourage employees to participate (Pollitz et al., 2016). There was a significant difference in extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction levels between employees who participated and employees who were nonparticipating in the wellness program (Marshall, 2020).

Employees exposed to a workplace wellness program reported significantly greater rates of some positive health behaviors compared with those who were not exposed, but there were no significant effects on clinical measures of health, health care spending and utilization, or employment outcomes after 18 months (Song et al., 2019).

According to the result of 2019 Health and Wellness Promotion Programs, most firms offering health benefits offer programs to help workers identify and address health risks and unhealthy behaviors. Fifty percent of small firms and 84% of large firms offer a program in at least one of these areas: smoking cessation, weight management, and behavioral or lifestyle coaching. Among large firms offering at least one of these programs, 41% offer workers an incentive to participate in or complete the program (Kaiser et al., 2019).

Health is a treasure. Of all the temporal possessions it is the most precious one has in life. Wealth, learning, and honor are dearly purchased at the loss of the vigor of health. If health is lacking, none of these can secure happiness. Unhappy persons are usually unhealthy either emotionally, socially, mentally or physically. The person has been really down, trapped in mental dungeon, can’t remember how it feels to be happy, and wondered if life was worth living for. Perhaps, one can identify with the frustration, fatigue and crisis experience of a person (Parker, 1995).

Employees with high stress levels had statistically significant lower quality of life, more fatigue, and poorer health compared with employees with low stress levels. In terms of their ability and motivation to participate in wellness programs, the high-stress employees were also less active and had less healthy nutritional habits, less support, and less confidence in their ability to be active. They also reported having more health problems, including high blood pressure, high blood sugar, high cholesterol, and overweight. It appears that employees with high stress levels—those who might most benefit from participation in wellness programs—may experience the greatest difficulty participating actively in wellness programs because of their lack of support, low confidence, and numerous health problems. Perhaps offering tailored stress reduction programs for these employees would be beneficial (Clark et al., 2011).

Worksite fitness and health promotion programs have grown exponentially in the past 15 years. To examine the impact of these programs, the literature through 1988 was reviewed. In general, fitness and wellness programs result in increased levels of fitness and a reduction in the risk factors for coronary heart disease. Recent research using control groups has found relations between reduction in health care costs, absenteeism, and turnover and implementation of
comprehensive health promotion programs. Issues related to participation rates, program implementation, and evaluation are also addressed (Gebhardt et al., 1990).

Wellness programs in the workplace, including government agencies, play a pivotal role in fostering a healthy and productive workforce. Research has shown that these programs can encourage employees to adopt healthier lifestyle choices, such as smoking less, eating healthier food, exercising more, and managing stress effectively. Changing and improving employee behaviors is the goal of any wellness program. By improving the behaviors of a workforce, you can help your team members lower their health risks and adopt healthy habits that will benefit all areas of their lives. Research shows that wellness programs can encourage employees to smoke less, eat healthier food, exercise more and manage stress more effectively. Wellness programs also have been shown to help employees alleviate and better manage the symptoms of depression, improving their overall wellbeing. Wellness programs encourage employees to eat healthy foods and exercise, reducing the risk of long-term health problems and helping them feel more energized and happier throughout their work days. Research shows that employees who are healthier tend to be more productive in the workplace because they're more rested, energized and motivated to complete their work to the best of their abilities. By participating in wellness programs in the workplace, employees remain focused on maintaining healthy behaviors like exercise, which is shown to improve sleep and increase productivity in the workplace. Weight loss challenges, walking groups and other wellness activities help employees feel more connected to the company they work for and to their co-workers. These activities help strengthen the relationships employees have with one another and their managers and can increase the likelihood that an employee will remain with the company for a long time.

A wellness program can help improve the morale of your entire team, as participating in one can create feelings of satisfaction among employees. Wellness programs help employees feel more supported in their health and wellness goals, which can help them feel more valued by their employer. These employees are more likely to embrace the opportunity. While stress does occur in the workplace, a wellness program can help to reduce or eliminate prolonged stress that reduces productivity and leads to unnecessary absenteeism from sickness. By creating a wellness program that's focused on reducing stress in the workplace, you can improve your team's performance and employee retention. Wellness programs help to improve the health of a company's workforce. Elevating the health of your team and minimizing stress as much as possible can increase their overall satisfaction in their role by making them feel more invested in their work. When employees feel healthy and morale is good, they're more motivated to come to work and perform at their best, improving company-wide attendance. By improving the health of a company's workforce, those employees are less likely to get sick or be injured on the job. This means that employees are receiving medical care less frequently, saving both themselves and the organization money in healthcare expenses. When employees work well as part of a team, they're more productive and the quality of their work also improves. They also tend to be more creative, since teamwork generally results in better collaboration and the development of more innovative ideas. By participating in wellness programs together, particularly team-based activities, employees can strengthen their relationships with one another, encourage each other and hold
one another accountable for their goals. Taking part in wellness activities outside of the workplace can also help with team bonding and camaraderie, which further improves communication and collaboration in the workplace (Krosel et al., 2023).

Wellness is not an objective habit that relies on an organization or any institution a person belongs to. In this sense, wellness is not something to be imposed on another person. Wellness on the other hand is a process of coordination and integration of lifestyle. It involves physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, occupational aligning. It is a style of living that requires self-responsibility and commitment. In simple terms, wellness is a determined choice to live a life of well-being. As an approach, wellness is the capacity of the self to extend love, care, and hope to others. It is not focused on a mere part of a person, but focuses on the integration and appreciation of everything a person does, thinks, believes, and determines to take control of his well-being (Angiwan, 2005).

Physical wellness is the overall fitness of an individual. It is one of the most important keys in achieving balance and harmony. Without physical wellness, there is no energy and stamina to participate in work, intellectual, and emotional pursuit for enjoyment (Angiwan, 2005). Physical wellness is one of the most neglected facets of life. Hence, feelings of dissatisfaction about health and body and body image occurs and it serves as impediment in joining social events to form relationships.

Social wellness refers to the ability to interact successfully in a global community and to live up to the expectations and demands of personal role (Swenson, 2004). It involves the ability to get along with others and appreciate the uniqueness of others that include the common good of the community. Furthermore, social wellness prescribes individuals to associate himself to a larger social unit such as good friends, community involvement, and volunteerism in a social program.

Intellectual wellness is regarded as the ability to gather, process, recall, and exchange information (Seaward, 2009). Swenson (2004) added that intellectual wellness is characterized by the ability to make sound judgment, to be open, and to think creatively. It includes openness to new ideas, sense of humor, and curiosity. It also includes continuous acquisition of knowledge throughout life, hence; learning should never stop. Intellectual wellness does not stop in acquiring knowledge; it should be shared with other people, family, and society.

Emotional wellness is defined as the ability to feel, express and control the full range of human emotions rather than be controlled by them (Seaward, 2009). Emotional wellness is also a dynamic state that fluctuates frequently with other dimensions of wellness. It is referred to as a skill of possessing the ability to feel and express human emotion constructively. Angiwan (2005) expressed those positive emotions such as happiness, amusement, excitement, and love contribute to overall sense of wellness. McGlynn (1999) suggested that the emotional dimension of wellness prescribes individuals to include healthy and helpful practices, to develop and maintain close relationships, to accept responsibility of action, and to see challenges as avenue of growth.

Financial wellness, broadly defined as the state of one's fiscal health and stability, has emerged as a critical aspect of personal development and life satisfaction. As Grossmen (1994)
emphasized, well-being encompasses a multifaceted perspective that extends beyond the absence of disease to embrace a continuous process of attaining greater personal satisfaction. In this context, financial wellness stands out as a fundamental component, intricately intertwined with physical, emotional, and social dimensions. The contemporary landscape is characterized by an array of financial challenges, ranging from economic uncertainties to the complexities of managing personal finances. The workplace, often considered a hub for personal and professional development, has become a focal point for interventions aimed at enhancing financial wellness (Kaiser Family Foundation et al., 2019; Marshall, 2020). The implementation of workplace wellness programs, including those addressing financial aspects, has gained traction as organizations recognize the profound impact of financial stress on employees’ overall well-being and job satisfaction (Pollitz et al., 2018; Song et al., 2019). The significance of investigating financial wellness becomes apparent as it intersects with individual productivity, mental health, and overall job satisfaction (Marshall, 2020; Seaward, 2009). Understanding the dynamics of financial wellness within the context of workplace environments is essential for both employers and employees. As organizations increasingly acknowledge the interconnectedness of financial health and overall well-being, research in this area becomes paramount to inform policy, intervention strategies, and foster a culture of financial resilience.

Spiritual wellness is a set of religious and guiding principles, belief, norm, and values that direct one’s life. It encompasses a high level of faith, hope, and commitment to an individual's life that provides a sense of meaning and purpose (Swenson, 2004). Exploring spiritual wellness includes praying, meditation, listening to God’s words, and reading the bible. As a result, inner peace and growing in grace will be attained. Spiritual wellness is not a separate entity to the other factors of wellness. Spiritual wellness demands a person to have a meaningful purpose in life, right relationship with God, prescribed prayer, meditation, personal reflection, attending church, and having a sense of hope and optimism (McGlynn, 1999).

In the result of research of Kitongan (2012), the teachers adopt most of the spiritual wellness practices like: establish a personal relationship with God; pray to God and ask for his guidance more than usual; assert beliefs in God’s goodness by doing good to others; pray personally outside the Sunday masses and worship; have personal devotion; attend spiritual recollection; and entrust life’s stress to God. This implies that most of the teachers are strong in their faith and spirituality. This corroborates with the findings of Angiwan (2005) that teachers of Sectarian Schools treasure the importance of spirituality because they find ample time for involvement in related programs and activities that contribute to their spiritual development, spiritual nurture, and growth.

In the intricate tapestry of individual well-being, vocational health and wellness stand as fundamental threads, weaving through the fabric of one’s professional life and overall quality of existence. Vocational health wellness, often encompassing physical and mental dimensions, addresses the challenges and opportunities encountered in the pursuit of a fulfilling and sustainable career (Gebhardt et al., 1990; Matthe et al., 2018). As the nature of work evolves and societal expectations shift, the emphasis on fostering vocational well-being becomes increasingly paramount. The concept of vocational wellness transcends traditional notions of occupational
health by embracing a holistic perspective that goes beyond the absence of work-related ailments. Rooted in the understanding that a harmonious and fulfilling work life is intricately linked to overall well-being, vocational health wellness encompasses aspects such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and professional growth (Pollitz et al., 2018; Song et al., 2019). The modern workplace, characterized by its dynamic nature and the continual evolution of job roles, necessitates a nuanced exploration of vocational health wellness. The significance of this exploration is accentuated by the profound impact that vocational satisfaction and contentment have on not only an individual's mental health but also on their overall quality of life (Marshall, 2020; Seaward, 2009). As organizations worldwide grapple with challenges such as burnout, high turnover rates, and the evolving nature of work, understanding the intricate dynamics of vocational health wellness becomes imperative. Through a comprehensive examination of existing literature, empirical studies, and insights from organizational policies, this research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on vocational well-being.

In relation to the wellness practices of the Benguet State University (BSU) Employees, a study denotes that there are significant differences in the wellness practices adopted by the BSU employees. The employees often adopted the different wellness practices to cope with the difficult situations they have encountered. The employees often adopted healthy practices that promote physical, intellectual, and emotional wellness, and occasionally adopted the practices that promote social and spiritual well-being. The employees keep themselves physically fit by enhancing one’s personality with beauty and grooming tips and accessories. They often eat natural and nutritious foods, drink plenty of water everyday, maintain healthy sleeping habits and get enough sleep, avoid cigar and alcohol consumption, go for a jogging or nature walk regularly, engage in sports activities or regular physical exercises, and consult with a physician for regular health check-ups. The study implies that the employees treasure or value the importance of physical health. Most of the employees engage themselves in physical activities that maintain a healthy body. This can be attributed to the high academic profile of employees who are very much aware and conscious on the importance of a healthy body to be able to function effectively and do work efficiently (Angiwan, 2005).

The DSWD is a national agency mandated to provide assistance to local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), other national government agencies (NGAs), people’s organizations (POs), and other members of civil society in effectively implementing programs, projects, and services that will alleviate poverty and empower disadvantaged individuals, families, and communities for an improved quality of life (DSWD CO, 1998). The DSWD Field Office Cordillera Administrative Region endeavors to provide the above par social protection services through the efficient implementation of projects, partnerships and programs designed to alleviate the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged in the region from poverty.

The implementation of Programs and Services are also anchored to the AmBisyon Natin 2040: Matatag, Maginhawa, at Panatag na Buhay wherein the AmBisyon represents the 25-year long-term, collective vision and aspirations of the Filipino people for themselves and for the country. It recognizes the need for a “bold vision and effective development planning” based on
a “forward-looking approach that goes beyond a single administration”. It also emphasized the centrality of people in development planning and their aspirations as requisite for the design of government interventions to achieve development outcomes. The accompanying DSWD Strategic Results Framework also supports the Philippine Development Plan Chapter 5: Ensuring People-Centered, Clean, and Efficient Governance of the Philippine Development Plan, Chapter 10: Accelerate human capital development, and Chapter 11: Reduce vulnerability of individuals. The Department is mandated also to provide programs that empower the poor families and help them increase their economic and social well-being and become active participants to development. Moreover, the Department constantly looks into means of innovation for better delivery of services and recognizes the role of each staff and partners in the implementation of the program and in meeting the goals set in terms of social assistance and social development (DSWD FO CAR, 2022, p. 1).

The DSWD 2023-2028 vision is “an empowered society where the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged sectors have immediate and equitable access to opportunities for an improved quality of life. Its mission is the authority in the Social Welfare and Development sector, the DSWD develops, implements, enables, and coordinates SWD policies and programs for and with the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged (DSWD, 2024).

As to the Organizational Structure, the DSWD FO CAR is headed by one Regional Director and concurrent Assistant Regional Director for Operations and assisted by the Assistant Regional Director for Administration. There is a total of eight (8) divisions at the Field Office headed by a Division Chief namely: (1) Administrative Division, (2) Disaster Response Management Division, (3) Financial Management Division, (4) Human Resource Management Division, (5) Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program Division, (6) Policy and Plans Division, (7) Promotive Services Division, and (8) Protective Services Division. Moreover, each province has a SWAD Office namely: SWAD-Abra, SWAD-Apayao, SWAD-Benguet, SWAD-Ifugao, SWAD-Kalinga, and SWAD-Mountain Province.

The DSWD FO CAR is committed to promote and develop a healthy and alert workforce in order to deliver excellent service to our clients and stakeholders and attain overall organizational effectiveness. It has a comprehensive set of policies being introduced to employees. The Human Resource Management and Development Division-Human Resource Welfare Section (HRWS) is tasked to provide opportunities and avenues for staff to promote and uphold their well-being in the areas of health and interpersonal relationships, hence the institutionalization of Employee Welfare. This shall be designed based on the principle of having a healthy well-being to include a healthy mind and body. In compliance with CSC MC No. 6, s or 1995, requiring all agencies to adopt “The Great Filipino Workout”. The Wellness Session focuses on the Physical, Social, Intellectual, Emotional, Financial, Spiritual, and Vocational Health of employees. The Weekly Wellness Session (WWS) shall be observed every Friday for a maximum of two (2) hours anytime from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM either individually or in group. If Friday is declared a holiday, the WWS shall be observed on a Thursday or any working day following a Friday with the same time and duration. Staff are encouraged to start their WWS two (2) hours before the end of their respective eight (8) working hours for the day (e.g. A staff who
entered the office beyond 8:00 AM and availed of the WWS at 3:00 PM may either return to the office by 5:00 PM to complete his/her eight (8) working hours to the office). Staff who fail to complete the required working hours shall incur deductions according to under time policies (DSWD, 2021).

In compliance with CSC MC No. 6, s or 1995, requiring all agencies to adopt “The Great Filipino Workout”, the Human Resource Welfare Section (HRWS) of DSWD FO CAR is tasked to provide opportunities and avenues for staff to achieve balance and attain wellness. The DSWD FO CAR HRMDD-HRWS upholds the principle of having a healthy well-being, including a healthy mind and body among its staff.

The DSWD FO CAR has been conducting weekly wellness sessions as part of its efforts to promote the well-being of its employees. This study aims to assess and potentially revisit the effectiveness of these wellness sessions in meeting the needs of the employees and contributing to their overall wellness. By examining the current state of the weekly wellness sessions, this research seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform potential improvements and ensure that the program aligns with the evolving needs and expectations of the employees.

The well-being of employees is a critical aspect of organizational success, as it directly impacts their productivity, job satisfaction, and overall performance. Recognizing the importance of employee wellness, the DSWD FO CAR has implemented weekly wellness sessions as a proactive measure to support the physical, mental, and emotional health of its workforce. These sessions may include activities such as mindfulness exercises, stress management workshops, physical fitness programs, and other initiatives aimed at promoting a holistic approach to wellness.

As the workplace dynamics and employee needs continue to evolve, it is essential to periodically assess the effectiveness of such programs to ensure that they remain relevant and impactful. This study will delve into the current structure, content, and outcomes of the weekly wellness sessions, aiming to identify areas of strength and potential areas for improvement. By doing so, the research seeks to contribute to the enhancement of employee well-being within the DSWD FO CAR, ultimately fostering a healthier and more engaged workforce.

The assessment or potential revisiting of the weekly wellness sessions of the DSWD FO CAR holds the promise of not only optimizing the existing program but also serving as a model for other organizations seeking to prioritize the wellness of their employees. Through this study, valuable insights were gained, leading to the development of evidence-based strategies that support the holistic well-being of employees in the public sector. These initiatives are crucial for supporting the well-being of staff and nurturing a positive work culture (DSWD FO CAR, 2019).

A memorandum dated 22 January 2024 was issued with a subject “Clean Up Day in Lieu of Wellness Hour”. It aims to highlight the importance of a clean work environment, strengthening the 7S habit, which shall take place once a month on identified dates. This is to create an environment that promote productivity, boosts employee well-being, and enhances overall organizational efficiency (DSWD FO CAR, 2024).

Burning-out is inevitable in the workplace caused by dealing with hundreds of clients, bulk of tasks, rendering overtime during weekdays, weekends, and holidays, and many more. It
is even noteworthy that during the pandemic, many reports have emerged on the prevalence of mental health issues. Hence, a weekly wellness session is being adopted by DSWD FO CAR to promote a healthy living for staff. To validate if the weekly wellness sessions are indeed a significant intervention for holistic well-being towards the DSWD staff, this study was conducted.

This study is significant since it benefits the DSWD, specifically the Regional Management Committee (RMANCOM) which is composed of the Regional Director, Assistant Regional Directors, and Division Chiefs. And the DSWD staff as they are the most to benefit from this study. The personnel are informed of the effectiveness of the weekly wellness session and staff are encouraged more to avail. And to encourage staff who are not availing the WWS. Also, the result of this study could be a basis to reformulate the office policy.

Other National Government Agencies, companies, institutions, schools, universities and colleges may use this research as a basis to adopt and implement the weekly wellness program. Further, other researchers and the researcher itself can benefit from this study too.

**LITERATURE OVERVIEW FINDINGS**

Wellness, within the scope of this study, encompasses the holistic well-being of DSWD FO-CAR staff, encompassing physical, social, emotional, intellectual, financial, spiritual and vocational dimensions. It reflects the individuals' overall health and quality of life, including factors such as stress management, work-life balance, interpersonal relationships, and personal fulfillment. Wellness is perceived as a multifaceted concept that extends beyond the absence of illness or disease, emphasizing the promotion of positive health outcomes and the cultivation of resilience and thriving in the workplace environment (Eriksson et al., 2023).

In our fast-paced world, achieving wellness has become a cornerstone for those seeking a fulfilling and harmonious life. Picture a wheel divided into seven slices, each representing a unique dimension of wellness. By understanding and embracing the wellness seven dimensions, you can embark on a journey of holistic well-being. Imagine the 7 dimensions of wellness as interconnected gears within a grand machine. Elevating one dimension has a positive ripple effect, enhancing overall well-being. For instance, focusing on physical wellness can lead to improved emotional resilience and heightened cognitive function.

Emotional wellness involves navigating feelings and nurturing connections. A crucial aspect of this dimension is acknowledging and managing emotions in a healthy manner. Practice gratitude journaling, engage in mindfulness meditation, attend emotional intelligence workshops, and cultivate empathy through active listening. By developing these habits, it can create a more positive emotional landscape and build meaningful relationships.

Spiritual wellness transcends religious boundaries, focusing on inner purpose and meaning. It’s about connecting with something greater than ourselves and understanding our place in the universe. Dedicate moments for silent reflection, attend nature retreats, explore meditation techniques, and volunteer for causes aligned with your values. By nurturing your spiritual dimension, you can find solace, purpose, and a sense of interconnectedness.
Intellectual wellness thrives on lifelong learning and cognitive engagement. It’s about expanding your horizons, embracing curiosity, and challenging your intellect. Dive into diverse books, engage in online debates, brainstorm with colleagues, and visit museums to stimulate creativity. By adopting habits that foster intellectual growth, you can keep your mind sharp and open to new possibilities.

Physical wellness encompasses exercise, nutrition, and mindful habits. It’s about maintaining a healthy body that supports your overall well-being. Establish an exercise routine, experiment with healthy cooking, incorporate relaxation techniques like yoga, and explore outdoor activities. By making physical wellness a priority, you can boost your energy levels, enhance your mood, and reduce the risk of chronic illnesses.

Environmental wellness emphasizes eco-conscious choices and caring for the world around us. It’s about recognizing the impact of our actions on the environment and taking steps to preserve it. Reduce plastic waste, conserve energy, join local clean-up efforts, and create a personal garden oasis. By adopting eco-friendly habits, you contribute to a healthier planet and a better future for generations to come.

Vocational wellness revolves around finding fulfillment in meaningful work that aligns with your passions and skills. It’s about pursuing a career that brings you satisfaction and a sense of purpose. Reflect on career aspirations, offer mentorship, attend industry events, and explore roles aligned with your skills. By nurturing your vocational dimension, you can experience professional growth and a sense of accomplishment.

Social wellness celebrates human connections and community engagement. It’s about cultivating healthy relationships and having a strong support network. Organize social events, participate in charity activities, join clubs, and engage in local projects. By prioritizing social connections, you can experience a sense of belonging, reduce feelings of isolation, and create lasting memories (Sintelly, 2023).

Further, the study is anchored from the theoretical support of these theories on the relationship between wellness and efficiency.

The Demand-Control-Support Model (DCS) is a well-established theory of stress that has been used to explain the relationship between wellness and efficiency at work. The DCS model suggests that stress arises when there is an imbalance between the demands of a job and the resources available to meet those demands. When employees feel that they have the skills and resources they need to do their job, they are more likely to experience a sense of control over their work. This sense of control can buffer the effects of stress and lead to improved wellness and efficiency. It is a theory that explains how job characteristics influence employees' psychological well-being. The model was developed by R. Karasek and his colleagues in the 1980s. The DCS model has three main dimensions: (a) Job demands: This refers to the amount of mental and physical effort required to do the job. High job demands can include things like heavy workload, tight deadlines, and role ambiguity. (b) Job control: This refers to the amount of control that employees have over their work. High job control can include things like being able to set one's own work pace, make decisions about how to do one's job, and have access to resources. (c) Social support: This refers to the amount of support that employees receive from
their supervisors, co-workers, and organization. Social support can include things like being able to talk to someone about work-related problems, receiving help from co-workers, and feeling valued by the organization.

The DCS model posits that high job demands and low job control lead to high levels of stress. This is because high job demands can lead to feelings of overload and exhaustion, while low job control can lead to feelings of helplessness and frustration. Social support can buffer the effects of high job demands and low job control, leading to lower levels of stress. The DCS model can be used to help organizations identify and address sources of stress in the workplace. By reducing job demands, increasing job control, and providing social support, organizations can help to improve employee well-being and reduce stress-related problems. Here are some additional things that could be included in the DCS model: (a) Work-life balance: This refers to the ability to balance work demands with personal and family obligations. Work-life imbalance can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased productivity. (b) Organizational culture: The culture of an organization can have a significant impact on employee stress levels. A positive and supportive organizational culture can help to buffer the effects of job stress. (c) Personal characteristics: Individual characteristics, such as personality, coping style, and resilience, can also influence how people respond to job stress. Some people are more susceptible to stress than others.

The DCS model is a valuable tool for understanding the causes of job stress and for developing interventions to reduce stress levels in the workplace. By understanding the factors that contribute to job stress, organizations can take steps to create a more healthy and productive work environment (Kristensen, 1995).

The Person-Environment Fit Model (P-E Fit) is a theory that explains how the interaction between an individual and their environment influences their well-being and performance. The model was developed by John Holland in the 1950s.

The P-E Fit model has two main dimensions: (a) Person characteristics: This refers to the individual's personality, values, interests, and abilities. (b) Environment characteristics: This refers to the characteristics of the individual's work environment, such as the job demands, the organizational culture, and the social support.

The P-E Fit model posits that individuals are more likely to be satisfied and perform well in jobs that are a good match for their personal characteristics. For example, an individual who is introverted and prefers to work independently is likely to be a good fit for a job that does not require a lot of interaction with others. The P-E Fit model can be used to help organizations identify and address sources of dissatisfaction and poor performance in the workplace. By matching individuals to jobs that are a good fit for their personal characteristics, organizations can help to improve employee satisfaction and performance. Here are some additional things that could be included in the P-E Fit model: (a) Work-life balance: This refers to the ability to balance work demands with personal and family obligations. Work-life imbalance can lead to dissatisfaction and decreased productivity. (b) Organizational culture: The culture of an organization can have a significant impact on employee satisfaction and performance. A positive and supportive organizational culture can help to buffer the effects of work stress. (c) Personal
characteristics: Individual characteristics, such as personality, coping style, and resilience, can also influence how people respond to work stress. Some people are more susceptible to stress than others.

The P-E Fit model is a valuable tool for understanding the causes of dissatisfaction and poor performance in the workplace. By understanding the factors that contribute to dissatisfaction and poor performance, organizations can take steps to create a more healthy and productive work environment.

The P-E Fit model is a dynamic model that takes into account the interaction between the individual's personal characteristics and the environment characteristics. The model can be used to understand how the interaction between the individual and their environment influences their well-being and performance over time (De Cooman et al., 2022).

The study identified the frequency of the availed WWS among DSWD FO CAR staff. The research also considered potential differences in the effectiveness of WWS based on demographic variables such as sex, age, level of position, and area of assignment. The study further explored common problems encountered by DSWD FO CAR staff in the avaiment of WWS, including time constraints (workload), lack of supervisory support, lack of colleague support, personal barriers (health issues), financial constraints, and other factors specified by participants.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the comprehensive literature review and the findings from the study on the Weekly Wellness Sessions (WWS) conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office Cordillera Administrative Region, several conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

Conclusion

1. **Effectiveness of WWS:** The study concludes that the Weekly Wellness Sessions (WWS) implemented by DSWD FO CAR are highly effective in promoting holistic well-being among staff members. Across various dimensions of wellness—physical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and vocational—the program has been rated as very effective. This effectiveness underscores the significance of workplace wellness initiatives in fostering a positive work environment and enhancing overall staff well-being.

2. **Diverse Range of Activities:** Coffee sessions emerged as the most popular wellness activity, indicating the importance of offering a diverse range of activities to cater to the varied needs and preferences of staff members. While certain activities like jogging/running/brisk walking and peer food trip bonding were well-received, limited facilities and high costs hindered participation in other activities like fishing, archery, and billiards.

3. **Universal Benefits:** Both female and male staff members perceived the WWS program as highly effective, indicating its universal benefits irrespective of gender. Additionally, the effectiveness of WWS did not significantly vary based on age, suggesting that staff members across different age groups benefit equally from the program.
4. **Tailored Interventions:** However, differences in perceived effectiveness were observed among different positions and offices/divisions within the organization. This highlights the need for tailored interventions to address specific needs and preferences across various segments of the workforce.

5. **Common Challenges:** The study identified common challenges encountered in the availing of WWS, including time constraints or workload, financial constraints, and personal barriers such as health issues. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensuring optimal participation and engagement in the wellness program.

**Recommendations**

1. **Enhanced Financial Dimension:** Given the room for improvement identified in the financial dimension of the WWS program, efforts should be made to enhance financial accessibility and affordability of wellness activities. This may involve exploring cost-effective options, subsidizing certain activities, or seeking external funding sources to support the program.

2. **Targeted Support:** Tailored interventions should be developed to address the specific needs and preferences of different positions and offices/divisions within the organization. This may include conducting surveys or focus group discussions to gather feedback and insights, followed by the implementation of targeted initiatives to enhance participation and effectiveness.

3. **Flexible Scheduling:** Recognizing the impact of time constraints and workload on staff participation, scheduling flexibility should be prioritized when planning wellness activities. Offering a variety of time slots and ensuring activities are integrated into regular work schedules can help accommodate staff members with varying availability.

4. **Promotion and Awareness:** Efforts should be made to promote and raise awareness about the WWS program, emphasizing its benefits and importance for staff well-being. This may involve utilizing multiple communication channels, such as email newsletters, posters, and staff meetings, to disseminate information and encourage participation.

5. **Health and Wellness Culture:** Cultivating a culture of health and wellness within the organization should be a long-term goal. This may involve incorporating wellness initiatives into organizational policies and practices, fostering social support networks among staff members, and providing resources for ongoing wellness education and training.

**REFERENCES**


