

ABSTRACT

EMPLOYER INVESTMENT IN WELLNESS PROGRAMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR FRESNO, CALIFORNIA BUSINESS FIRMS AS LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS

Although employee health is linked to productivity, low absenteeism, and presenteeism, not all business organizations invest in employee wellness programs (EWPs). Business leaders who perceive their firms to be learning organizations may be more committed to invest readily in wellness programs. Moreover, Fresno businesses with EWPs and those who promote known healthy lifestyles generally manifest most of the action imperatives of learning organizations. An online survey was participated in by fifty-five business leaders in Fresno from October to December, 2006, to analyze the correlation between the Fresno-based firms' perception of their businesses as learning organizations and their readiness to invest in wellness programs. Additionally, information on the primary healthy lifestyles currently promoted by wellness programs and components of wellness programs employees might be interested in participating in the future was explored. Results reveal that on average Fresno businesses are learning organizations in the contemplative stage-of-change, but there is no significant correlation between the business leaders' perception of their firms as learning organizations and the readiness to invest in EWPs, and the wellness lifestyles currently promoted in EWPs. However, the degree of interest in participating in future components of wellness programs is significantly correlated with being a learning organization.

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