

Leadership Orientation and Stress Perceptions of American Business Students

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Abstract

The leadership tendencies of people are likely to be influenced by their education and other personal traits. For example, it is expected that managers are likely to be more focused on building and maintaining strong relationships as they deal with people most of the time on the job. To explore the behavioral tendencies of

working adult business students in the cities of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Orlando, this study focused on comparing the leadership and stress perceptions of 813business students based on their education, religion, age, and gender. These respondents have a significantly higher score on relationship orientation. Females are significantly more relationship-oriented and less task-oriented than their male colleagues. The more educated respondents have a significantly higher score on the stress overload perception. Practical suggestions for stress management along with implications for the creation of a wellness program are presented. Investing in human capital can position the company above others in the marketplace as it helps with high morale and employee retention.

Key words: Relationship; Task; Stress perceptions; Healthcare; Wellness; Leadership

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INTRODUCTION: THE HUMAN CAPITAL

Today's business students are tomorrow's employees, managers and leaders of private and public sector institutions. As students, employees and managers, they are all valuable human resources asset – they are the human capital. Human capital is an important and essential asset which contributes to the development and growth of individuals and their organizations, in similar ways as to physical assets such as machines and money (Marschke and Mujtaba, 2011). It is well documented that the collective attitudes, skills and abilities of people contribute to organizational performance and productivity

which are critical for survival in today's competitive economy. Any expenditure in management training, leadership development, and healthcare support should be seen as an investment, not just an expense (Brocaglia, 2011). Human capital, physically and spiritually, can create a competitive advantage for organizations and a good long-term return on their investment (Gurchiek, 2010; Lee, Blake and Lloyd, 2010; Miller, 2010a; Yen, Schultz, Schaefer, Bloomberg, and Edington, 2010; Marschke and Mujtaba, 2007). Strategic efforts related to the effective management of human capital over the past decade have included, but are not limited to, effective recruiting, retention efforts, training programs, employee leadership development initiatives, and coaching and mentoring programs. Dysfunctional stress or distress is one area where companies must focus to help employees since overworked employees can be suffering from an overload perception in their roles (Michaels, Day, and Joachimsthaler, 1987). Many companies are implementing and managing health and wellness programs in the workplace as yet another strategic effort to contribute to the financial success and long term sustainability of an organization.

By implementing health and wellness programs in the workplace, organizations can combat the rising healthcare costs which are often caused by workplace stress. Health and wellness programs have proven to improve the health of employees who participate. The improved health of employees then lowers the organization's healthcare costs. Implementation of effective stress management programs can also benefit employers by reducing absenteeism, motivating employees, and creating a more productive work environment (Baicker, Cutler, & Song, 2010; Marschke and Mujtaba, 2011). When stress is managed effectively and in a timely manner, individuals can prevent diseases and other health risk factors that negatively impact their personal and work life. Poor wellness has been linked to dysfunctional stress, high absenteeism, low productivity, workplace inefficiency, employee turnover, and high healthcare costs (Miller, 2007). Consequently, employers want to support the wellness of their employees through health and wellness programs in the workplace.

Implementing effective wellness programs will also benefit an organization by not only improving the health of their employees, but also increasing employee satisfaction (Mitchell, 2012). As employees feel their work is better, productivity inherently increases; satisfaction comes from the level of engagement they feel they are enabled to own. Employees will get this satisfaction when they are working in a non-hostile and nurturing environment. An employer is able to foster this environment by offering non-monetary compensation such as child care, tuition reimbursement, mentorship programs, etc. (Mitchell, 2012). Although this investment will cost the organization

in the short-term, the pay-off will be seen in the level of engagement and quality of work an employee is producing.

Gurchiek's (2009) results of a global survey showed that only 22 percent of respondents that offered a workplace wellness program measured its financial impact. Successful wellness programs can lead to lasting benefits for both the individual and the organization. In order to quantify the benefits of wellness in the workplace, human resources professionals must measure wellness interventions to show the impact on the organization and to insure success of the program. Organizations invest substantially in health and wellness programs. "Almost 40 percent of large companies in the United States spend more than \$200,000 annually on wellness programs, and 20 percent spend at least \$1 million" (Wells, 2008, para.7). In order to prove that health and wellness programs in the workplace are a strategic effort, managers must show that they create a good return on investment (ROI). When a ROI can be calculated, health and wellness programs are considered an investment and not an organizational expense.

Research has shown that employees who participate in wellness programs are better at managing stress and maintaining healthy relationships with their stakeholders, while, as a result, positively contributing to the productivity of the organization. On study found that workers with chronic diseases contributed to lost productivity in the workplace; "productivity losses associated with workers who have chronic diseases are as much as 400 percent more than the cost of treating chronic diseases" (Miller, 2008, para. 5). Chronic disease is prevalent throughout the United States and is on the rise globally. It has been shown that chronic diseases can be prevented or the effects lessened through effective stress management and wellness programs in the workplace. Human resources professionals must promote wellness programs in the workplace as a strategic effort to reduce the negative effects of stress and chronic diseases on the organization's bottom line. Studies have shown that the investment in the wellness of their employees is less than the costs in lost productivity due to unhealthy employees (Miller, 2008). Miller (2008) mentioned that individuals who cited mental health as a health risk lost 2.4 weeks of productivity per year, individuals that cited stress as a health risk lost 5.7 weeks of productivity per year, and employees that cited continued back pain as a health risk were 10.9 percent less productive than individuals that were not at risk for back pain and lost 5.7 weeks of productivity per year. As such, studies assessing the leadership orientation and stress perceptions of employees and managers can be a good start toward the creation of comprehensive healthcare management and wellness programs.

1. LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION AND STRESS PERCEPTIONS

Leadership is about exercising sufficient and timely influence to get the job done with and through people without causing anyone dysfunctional amounts of stress. Task and relationship orientations are two important dimensions of leadership. Hersey (2011) explains that *task behavior* is the extent to which leaders engage in top-down communication with the followers; and *relationship behavior* is the extent to which leaders engage in joint communication with followers while providing support (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2001; Hersey, 1997). Nguyen and Mujtaba (2011) found that Vietnamese adults with fewer years of education have a significantly higher score for task orientation than those with more years of education. Perhaps they are more task-oriented to effectively compete with their more educated counterparts. However, the scores for relationship orientation were not significantly different between the two groups.

As an individual in a leadership position, it is the leader's responsibility to inspire and engage employees in both good and bad times (Brown, 2012). Emotional intelligence is a key factor in the success of an individual in a leadership position; it is up to this individual to not only understand what is going on in the business, but to find the most efficient and effective way of accomplishing what needs to happen. For leaders to be most effective in their role, they must have the respect and trust of their employees and also be willing to look at and incorporate the strengths and weaknesses of their workforce (Brown, 2012).

Research shows that leadership and management have been recognized as a determinant of role stress (Tajaddini and Mujtaba, 2010; Babin and Boles, 1996; Michaels, Day and Joachimsthaler, 1987). It has been assumed that high task orientation of managers can cause more stress on everyone in the department. This study will analyze the leadership orientation of respondents and test the stress perceptions of working adult business students. It assesses their relationship and task orientation and whether respondents report low, moderate, high, or severe levels of stress associated with task overload.

Stress is anything to which the body reacts to or adapts to in a given time period (Selye, 1956, 1974). Stress can be all those feelings and perceptions in lack of time, ability, skill, or resources to effectively deal with personal or professional demands in a given time. Mujtaba and McCartney (2010) stated that eustress describes the good or positive things that happen, and distress describes the negative things that cause a person undue hardship. The most popular accepted concept of stress is that there is a stressor that triggers off or has a response to (stress) either eustress or distress (Tajaddini and Mujtaba, 2009). The feelings of work stress can differ among individuals based on various personality traits such variables as their

level of religious commitment. The believer will accept long working hours, poor conditions, role problems, miscommunication, and even less money if s/he believes that performing the job will lead to receiving God's acceptance (Barham, Younies and Muhmaed, 2009).

Research has shown that when stress is managed at the workplace by incorporating wellness programs, employees are more productive on the job; they show up differently when they feel the organization is supporting them (Harker, 2012). An organization of any size has the ability to utilize different wellness programs that will cater to the different needs of their workers. Supporting the staff of an organization will help manage both the physical and the mental wellness of workers. Nguyen and Mujtaba (2011) found that Vietnamese adults with fewer years of education have a significantly higher score for work overload stress perception than those with more years of education. Perhaps more education means more confidence in handling the workload, less worrying and better job opportunities.

While there are many variables that impact a person's level of stress that can lead to physiological or psychological health problems, one aspect of this study is designed to assess whether respondents report low, moderate, high, or severe levels of stress associated with task overload.

2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

Northouse (2007) provides the Style Questionnaire to obtain a general profile of a person's leadership behaviors regarding task and relationship orientations. The output for the reliability data has shown that the Cronbach's alpha is 0.888, which means that questions are good for classroom tests and they are acceptable in social science research. A rating of 1 means "Never" and a rating of 5 means "Always" with the person demonstrating the specific behavior. To determine one's scores for the leadership styles questionnaire, one can add the responses for each category (the odd numbered items) to determine the score for task-orientation behaviors, and add the responses for the next category (the even numbered items) to determine the score for relationship-orientation behaviors. The scoring interpretation for task and relationship orientation based on the Style Questionnaire is demonstrated with the following scores and descriptions (Northouse, 2007, p. 87).

SCORES	DESCRIPTIONS
• 45-50	Very high range
• 40-44	High range
• 35-39	Moderately high range
• 30-34	Moderately low range
• 25-29	Low range
• 10-24	Very low range

The Overload Stress Inventory, adapted from Hyde and Allen's conceptual analysis of overload (1996, pp. 29-30), can be used to assess the stress perception of respondents. This study used the Overload Stress Inventory to assess how respondents currently see their level of overload stress. This inventory has ten statements, and a rating of 1 means "Never" and a rating of 5 means "Always" with the person demonstrating the specific behavior. The responses are assessed according to the following general criteria (a modified version of Hyde and Allen's 1996 scoring):

- *Scores in the range of 40 – 50* tend to mean *severe* stress from overload.
- *Scores in the range of 30 – 39* tend to mean *high* stress from overload.
- *Scores in the range of 20 – 29* tend to mean *moderate* stress from overload.
- *Scores in the range of 19 and below* tend to mean *low* stress from overload.

The sample was obtained through a private educational institution's link to alumni and existing working adult students. The survey forms were emailed to the respondents and were encouraged to complete it within a two-week period. A total of 2,150 respondents were contacted through group email lists, and 813 American born individuals successfully completed the questionnaires in the allotted time period. A majority of the total surveys came from females (513 or 63%). The reported years of work experience for the average respondent was 7 years. While only 145 respondents have earned a high school degree while attending college, the rest all had a Bachelors of Science degree or higher. For the average person, the survey takes about 6-8 minutes to complete. Subjects' data and responses were automatically entered into an Excel file upon completion and their individual results were immediately given to them along with a description of their level of stress.

The authors would like to acknowledge that the convenient sample collected is very small for a profession as large as so many business fields and a big country like the United States which has a diverse population. Therefore, this analysis can be seen as an initial study where the conclusions and generalizations are only indicative of responses for those included in the sample, and are not necessarily a representative of all business students in the United States. Overall, the research question for this study was to determine the leadership orientation of business students and whether these respondents report a high or moderate level of stress based on various demographic variables such as gender, age, education, and religious affiliation.

3. STUDY RESULTS

While the average task orientation score of these business student respondents falls in the "moderately high range,"

and their relationship orientation average falls in the "high range," there are statistically significant differences among them (see Table 1). These business students strongly relationship oriented.

Table 1
Leadership Styles of Business Students

Task Orientation	
Sample Size	813
Sample Mean	37.93
Sample Standard Deviation	7.27
Relationship	
Sample Size	813
Sample Mean	42.32
Sample Standard Deviation	5.8

Intermediate Calculations	
Population Sample Degrees of Freedom	812
Total Degrees of Freedom	1624
Pooled Variance	43.24645
Difference in Sample Means	-4.39
t-Test Statistic	-13.46

Two-Tailed Test	
Lower Critical Value	-1.961
Upper Critical Value	1.961
p-Value	0.000

Using the t-test for differences in two means, at a 0.05 level of significance, the first hypothesis ("*Business students will have similar scores for relationship and task orientations*") is rejected because the calculated t value (-13.46) does not fall within the critical value of t for statistical significance; in other words, since the t value does fall within the critical values (+1.96 and -1.96), the alternative hypothesis is supported. Furthermore, since the p-value ($p < 0.00$) is smaller than alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$), there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Based on the results, the task orientation and relationship orientation scores of business students do not appear to be similar. As such, one can conclude that business students have significantly different scores on the task and relationship orientations. Perhaps because of their focus on building strong interpersonal skills, business students seem to be putting significantly more emphasis on relationships than tasks.

The hypothesis which states that ("*Male and female business students will have similar scores on task orientations*") cannot be supported because males are more task oriented (see Table 2). Based on these results, the task orientation scores of male and female respondents are dissimilar.

Table 2
Task Orientation by Gender

Group	No.	Mean	St. Dev.
Male	300	39.06	6.9
Female	513	37.27	7.4

t = 3.41; p = 0.00068; reject.

The hypothesis stating that (*“Male and female business students will have similar scores on relationship orientations”*) cannot be supported because females are more relationship oriented (see Table 3). Based on these results, the relationship orientation scores of male and female respondents are dissimilar.

Table 3
Relationship Orientation by Gender

Group	No.	Mean	St. Dev.
Male	300	41.397	5.94
Female	513	42.86	5.66

t = -3.49; p = 0.00051; reject.

As can be seen from Table 4, the hypothesis stating that (*“Business students who have only earned a high school degree and those who have already earned a master of business administration degree will have similar scores on task orientations”*) cannot be supported because those with graduate degrees are more task-oriented. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the latter group better understands the importance of getting things done to enhance organizational productivity and personal promotional opportunities. Or, maybe those with higher degrees have more things to get done at any given time.

Table 5
Stress Perceptions of Business Students

Group	No.	Mean	St. Dev.	Analysis Results
Younger	262	23.06	8.39	$t = -1.02; p = 0.30866$
Oldest	181	23.895	8.6	
Males	300	23.783	8.82	$t = 1.15; p = 0.25182$
Females	513	23.078	8.24	
High School Degree	145	22.62	9.27	$t = -1.12; p = 0.26205$
BS Degree and higher	668	23.49	8.276	
High School Degree	145	22.62	9.27	$t = -1.65; p = 0.09966^*$
MBA Degree	228	24.11	7.97	
B.S. Degrees	440	23.18	8.42	$t = -1.38; p = 0.1686$
MBA Degree	228	24.11	7.97	
Christians	557	23.61	8.46	$t = 1.35; p = 0.178$
Others	256	22.75	8.44	

*significant at the 90% confidence level.

Based on the results, the stress perception scores of male and female as well as younger and older respondents are statistically similar. Similarly, religious affiliation did not produce any significant differences

Table 4
Task Orientation by Education Level

Earned Level of Education	No.	Mean	St. Dev.
High School Degree	145	36.69	9.01
Master's Degree	228	38.66	6.52

t = -2.45; p = 0.01493; reject.

In regard to stress perceptions the hypothesis which states that (*“Business students will report a moderate level of work overload stress”*) is accepted because their mean stress perception score (23.338) is within the moderate range. As can be seen from Table 5 and using the t-test for differences in two means, at a 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis stating that (*“Business students who are 26 years of age and older will have similar scores on stress perceptions as the respondents who are 25 years of age and younger”*) cannot be rejected because no statistically significant results were discovered. Based on these results, it can be concluded that younger and older respondents have similar stress perceptions. Similarly, no significant differences were discovered for stress overload perception based on gender and religion. However, the variable of education is partially supported when those with a high school degree are compared to respondents that have already earned graduate degrees. So the hypothesis (*“Business students who have only earned a high school degree thus far and those who already have a master's of business administration degree will have similar scores on stress perceptions”*) cannot be supported since statistically significant differences are found at the 90% confidence level.

in stress perceptions. Education is supported partially in that respondents with graduate degree tend to have significantly higher stress perceptions than those who are high school graduates. Perhaps more education means

that a person gets busier due to more responsibilities or due to jobs with higher levels of stress. As such, those with higher level degrees need to spend more time in effectively balancing their personal and professional lives. According to a survey of Alliance for Wellness ROI, Inc. (2008), components of a work/life balance program include legal, financial, concierge, subsidy for onsite childcare, subsidy for offsite child care, and lactation support. There are a number of options available for effective stress and healthcare management in the workplace. For example, health risk appraisal (HRA) is a tool used to provide individuals with an evaluation of their health risks and quality of life. The components of weight management programs include coverage or discounts for weight loss, weight loss surgery, weight loss medications, nutritional counseling, healthy cafeteria choices, and financial incentives for weight loss. Wellness education and communication program components are print communications, online communications, audio/visual communications, self-care guide, and pre-natal programs. Preventive care components consist of physicals as part of medical plan and physicals outside of medical plan. Fitness program components consist of onsite fitness, fitness club subsidy, and fitness club discounts. It is important that business leaders now incorporate health and wellness programs into the workplace as a strategic effort. Wellness education and wellness efforts in the workplace have been found to be very successful in the prevention of dysfunctional stress and other chronic diseases and to the long term sustainability of an organization (Marschke and Mujtaba, 2011).

4. WELLNESS PROGRAMS FOR PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT

Business students, especially those who have just started their undergraduate business program, usually have their own definitions of effective leadership. They have their own perception of what makes an ideal leader as well as the characteristics and behaviors of such leader. These definitions could be established based on their own experience with certain characters or people such as their family members including grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters. The sources of this preconception could also be a friend, a neighbor, a local priest, a national and international figure and hero, or even a fictional character that they learned about when growing up. Oftentimes it is because of the traits and positions of these references. When the leadership concepts are formally taught at business school, business students tend to use these “pre-existing” perceptions and definitions to explain and interpret the material. While students may have some valid points, business educators need to emphasize that effective leadership can be learned and developed to a certain extent (Betts, Morgan, & Castiglia,

2008). Students can learn and develop effective leadership skills through hands-on projects, simulation and one-on-one coaching, as Paula Hill Strasser, director of the Business Leadership Center at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, called it “a process of self-discovery” (Bisoux, 2005).

Business leaders and managers can create a culture of effectively managing distress and wellness in the workplace by aligning the goals of the wellness program with the overall company culture, implementing policies that support employee wellness, communicating the expectations of the program, motivating employees to participate, benchmarking the program, rewarding participation, and measuring the effectiveness of the program (Fitzenz & Davison, 2001). The employees must be educated about health and stress and implement a practical wellness program in the workplace. Business leaders and managers must work on creating cohesiveness and positive norms around health and wellness. It is important that employees see that the organization is willing to invest in their health and wellness (Neftzger & Walker, 2009). Business leaders and managers must develop organizational policies that support a healthy lifestyle. Such policies may include the prohibiting of smoking in the workplace and allowed time for fitness during the day. The organization's benefits must support the policies in place (Neftzger & Walker, 2009). For example, if the organization prohibits smoking, their benefits package should include a smoking cessation program to help employees quit smoking, and if the organization allows time for fitness during the day, the organization's benefits should offer an on-site fitness center (Neftzger & Walker, 2009).

Marschke and Mujtaba (2011) suggested that to further create a culture of wellness, posters should be displayed throughout the organization, brochures should be widely available, the organization's intranet should have all pertinent information on health and wellness available to all employees, the company newsletters should include a health and wellness section, and the organization should have a healthy-events calendar that includes such events as conferences and seminars on health and wellness. The organization can also invest in wellness days at work such as hosting a health fair, sponsoring outside events such as a 5k run, and creating relationships with vendors that will support employee wellness such as a vendor that teaches a healthy cooking class (Neftzger & Walker, 2009). Globally more and more organizations have begun to create a culture of wellness in the workplace and implement wellness programs as a way to offset rising healthcare costs.

As wellness programs gain popularity in the workplace, benefits of their implementation are becoming clearer. Miller (2010b) stated that wellness programs are not only creating a good return on investment (ROI), but

are also creating a good return on value (ROV). Value is a subjective concept and is therefore difficult to quantify and measure. Value must be determined by the organization. The idea of value creation from such intangible assets as human capital can use ROV to help analyze factors beyond ROI for successful health and wellness programs (Turbitt & Yesakova, 2008). There is an inherited ROV from health and wellness programs in the workplace. Soft savings such as raising corporate health awareness, changing employee behavior, increased morale, increased employee satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, reduced turnover, reduced disability and workers compensation claims, and a good corporate image all create a ROV. A value on investment (VOI) can then be determined; VOI "is the total measure of benefits derived from soft benefits" (Turbitt & Yesakova, 2008, para. 20). VOI allows managers to show how intangible benefits affect the organization's bottom line (Marschke and Mujtaba, 2011).

High employee turnover negatively affects an organization. Wellness programs have been shown to aid in the retention of employees (Marschke and Mujtaba, 2011). The turnover rate can be calculated monthly or annually, to calculate the monthly turnover rate take " $\frac{\# \text{ of separations during mo.}}{\text{Avg. \# of employees during mo.}} \times 100$ " (SHRM, 2007, para.13). To calculate the yearly turnover rate take " $\frac{\# \text{ of employees exiting the job}}{\text{avg. actual \# of employees during the period}} \times 12 \div \# \text{ of mos. in period}$ " (SHRM, 2007, para.14). Calculating the turnover rate shows if turnover has increased or decreased over a specific period of time, and human resources specialists and managers can then analyze if the wellness program had an effect on turnover (SHRM, 2007).

Wellness programs increase the health of employees and assist them in staying healthy; as a result, human resources departments are starting to look at the impact of wellness programs on disability and workers compensation claims. "The integration strategy is focusing on combining all disability data and health data vs. only disability and workers compensation" (Mattaliano & Hall, 2007, para.2). The cost of illness or injury related to disability or workers compensation has significant effect on an organization's productivity and efficiency (Mattaliano & Hall, 2007). Business leaders and managers can strategically encourage employees to participate in wellness programs in the workplace to manage disability time off and workers compensation costs. Effective wellness programs cannot only reduce the costs associated with disability and workers compensation but also reduce medical costs (Mattaliano & Hall, 2007).

A study by Clark (2008) reviewed multiple studies on corporations using incentives to encourage employee participation in the organizations wellness program. One study that was reviewed, completed by ERISA and the National Association of Manufacturers and InCentOne, showed that 76 percent of 242 major U.S. manufacturing

companies offered a health management program. Of the 76 percent that offered a health management program, two-thirds used incentives to encourage employee participation (Clark, 2008). The most common incentive used was a reduction in healthcare premium, with approximately 40 percent of organizations offering this incentive, followed by approximately 28 percent offering cash bonuses as an incentive, and approximately 22 percent offering merchandise as an incentive (Clark, 2008). Since 2004, IBM has spent more than \$130 million on their wellness program and used incentives to motivate employees to participate. For example, IBM gave employees, who are also parents, a cash incentive of \$150 for participating, for at least 12 weeks, in a program that encourages health and fitness at home. "IBM also has cash incentive plans to encourage employees to quit smoking, get active and lose weight with healthier diets" (Clark, 2008 p. 26). IBM offered U.S. employees a \$150 rebate per wellness program they participated in. IBM is not alone in offering incentives for participation in workplace wellness programs, other surveys showed that 10.5 percent of U.S. employers offer employee incentives such as lower healthcare premiums, lower co-pays when they went to a doctor, cash contributions to health reimbursement arrangements, and gifts for participation in the organization's wellness program (Miller, 2007).

Investing in wellness programs for an organization will not only help with the measurable matters such as turnover, absenteeism, and stability, but also act as an investment tool for their human assets. Wellness programs can act as an instrument to build for the future; a good program will help productivity in the workplace by building mental health (Shaw, 2012). Building physical toughness is not only healthy for the body, but also for the mind. Having a strong mental capacity will help individuals to push through boundaries; they learn to move through obstacles and overcome any interference they may face. Building physical strength and pushing oneself to be healthy will induce the brain to build a muscle which helps push an individual through to where failure is not an option and challenges are seen in a positive matter.

Amongst the positive effects that promoting a healthy lifestyle add for the employee and their organization is simple exercises which help the body to produce endorphins and increased levels of serotonin, adrenaline, and dopamine (Lincolnshire Echo, 2008). Simple exercise routines help the individual to develop and maintain a high self-esteem, which will in turn, increase the quality of work. Overall, promoting a healthy lifestyle and building avenues where employees are able to take advantage of such benefits will profit both the employees and the organization. The leaders of an organization are responsible for identifying such opportunities for their employees to utilize.

5. SUMMARY

Leadership means effectively influencing others through relationship building opportunities while strategically getting the job done in a timely manner. This study demonstrated that business students are highly relationship oriented. Their focus on task orientation also falls in the moderately high range. Perhaps due to their high relationship orientation, they are able to socialize with people in the workplace and, thus, have a healthy score on the stress perception. More educated individuals have a higher level of stress perception. More education usually means one will also have more responsibilities in the workplace. As such, the need for a more effective stress management program becomes paramount. With the world being more fast-paced and competitive, many college students often deal with stress. Some of them even work full-time or part-time while attending college. Coursework, projects and exam deadlines and balancing education and other personal needs can be very stressful. Stress management skills need to be introduced and emphasized in college in order to help business students cope with stress more effectively while at school as well as for their future use. This article recommends that employees and managers focus on the creation of a comprehensive wellness program for everyone in the company as this can proactively help with stress management.

By creating a culture of wellness in the workplace and encouraging employee participation in the organization's wellness program, leaders and managers can strategically influence the behavior of employees and help them to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Benefits of workplace wellness programs to the employee include weight loss, lower stress, and a lower risk of chronic disease. Employers also benefit from workplace wellness programs, benefits to the employer include enhanced increased employee retention, decreased rates of illness and injuries, reduced employee absenteeism, improved employee relations and morale, and increased productivity.

In addition to leading a healthier lifestyle, employees in an organization with health and wellness programs have a higher level of job satisfaction as well as a higher quality of work. Investing in employees shows that an organization cares about their workers, and in return, the employees care more about their work. When employees are enabled to be innovative and try new things, the organization will see a competitive edge that is unattainable most by others in the industry.

Health and wellness programs are not an expense; they are an investment in the organization's human capital. Human capital is an organization's most valuable asset and should be given sufficient opportunities to effectively deal with workplace stress. Human capital cannot only add value to the organization but also create a sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace.

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