The Impact of Physical Activity on Workplace Productivity and Leadership Effectiveness

Sandro Tsotniashvili

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Assistant Professor Ms. Marika Mchedlidze

Ilia State University

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Sandro Tsotniashvili

Declaration

As the author of the submitted master's thesis, I hereby state that the submitted thesis is entirely original work of mine and does not contain any materials previously published, accepted for publication, or submitted for defense by other authors that are not properly credited, referenced or cited in the thesis according to established rules.

Sandro Tsotniashvili

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Sandro Tsotniashvili

Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of physical activity on workplace productivity and leadership effectiveness among employees and employers in Georgian organizations. The research was designed as a two-stage mixed-methods study. In the first, qualitative stage, eight in-depth interviews (four employees and four employers) were conducted and analyzed with MAXQDA in order to map the broader determinants of performance in the Georgian workplace; this stage identified five recurring factors - training, pay structure, further development, staff, and the working environment - and revealed that physical condition and energy cut across all of them. In the second, quantitative stage, a structured questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms. Of the 84 respondents, a skip-logic filter excluded those reporting no weekly physical activity, leaving a final analytical sample of 83 active professionals, most of whom worked long weeks of 41 hours or more. The findings consistently support a positive relationship between regular physical activity and work outcomes. A majority of respondents reported stronger focus and concentration, higher and more sustained energy across the workday, and markedly better stress management, with 82% agreeing that exercise helped them cope with work-related stress. Respondents also linked their activity to faster task completion, fewer errors, clearer thinking, greater confidence in decision-making, more positive communication with colleagues, and a stronger willingness to take initiative. With respect to leadership, the data show that physically active respondents felt more able to set a positive example, stay composed under pressure, and step up to guide their teams through difficult situations; three quarters considered physical activity either helpful or essential to their career and leadership development. The productivity benefit was most often experienced as a cumulative, long-term gain rather than a same-day effect. The study concludes that physical activity functions as a cross-cutting enabler of both individual performance and effective leadership and recommends that organizations actively support employee fitness through flexible scheduling, workplace wellness initiatives, and leaders who model a healthy, active lifestyle.

Sandro Tsotniashvili

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