Case Study: Workplace Wellness Programming for an Individual with Mild Mental Retardation

Katherine Banovetz
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, KMBANOVETZ@CSBSJU.EDU

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday/31

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Celebrating Scholarship and Creativity Day by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csbsju.edu.
Case Study: Workplace Wellness Programming for an Individual with Mild Mental Retardation

Kate Banovetz
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John’s University
Exercise Science and Sport Studies Department

Introduction

- Obesity is a major health problem in the US, especially for those with mental retardation.
- Individuals with mental retardation frequently demonstrate low fitness levels and work productivity.
- WACOSA is a place for individuals with disabilities to work and serve their community.
- Previously, WACOSA conducted a wellness program, that consisted primarily of exercise activities found work productivity increased for most clients.

Purpose

- To investigate how a workplace wellness program, which includes exercise and nutrition programming, affects an individual with mild mental retardation at WACOSA.

Client’s Goals

1) To increase skills needed for paid employment through teaching techniques and communication styles he understands
2) Increasing independence at home, includes being able to do daily tasks like cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry
3) Decrease the frequency of situations in which MB gets angry and be able to calm down after these incidents

Wellness Program

- One hour session, once per week for 14 weeks
- Rotation between aerobic exercises, chair yoga, exercise video, mall walking, and nutrition activities throughout the weeks
- Nutrition videos and activities focus on distinguishing between healthy and unhealthy foods
- BMI was calculated at the beginning and end of the 14 week program
- MB’s work productivity was assessed each month

Outcome

- MB loved the wellness program and always gave it his full effort
- He even asked for notes from the exercise videos so he could do them at home with his housemates
- MB’s BMI improved from 24.5 to 23.9 during the 14 week period
- MB’s work productivity improved from December to February, coinciding with the wellness program that started in January (Figure 1)

Discussion

- A workplace wellness program may be an effective strategy to improve BMI and work productivity.
- Results of study are consistent with Croce and Horvat who found an exercise program increased cardiovascular fitness, strength, and work productivity.
- A major limitation of this study is the inability to generalize results due to the small sample size.
- Confounding variables include:
  - Lack of consistency of clients coming into wellness program once a week
  - Issues in assessing work productivity
  - The improvement could have occurred as a result of other uncontrolled variables
- Future research should assess more health related variables both pre- and post-intervention

Case Presentation

- A client, we will call MB, is diagnosed with mild mental retardation.
- MB was born with congenital brain malformations because of hydrocephalus.
- Mental retardation: overall IQ of 57, verbal IQ of 61, and performance IQ of 59.
- Physical impairments: left sided visual deficits, left amblyopia, mild spastic diplegia, and epilepsy.
- Social challenges: has an inability to deal with frustrations and gets angry easily with housemates/other clients.
- Low work productivity was identified as an area for improvement for MB.
- According to MB’s BMI of 24.5, he is categorized as normal range but on the edge of overweight.

Conclusion

- The results of this case study indicates workplace wellness programming can be an effective strategy to improve BMI and work productivity.

Literature Cited


Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Don Fischer for assisting me with this case study and the staff members and clients at WACOSA for allowing me to be apart of their community and conduct this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. The graph depicts work productivity by month as the percentage of work completed by MB compared to a person without mental retardation in the same amount of time.

*Limited work productivity in March was likely due to insufficient materials available for MB to complete during his testing session.*