

The Effect of Busyness on Productivity of an Individual

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ABSTRACT

Present research aims to study the effect of busyness and multitasking over productivity. The purpose of this research is to clarify the fact that busyness is always unproductive. Since, a person is busy when he is involved in many jobs without the desired output. In the present research we have interviewed 25 subjects from different fields, taking into account, the various components of busyness and productivity. Content analysis has been carried out on the recorded data, on the basis of five components of busyness and five components of productivity. Hence our qualitative research establishes that busyness doesn't leads to productivity.

Keywords: *Busyness, Productivity, Individual*

Now a day's people tend to remain busy on things they perform whether it might be their Smartphone, laptop or in any task they perform. So we often hear this term busy being used by people. But those people who remain busy round the clock might or might not be productive. Productivity under this case can be considered as the act of performing something useful instead of simply whiling away the time. The focus of the research is to establish a relation between busyness and productivity by taking the components of the respective fields.

Busyness has been portrayed as the state of carrying out or performing a task or a responsibility without being in a state of idleness. But its perception is different for different individuals, which is why there is a need to conduct a research that gives a clear cut picture of the actual nature of busyness. In short busyness means executing a given set of tasks or responsibilities. In this research busyness has been estimated by accessing the components on which it is based. The components of busyness include motivation, contentment, planning, prioritization etc. In the same productivity can be considered as the outcome or the net result of any work or task. So this research mainly aims to study effect of busyness with the relation

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to its productivity and to assess the level of productivity. Components includes like team work, realization of role, team coordination etc.

Also another one important component considered in this topic is multitasking. Multitasking can be stated as carried more than one task at the given stipulated time. In short it means carrying two or more tasks simultaneously. Multitasking was considered as an important component in this research because it was found to have direct relationship with regard to busyness and productivity. In simple words a person is said to be multitasking if he does his writing while having an important conversation on phone. So this means a person is considered to be busy as well as more productive. But in general people quote “too much of cooks spoil the broth”.

The data for this research has been extracted with the method of personal and online interviews. The responses were then classified and categorized, following this the entire responses were analyzed through content analysis and then the report was formulated accordingly.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Silvia Belleza, Neeru Paharia, Anat Keinan. *Why are Americans so impressed by busyness* 2016. This study aims how signaling busyness at work influences perceptions of status in the eyes of other. The methodology adopted in this study was the Social mobility scale (Bjørnskov et al 2013). The sample size was of 450 respondents and one middle aged consumer. Outcomes of this study revealed that status attributes were influenced by beliefs and social mobility. Peapods results showed that brands can be used for status.
2. Bradley Staats, Francesca Gino. *The Remedy for Unproductive Busyness* 2015. This study tests the hypothesis stating we often feel busy but not necessarily productive and they are both self-imposed. The sample was collected from the employees at an MNC's technical support call centre. The analysis revealed that people feel more productive when they are executing tasks rather than planning them, Also it revealed that successful people were planners.
3. Travis Bradberry. *How being busy makes you so productive*. This study had taken it trails on Microsoft employees. The findings of study were switching between tasks results in delay. High multitasking leads to less brain density in anterior cingulate cortex through MRI studies. Also proved that busyness is way to hide laziness and fear of failure.
4. Christopher K.Hsee, Adelle X.Yang, Liangyan Wang. *Idleness Aversion and the Need for Justifiable Busyness*. 2010. The main purpose of the study was that many purported goals that people pursue may be merely justifications to keep themselves busy. The methodology adopted was by placing chocolate at two locations with a distance of 15mins on foot. The sample size was taken as 98 college students. The study revealed that the busy participants who walked longer distance reported greater happiness than

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other participants. It revealed that people usually dread idleness until their are given a valid reason.

5. Frank Martela. Reasons to stop pursuing happiness and what to do instead. 2014. The article was prepared to study the fact that In modern western culture there is a strong pressure to strive for happiness. It revealed that pursuing happiness can make us feel less happier. It concluded to stop striving for happiness and to strive to do wider and meaningful contributions.
6. Megan Wycklendt .Reasons to stop using busy. The purpose of this study was to investigate why everyone complains that they are always busy. It revealed that using this phrase disconnects you from the present, it is cover up and a choice. The conclusions were that are connections between well being and happiness of people who are emotionally compassionate. Avoiding the word busy makes life less hectic.
7. Paul Borden. Busy does not equal productive. 2014. The purpose of the study was to evaluate ministry more on production then time served means starting with a clear sense of mission. It concluded that improving the correlation between busyness and production enhances results
8. Corey Kohn. The difference between being busy and getting things done. 2015. The motive of this study was to differentiate between busyness and effectiveness. The studies carried out on IT employees revealed that they were interrupted often 3 minutes up to 20 times an hours. This led to the conclusion the more energy and time were spent deliberately in getting things done.

METHODOLOGY

People now days are fascinated by the term busyness and they tend to be busy without any desired productivity. There are mixed views on busyness, hence the researcher has selected the topic for study.

Design

Interview technique has been utilised for the purpose of the study, to assess the idea behind busyness.

Tool

The tool used for the purpose of interview consist of 11 questions in which five questions are based on the components of busyness such as motivation, contentment, busyness leading to productivity and communication, one on multitasking as in multitasking resulting in increased productivity and remaining for productivity considering components such as Realisation of role, Efficiency, Planning and prioritisation, Level of assessment, Time frame, Team coordination. It is done to find out any direct or indirect proportion between busyness keeping multitasking into account. Personal and telephonic interviews are conducted by the researcher which are recorded with due permission for the purpose of study. The recorded interview is translated into the hard copy to decode the information contained in the answers.

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Sample

The subjects for study includes both genders falling between the following groups

1. 25-30 years
2. Above 30 years

Sampling

The sample is purposive in nature and 25 subjects have been subjected to detailed interview on the components of busyness and productivity. The subjects belong to both working and non-working class. Data has been analysed through extensive content analysis.

Following components of busyness and productivity are taken into consideration for the formulation of questions. Decision making, goal setting, communication, delegation, planning and priority resource workflow, task management, time frame, motivation, role perception, work place environment. The questions are as follows:

1. What is your idea on self motivation? Do you feel you are motivated most of the time?
2. Are you contented with your profession and what do you feel about your professional ability???
3. Do you believe in the statement busyness leads to productivity or other way round?
4. What is your idea about communication in a team work???
5. Do you believe in multitasking if so then why???. Please explain in relation to productivity
6. Are you clear with "YOUR ROLE" in any task or project???. How??
7. Do you feel you are efficient and productive?
8. Do you believe in "PLANNING AND PRIORITISATION" please explain in brief
9. Do you assess your level of rise and fall and do you accomplish your set goals?
10. Do you believe in time frame ?explain
11. Do you cope up with your teammates???

FINDINGS

The obtained data has been subjected to content analysis that shows following result.

Busyness	Productivity	Multitasking	Total responses
Yes	Yes	no	8
YES	Yes	yes	nil
No	Yes	no	9
No	Yes	yes	5
May or may not be	May or may not be	May or may not be	3

This table enumerates the fact that 8 subject believe that busyness is good and it leads to productivity but multitasking is a hindrance. 9 subjects believe that an individual is productive when he is not busy and there is no multitasking. 5 subjects believe that multitasking is important part of life and hence busyness leads to productivity. But three

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subjects strongly agree with the fact that an individual should be busy in order to be productive. Multitasking may or may not have any effect on productivity.

DISCUSSION

The interview was recorded and decoded doing content analysis. The decoded information reveals an interesting fact that out of 25 subjects who were studied 3 have mixed response and hence they were not clear on the components of busyness and productivity. But there are 8 subjects who were of the opinion that busyness always lead to productivity when multitasking is avoided. All these subjects were from corporate and education sector. Their idea on busyness is different than the usual idea of doing many things at a time. They strongly agreed on the fact of understanding their role and prioritization at work. They also believe that multitasking is not good and it ruins the hard work, as it disseminates the energy in different jobs and hence one is not able to do a job sincerely leading to less productivity. As per the subjects multitasking makes the individual sick with busyness, leading to several physiological and psychological issues. Hence one should be busy to achieve the target but one task at a time should be followed.

There are 9 subjects who believed that busyness is very harmful and it does not lead to productivity. They were of the opinion that when one is multitasking, he is not able to concentrate on one job leading to unnecessary busyness or unproductive busyness. They had a strong opinion that those who accomplish the task within the stipulated period of time can never be busy, as they are satisfied with their accomplishment. They believe that multitasking is avoided by achievers, as it distributes your efforts hence the result is not the desired one.

5 subjects have the opinion that to busyness is never productive but contrary to the above mentioned opinion they had the view that in the present scenario when life is running at a very high pace one cannot avoid to be multitasking. So to be productive one should do multiple tasks at time.

Age is also playing a role in the difference of opinion. People who are below 30 believe in multitasking and busyness for being productive. But people above 30 have acquired this idea by virtue of their experience that multitasking should be either done mindfully or avoided. There is no point in working for multiple tasks as it will not be productivity. House wives have the opinion that multitasking is important as they are doing multiple jobs at a time but they are not clear of their role and have not spoken clearly on prioritization. Subjects from senior managerial position on the other hand firmly believe that knowing your role in the task and prioritization during the task is very important. This way you avoid unnecessary randomness and jumbling up of different tasks with desired productivity. The subjects in senior position have laid emphasis on communication and team work.

CONCLUSION

It has been concluded that 13 people believed that busyness never leads to productivity and multitasking has its own definition for them. Whereas 8 subjects are of the opinion that

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busyness is required for productivity but multitasking should be avoided. These subjects have a different definition for being busy. Their busyness is more of engrossed ness in a task. So if you are engrossed you will accomplish the task with full focus and target will be accomplished. People have different opinion on busyness but this research establishes the fact that a person is productive when he does not feel that he is busy and avoids multitasking. Multitasking term should be replaced by prioritization. Busyness can never be productive as it is unnecessary.

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