



A STUDY ON INFLUENCE OF A FLEXIBLE WORK ENVIRONMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES IN AN ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

A flexible work environment is the physical space in which an individual performs their job duties. It includes the setting, culture, and social norms that impact an employee's well-being, satisfaction, and productivity. A positive flexible work environment promotes employee engagement, creativity, and innovation while reducing absenteeism and turnover rates. On the other hand, a negative work environment can result in employee burnout, stress, and reduced performance. Employers can create a positive work environment by establishing open communication, providing opportunities for growth and development, fostering a supportive culture, and promoting work-life balance. Creating and maintaining a positive work environment benefits both employees and employers.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the key factors that influence a positive flexible work environment, including the employee physical and mental health, work life and personal life balance, job satisfaction and productivity.

Key words: Flexible work place, work environment, physical and mental health, work life balance

INTRODUCTION

Flexible work environment plays a critical role in shaping employee well-being and productivity. It refers to the physical and social conditions in which work is carried out, including factors such as proper cabin setting, proper equipment/furniture, relaxation room and consulting room. An effective work environment should be designed to meet the needs of employees and promote their physical, mental, and emotional health. It should also be conducive to achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the importance of a supportive flexible work environment. Research has shown that a flexible work environment can have a significant impact on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. It can also improve organizational performance and reduce costs associated with employee turnover and absenteeism.

However, creating a flexible work environment is not always straightforward. It requires careful consideration of various factors, including ergonomics, technology, and social dynamics.

It also involves ongoing evaluation and adaptation to meet the changing needs of employees and the organization.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To find out the influences of a flexible work environment among employees in an organization

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used in the study is **Descriptive** and data are collected from the direct participants of the subject being discussed.

The research is done with the **Primary data**. The primary data was collected from **150 employees** from different age groups and different occupation. Tools used to interpret the data the with the help of **Questionnaire** by using convenience sampling method which is a non-probability method of sampling. As this method was applied, the respondents were selected because of their accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the available literature that will include the articles related to flexible work environment.

According to Kahn (1990), a work environment in which individuals are intellectually, physically, and emotionally involved in their professional tasks. Employee engagement, is a condition in which workers choose to invest in their job with the hope of advancing their careers and finding meaning in their employment. Employees that are engaged in their work do it with optimism and passion. **(Kahn & Heaphy, 2014)**.

(Allen et al.,2013), Researchers and practitioners are highly engaged in flexible work arrangements, but there is still disagreement over the advantages of implementing flexible work arrangements in firms. According to some definitions, flexible work arrangements are self-management techniques that provide employees flexibility over how they organize and divide their time, attention, and energy.

(Bal & De Lange, 2014), Daily flexibility allows workers to determine their work schedules, start and stop hours, and job-sharing agreements. This is referred to as regular flexibility. Regular flexibility will be utilized throughout this study to refer to flexible work arrangements. Examples of FWAs include telecommuting (using technology to keep connected), flexible work place and flextime. **(Michel et al., 2011)**.

According to a study by **Thompson, Payne, and Taylor (2015)**, younger individuals heading into the workforce prefer having more freedom to combine their work and non-work activities, whereas older generations prefer clearly defined lines separating work from non-work. Younger generations now anticipate flexible work options in the workplace. **(Lyons & Kuron, 2014)**.

(Skinner & Chapman, 2013), According to researchers, flexible work arrangements, managerial awareness, and support help employees balance their job, leisure time, and family responsibilities. **(Casper & Harris, 2008)**, Flexible arrangements have a good association with organizational support perception and emotional commitment, but an adverse connection with turnover intention.

(Dries, Pepermans, & De Kerpel, 2008), Millennia's are becoming more and more concerned with work-life balance. In terms of decent pay, professional growth, demanding job, social contribution, and a work-life balance, a survey of the popular literature indicates that millennial tend to desire rapid satisfaction. According to reports, millennial have witnessed their parents make tremendous sacrifices for their businesses only to experience family upheaval, layoffs, and lengthy workdays. For these reasons, millennial often approach their working lives more holistically and place a high value on work-life balance.

Chen and Fulmer (2017) discovered an association between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment that was favorable. Working fewer hours was shown to be less strongly connected with organizational commitment than flexible schedule and location.

(Shockley & Allen 2007), More flexible work options are being offered by enterprises as a whole. Flextime, also known as flexible time, and flexible space are the most common. These flexible work arrangements provide employees the freedom to choose when and where they work.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

CROSS TABULATION:

Cross tabulation is a method used for analysing the relationship between two or more variables. The highly used analytical tool, which has multi-dimensional table for understanding the respondents having specific characteristics highlighted in the table cells.

Cross tabulation plays an important role in analysing categorical data. An attempt has been made to understand the relationship between the gender and the influences of flexible work environment on the various aspects of their work.

1. Do you feel like you have enough time to take care of your physical and mental health

OCCUPATION	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
PRIVATE	5.3%	9.3%	4%	22.7%	45.3%
GOVERNMENT	2.0%	3.3%	1.3%	1.3%	3.3%
OTHERS	-	-	1.3%	0.7%	-
TOTAL	7.3%	12.6%	6.6%	24.7%	48.6%

Interpretation:

From the table it can be understood that 48.6% of the total respondents strongly agree with the statement, 24.7% of the total respondents agree, 6.6% are neutral about the statement, 12.6% disagree, and 7.3% of them strongly disagree with the statement. Also, it could be understood from the table that respondents working in private sector are more inclined towards flexible work environment when compared with respondents from Government sector.

2. A flexible work environment encourages you to stay with a company longer

OCCUPATION	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
PRIVATE	2.7%	8.0%	2.0%	23.3%	50.7%
GOVERNMENT	2.0%	3.3%	1.3%	1.3%	3.3%
OTHERS	-	-	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%

TOTAL	4.7%	11.3%	4.0%	25.3%	54.7%
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Interpretation:

From the table it can be understood that 54.7% of the total respondents strongly agree with the statement, 25.3% of the total respondents agree, 4.0% are neutral about the statement, 11.3% disagree, and 4.7% of them strongly disagree with the statement. It can also be understood, from the table, that the 50.7% of the respondents from private sector prefer to stay with a company longer if a flexible work environment prevails.

CHI-SQUARE:

Chi-squared (χ^2) is a statistical test used to compare observed data with expected data. It is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies of events.

A. H0: There is no significant association between occupation and employee's physical and mental health

H1: There is significant association between occupation and employee's physical and mental health

	Value	df	Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	29.593	8	0.000

Interpretation:

The result from the analysis shows that there is a significant association between the occupation and employee's physical and mental health in a flexible work environment at **significance = .000**

B. H0: There is no significant association between occupation and employee's stay longer

H1: There is significant relationship between occupation and employee's stay longer

	Value	df	Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	26.694	8	0.001

Interpretation:

The result from the analysis shows that there is a significant association between the occupation and employee's stay longer in a flexible work environment at **significance = .001** and **chi square value**

FACTOR ANALYSIS:

A. *Exploratory Factor Analysis* has been attempted to reduce the variables into 3 factors and thereby making an attempt to understand the predominant variables. Within the help of SPSS, 3 factors have been identified with nine values greater than 1. The variables which have communalities more than 0.5 have been taken for study.

KMO is the test conducted to understand the strength of the correlation, (i.e) the factors explaining each other, between the variables. KMO values closer to 1.0 are considered ideal and less than 0.6 indicates that the sampling is not adequate.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.895	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df = 28	Sig.= 0.000

From the analysis, it could be understood that the dataset has been adequately sampled and the factor analysis is appropriate. Since the Bartlett Test of Sphericity is significant implying that factor analysis can be done.

COMPONENTS	VALUES	FACTORS
A flexible work environment encourages you to stay with a company longer	.887	Prioritizing
Flexible work environment helps to balance between work-life and personal life demands	.600	
A flexible work environment makes you feel more valued/connected in an organization	.746	Retaining
How are you with the balance between your work and personal life	.830	
How satisfied with the amount of time you have for your personal life	.674	
Do you feel like you have enough time to take care of your physical and mental health	.682	
Do you think a flexible workplace helps foster better mental health	.814	Relaxing
How often do you feel overwhelmed by the demands of work and personal life	.656	
How often do you feel like you have enough time for hobbies and other leisure activities	.809	
3 factors have been identified		

B. Confirmatory Factor Analysis has been done to test the relationship between the observed variables and the underlying construct. It has been done to understand the researcher's knowledge of theory, empirical research or both, postulating the relationship between the priori and the tests.

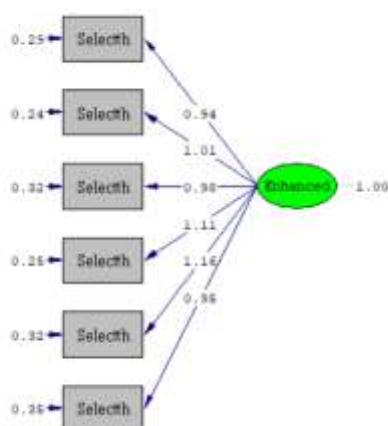
CFA has been conducted to understand the link between the theory and the tests for the following items and thus, attempting to prove that the following flexible workplace items enhance the work life.

a. I believe that a flexible workplace helps to work effectively
b. I believe that a flexible workplace helps me to be consistent in my work/tasks
c. I believe that a flexible workplace can create better satisfaction
d. I believe that a flexible workplace creates better performance in my work
e. I believe that a flexible workplace will increase my productivity
f. I believe that a flexible workplace will help me stay on track with consistent goals

Chi-square =27.41, Df =9, P- value =0.00120, RMSEA =0.079

The RMSEA ranges from 0 to 1, with smaller values indicating better model fit. The value above shows that the model is fit.

The GFI and AGFI range between 0 and 1, with a value of over .9 generally indicating acceptable model fit. The SEM shows the value to be 0.94 for GFI and 0.87 for AGFI. Values for both the NFI and NNFI should range between 0 and 1, with a cut off of .95 or greater indicating a good model fit. The model shows the value to be 0.98 for NFI and 0.97 for NNFI.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a flexible work environment has numerous benefits for both employees and organizations. It can improve employee well-being, job performance, and organizational outcomes. Therefore, organizations should consider implementing flexible work arrangements to reap these benefits. However, it is important to note that not all employees may be suited for a flexible work environment, and organizations should carefully consider their employees' needs and preferences before implementing such arrangements.

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