
Impact of Work from Home and Flexible Working Hours on Employee Performance During Covid-19

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Abstract

The world is being faced, in the current era, the worst epidemic challenge which are never occurred earlier. It destructed the millions of jobs and shaken the world strongest economies as well. The COVID 19 outbreak has enabled to the organization to implement various strategizes to protect their employees form this fatal disease as well to accomplish their organizational objectives simultaneously. It gives the numerous options to work i.e. Flexible timing, reducing working shifts, alternative working plans and working from home etc. Workplace as a locus of contact and crowd of people is a risk factor that requires to be expected the effect of transmission (MENKES, 2020). This research has evaluated the impact of flexible working hours and Work from Home Strategies on employee's performance during COVID 19. Through literature review the hypotheses are produced and reinforced. Quantitative method is used to discovery the relationship among variables. By using SPSS, whole model is examined and analyzed. The data is collected from Pakistan/Karachi based employee by using Likert Scale basis questionnaire. It is discovered that the strategies are found to be a continual process and it is extremely business specific.

Keywords: COVID-19; Flexible Working Hours; Work from Home; Work Life Equilibrium

Introduction

Background of Study

The world is being faced, in the current era, the worst epidemic challenge which are never occurred earlier. It destructed the millions of jobs and shaken the world strongest economies as well. Thousands of employees have got lost their jobs during this pandemic period. Organizations are fronting the employees' management encounters with respect to managing their shifts and working styles. The COVID 19 outbreak has enabled to the organization to implement various strategizes to protect their employees form this fatal disease as well to accomplish their organizational objectives simultaneously. It gives the numerous options to work i.e. Flexible timing, reducing working shifts, alternative working plans and working from home etc. Workplace as a locus of contact and crowd of people is a risk factor that requires to be expected the effect of transmission (MENKES, 2020).

Domestic economies and business became a severe setback because of the wave of COVID 19. World Health Organization (WHO) has been continuously issuing the guide lines and precautionary steps to meet the 'new normal situations'. Maximum affected republics have levied fractional or whole lockdown of their economies as control measures to time boxing the virus (Lau et al., 2020; Remuzzi & Remuzzi, 2020). Numbers of Standard Operating Procedures and criteria to fight against the COVID 19 are being designed and implemented all over the world. The COVID outbreak hit the various sectors in world economies are severely especially the travel and tourism sectors got much affected by the wave of fatal and contagious virus. Administrations and authorizes of countries have applied various measures extending from physical social distancing, limitations on the freely movement and the shutting of non-essential corporations and

undertakings, to the lockdown of complete cities, industrial and social hubs in various parts of the realm. As the pandemic grows, so have the actions administrations have engaged to discourse it. Most of the Government are striving and adopting several steps to control the spreading of the virus and minimizing its impact on their economies. The concept of working from home and flexible working styles got much popular in these epidemic periods. Human Resources department are creating and adopting numerous tools and tactics in-order to ensure for the achievement of organizational objectives and goals. The role of human resources department become much imperative and critical to meet and ascertain the implementation of attendance policies and procedures. One side it should not be aligned with the SOPs of respective governments and higher authorities but also on the other hand as per the organizational procedures and guidelines. The current COVID-19 eruption has exposed how rapidly businesses requires to respond to quickly progressing HR-related matters (McCulloch, 2020; Sylvers & Foldy, 2020; Wei & Wong, 2020) As all a like the growth of Pakistani economy has also been affected by the COVID 19. The pandemic made individuals in the republic even additional helpless to scarcity, and those who were already helpless have been hard-pressed below the poverty line. It's made the country's economy contracted and its growth rate was suppressed. The unemployment rate also exceeds the budgeted figure. The government of Pakistan has issued number of Standard Operating Procedures for the organizations and Companies regarding the shift management, maintaining the social distancing, working on reduced strength, compressed working hours etc. They issued several guide lines and procedures mandatory to strictly follow and implement in the companies.

The phenomenon that is occurring in these days, amid organizations are thoughtful of economic benefit in order to linger to strive, organizations are tackled with the condition of the existing COVID-19 pandemic. This also creates it a test for administration to frame suitable working guideline & policies and encourage inventive work performance in order to preserve organizational outcome and its performance.

Research Problem

Acquiring the identical output by utilizing the reduced work strength is the great challenge for human resources professionals. Now it's created the excessive pressure on the Human Resources Professionals to maintain and survive in this low growth economy period. Pakistani organizations and companies cannot avoid this universal situation. They need to redesign and innovate their work structure and working environment to cope and meet the desired challenges. The aim of the research is to find out the impact of flexible working arrangement and work from home, how it can be helpful for human resources professional to enhance employees' performance lead to acquire the organizational objectives which is primary objective of organizations.

Research Questions

According to above mentioned problem, the purpose of this study to provide the batter understanding about the impact of flexible working hours and working from home on employee performance.

In order to serve the above purpose, we will address the following research questions.

1. Is the working from home enhance employee performance in Pakistani organizations?
2. What is the impact of flexible working arrangement on employee's performance in Pakistani organizations?

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as under!

- To determine whether human resources consider flexible working arrangements and work from home as a viable strategy in the Pakistani Organizations.

- To discover the reasons why Human Resources Professionals embraced the flexible working arrangements and work from home strategies.
- The study will also discover how the flexible working arrangements and work from home strategies helpful for human resources professional to boost employee's morale which will lead to enhance the employee's performance.

Justification

This research is conducted to measure whether flexible working arrangements and work from home strategies are feasible strategies to be adopted by the organizations in Pakistan. Furthermore, it will discover to what degree is flexible shift arrangement and working from home practiced in Pakistani organizations. This study is directed at providing that healthier conceptualization of flexible working hours and working from home and performance of employees in Pakistani industry. This study will provide perfect image of the relationship among the performance of employees' and flexible working arrangement and working from home in COVID 19 period. The target audiences are the employees of Pakistani companies. This report covers how the organizations can design the most effective and smart flexible shift arrangement and working from home in Pakistani organization.

- Organizations which are functioning in Pakistan would benefit from the study in designing the flexible work arrangement and work from home strategies to achieve their organizational objectives.
- Organizations can adopt the various policies and tactics after analysis of the findings of the study.
- Teachers, researchers and Students will acquire understanding from the study about the shift arrangements and work from home strategies in the corporate sector.

Limitations

The research also has a few limitations and boundaries.

1. This research will only take into account the Pakistani organization and corporate sectors because of the inadequate period of time for research; moreover, the conclusions, suggestions and recommendations will be beneficial to existing organizations in Pakistan.
2. Interviews will be conducted with only the organization based in Karachi because of limited resources.
3. It will only consist of the relationship between flexible work arrangement and work from home on the performance of employees in Karachi based companies; no other fields will be considered. This study will only check the impact of flexible work arrangements and work from home on employee performance. That's why, this will not include all variables, which could affect the performance of employees in organizations, however there are some other variables also exist which influence on the employee performance i.e. Compensation, Organizational Culture, and Growth Opportunity etc.

Scope

This study will take into account the Pakistani organizations and corporate sector, the recommendations, suggestions and conclusions will be advantageous to companies operating in Pakistan. The research will take into account the employees' perspective; as to how they feel the impact of flexible working arrangement and work from home on their performance. It will only consist of flexible shift arrangement and work from home and employee performance organizations, no other areas will be considered. Companies of Karachi will be sampled and

generalization will be made for the population which consists of all companies in Pakistan. Moreover, the data will be collected only from the companies based at Karachi.

Assumptions

Following assumptions will be adopted to carry on the research!

1. The political and others factors will persist same in Karachi (where we will conduct our study) throughout the duration of our research.
2. The information that we will gather from certain companies will be considered as truthful and will reflect the actions of majority of the players belonging to similar sectors.

Literature Review

This chapter precisely discuss the literature of flexible work environment and work from home, and its impact on employee performance in organization during the period of COVID 19. The COVID 19 was outbreak in January 2020 in Wuhan city in China, its affirmed by World health organizations (WHO). The CORONA virus was greatly irresistible. It's got extent was furthermore accelerated by the Chinese New Year travel and tour surge. As the COVID-19 emergency extent to a lot more countries outer of China, WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020b). Since its declared the pandemic, the world environment has got entirely transformed, lock down, social distancing, work from home, flexible work arrangement and much more processes and terms are being designed and implemented all over the world. The people of world have adopted the new way of life and changed their social activities, they made them prepared to live with this pandemic. They opted and abide the minimization of community movements. The usefulness of limitations on community movement and congregation, when applied at various stages of the ailment, lead to extraordinarily changed results in its transmission (Hatchett, Mecher, & Lipsitch, 2007).

The continuing COVID-19 eruption has revealed how swiftly businesses required to react rapidly proceeding Human Resources related matters (McCulloch, 2020; Sylvers & Foldy, 2020; Wei & Wong, 2020). Robinson (2009) suggested on how to manage the employees in difficult times and keep them focused and involved in times of transformation. While advising staffs to work from home was the single feasible choice for companies and organizations to operations, we draw upon the worker remoteness literature to excavate its psychosomatic effects (Cooper & Kurland, 2002; Golden, Veiga, & Dino, 2008; Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). Staffs working in virtual atmospheres have described emotional state of professional and social segregation due to an absence of sense of belongingness, companionship and trust that produces during physical occurrence and social connections. Numerous republics have also sealed boundaries to avoid intercontinental tourists from dispersion the virus (Ghosh, Brindisi, Shahabi, Mackenzie, & Andrew, 2020). According to Business Insider (Kaplan, Frias, & Mefall-Johnsen, 2020), greatest number of the countries are implementing procedures to sluggish the extent of the COVID-19, from nationwide quarantines to institute closures.

The entire world economy has also got affected by this pandemic severely. Most of the countries has sealed their borders and trading with other countries in-order to minimize the transmission of the fatal virus. The situation has created and pressed much pressure on the organization to retain and engaged their employees with in limited resources. On the other hand, employees are also got demoralized because of low productivity, job insecurity and termination as well retrenchment issues. The life of corporate sector has turned a new leaf of life because of the COVID 19. Organizational performance is reflected to be interrupted by the influence of extent of corona virus. The primary purpose of lockdown is to get isolation it leads towards the distancing of individuals who has been identified with this fatal disease from the person who are not fallen in this disease (Brooks et al., 2020).

In these days' organization has nothing options than to adopt the flexible working arrangement in order to cope up the requirements and needs of staff expectations which are enhanced due to socio-demographic changes and requirement.

Employee Performance

According to Armstrong & Baron (1998: 159), performance is about how to do efforts and the outcomes attained from the effort. Performance is the outcome of effort that has a solid connection with the organization's strategic goals and objectives, satisfaction of customer and contribution in economy. Trend which demonstrates how healthy he/she is executing his/her job, work and tasks is called staff performance. Staff productivity is counted through their performance. Staff performance can be achieved through operative shift arrangements and work from home in period of COVID 19. To get higher performance one will have exert greater efforts (Baker, 1998; Jensen, 1998; Murphy, 1998). Employee performance is assumed to be completion of a promise in a specify ways that reliefs the employees from all responsibilities and accountabilities.

Performance management is a development of movements planned to assurance that the organizations acquires the performance it needs from its employees (Mathis & Jackson, 2008). Rahman & Kistyanto (2019) explained that performance is an achievement of work performance, both in quality and quantity that has been carried out based on the work objectives that have been determined by the company. Organizations are much focusing for improving the employee performance especially in COVID 19 period. The organization can get the lesson form the fear of leaving the highly skilled and talented employees to move to the competitors (Blinder, 1991; Krueger, 1991; & Bishop, 1991).

A behavior reflecting what has been learned by the workers or the types of training workers has got in work place is called the employee performance, it comprises the results of the psychological and mental abilities (Faiza and Nazir, 2015). Worker Performance is an impression that is progressively widespread between researchers of management sciences, as worker performance is necessary to organization and individual himself. Staff Performance donates to the whole improvement of the procedures of the companies predominantly in relations of competence and output (Abualoush et al., 2018a). Moreover, Employee performance has connection to the actions and responsibilities staffs transmit in efficient and effective manner, and it also directives how ample staffs pay to the companies and amongst the offerings of staffs are productivity number, attendance at work, and helpful approach (Abualoush et al., 2018b). In addition, the monetary or non-monitory results of the staff which are narrowly connected to the act and achievement of the companies is also replicated by staff performance (Anitha, 2014). In respects to the idea of staff performance, it is quantifiable by means of various procedures (Faiza and Nazir, 2015), and in general, performance includes what is completed or not complete by employees. This involves the complete result or achievement of a individual throughout precise phases of responsibility as opposite to the prearranged and recognized normal of effort and goals or conditions (Abualoush et al., 2018; Pawirosumarto et al., 2017). Performance is the artefact of the ability of worker, increased with backing and exertion. Hence, decrease or absence of one factor will source reduction in performance (Pawirosumarto et al., 2017).

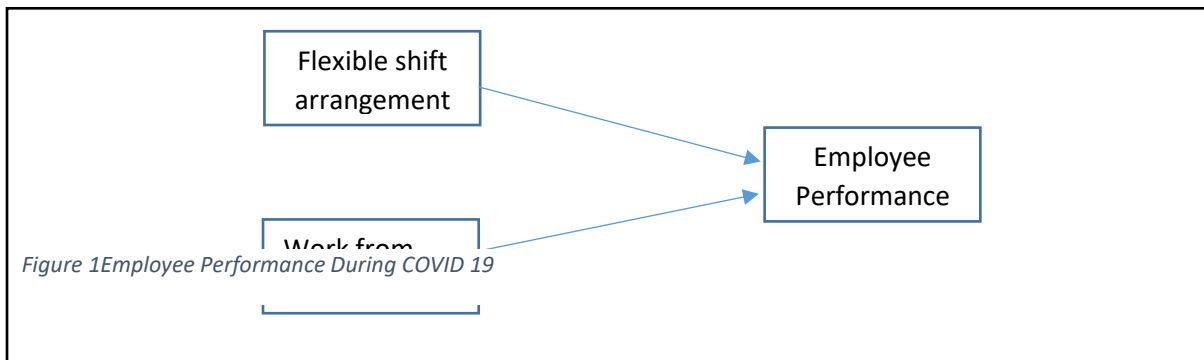
Theoretical Frame Work

Managing performance of employees in this epidemic period is a great challenge for all organization. A few options organization have, in order, to meet this challenge successfully. An organization can stop their function for the interim period till the pandemic got controlled and life become normalized, the second option is reduced their work, manage it by bifurcation of flexible shifts arrangements and work from home options.

In this study it has been determined that the designing of flexible shift arrangement and work from home have resulted in clear performance gains in all areas. The results from implementation of

positive atmosphere and environment were more obvious and persevered to increase individual performance. The aim of this research is to find and acquire the evidence about the disadvantages and advantages of flexible shift arrangement and working at home (Work from Home) throughout pandemic COVID-19. To find out the relationship between flexible shift arrangements and work from home on the employee performance conducted by Rehaman, Kistyanto & Surjanti (2020) in Indonesia.

This study will be conducted in Pakistan to examine the relationship between flexible shift arrangement and work from home on the performance of employees.



Flexible Shift Arrangements

Flexible Shift arrangements (FSAs) have been considered by Hill et al., (2008). Masuda, et al., (2012) named four kinds of flexible work arrangements: flextime, compressed workweek, telecommuting (also known as flexplace), and part-time work. The meaning of Flexibility/ Flexible Working Hours is not constant and is this one a substance of discussion. The terms Flexible Working Hours (FWH), Flexibility, and Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA) have been relatively frequently utilized alternatively. Gash (2008) has distributed the flexibility into two wide-ranging classes i.e., “chosen” and “constrained” in context of part-time working. Similarly, Roberts (2008) differentiates the two procedures as “customization” (benefiting the staff) and “flexibility” (to benefit the organization).

Technically flexible practices comprise number of techniques which includes swapping of shift, reduced working hours, working from home, compressed week, I lieu time off, overtime slots, mobile working etc. (ACAS, 2015; Kodz et al., 2002; Torrington et al., 2005). Legge, (1974) defines Flexibility Work Hours as “a plan whereby the worker is allowed a (limited) options of the working hours when he/she performs as long as he/she bonds over a decided period—be it a working day, or a whole week, or an entire month—to work his standard total of working hours”. According to Workplace Flexibility (2010), Georgetown University Law Center, “flexible shift arrangements are one of the range of work structures that changes the timing slot that perform on a regular basis in the organizations.” Some welfares to staffs and workers are decrease in work place stress during the jobs, improved work/life balance and work/family, and better mental and physical health (Bhate, 2013; Hashim & Hameed, 2012). Flexible working hours are frequently schedules among employee and employer in which both reach agreement to timetable the work flexibly, targeting to increase welfares to all concerned. (Galea, Houkes & De Rijk, 2013).

Flexibility at workplace is no lengthier impartial and pioneering techniques and rules criteria for handling their employees’ in organization. It is likewise a risky constraint for organization to embellishment in nowadays modest and vibrant international business atmosphere. The international environment of jobs demands for an ever-increasing utilization of schedules flexibility, locations and hours. An effective and efficient operations and sensibly imposed wide-ranging workplace flexibility procedures and programs can lead to successful condition both for

employers and employees. There have been many studies about impact of flexible working hours on individuals and organizations (Coenen & Kok, 2014).

Relationship between Flexible Shift Arrangement and Employee Performance

Flexible shift hours provide much benefits to employees in organization. Flexible forms of work can support the companies to increase client facilities and services by motivated and satisfied employees' (Hashim, Khattak & Kee, 2017). Employees and workers acquire much benefits by adopting the work flexible shift arrangement or reduced working hours' procedures, he/she get sufficient time for balancing in work/family life, the compressed working hours provide the opportunity to perform more personal work easily. It gives the ease and relax to employees and workers in organization.

From employer's side it is enhanced staff morale and engagement of work at workplace, moreover effective recruitment outcomes and retention of employees in organization, further increased output and productivity by an unwavering talent pool etc. These advantages can be lead to acquire the competitive advantage for all organizations. Most important employees' advantage is reduction on stress level on the workplace, excellent work/life and work/family equilibrium, last but not least the increased mental and physical health of employees (Bhate, 2013; Hashim & Hameed, 2012). Working in flexible shift will provide the opportunity to make and design their schedules to achieve better staff wellbeing and family life balances (Rastogi, Rangnekar&Rastogi, 2015).

Abid and Barech (2017) found an affirmative connection among Flexible Working Hours and quality of life for staff and workers. Flexible working hours can make them feel happy and satisfied. Moreover, it can also be enhanced the employee productivity, and their level of gratification which leads to employee retention which save huge amount in term of reduction in recruitment cost. Cecilie & Linda (2013), establish that flexible working arrangements (FWA) are a vibrant instrument to accomplish and endorse the organizational assortment and implement it in an uneven way in UK services industry.

H1: There is a positive relationship between flexible working hours and employee performance during COVID 19

Advantages of Flexible Working hours

There are so many advantages are associated with the flexible working hours for both employees and employers. A few of them are stated below.

Win-win condition

One of the most important benefits from the flexible working hours to provide the condition and environment where both stake holders are satisfied and feel them happy as well motivated. Coenen and Kok (2014) stated that among so may situations, employers adopted the flexible working hours due to desire of the employees. This provides for management to generate and produce the competitive and conducive environment where staff are willing to work with fully motivation and enthusiasm. According to Masuda (2011) Such environment is advantageous for employers as staff wellbeing and satisfaction result to decrease the turnover ratio and enhanced productivity level in organizations. Moreover, it also decreases accommodation cost and absenteeism level in companies (Wheatley, 2016). Sometime flexible working hours can also result the loss of the employees in term of economic loss as they are usually not paid according to the work he does (Nijp, 2012).

Enhanced Work Life Equilibrium

One of the study has been conducted by Hayman (2009) to find out the relationship among work life equilibrium and flexible working hours, collected the data of 710 staff based at offices. It was discovered that there is positive relationship between family, work, and schedules of flexible working hours. Those staff who utilized and availed the flexible working schedules enjoyed

positive work life equilibrium over them who have not been availed the facilities in their organizations. As highlighted by numerous scholars, handling work-life equilibrium has turn into one of the utmost perilous management tactics for confirming performance of staff and improvement in organizational performance.

Integration between work and life

Qualitative research conducted by Houkes, Galea and De Rijk (2013) discover ‘the staff experience who avail the flexible working hours in their offices and further how much this affected on employees work-life balance’. Their study reveals that flexible working hours are very beneficial technique during handling the transition among work and their personal life. It’s much beneficial specially in the condition when family concern is more important and employee requires to pay more attention to their family life. It helps staff to integrate their personal life and professional life. In addition, when management need to acquire the improved work life balance in organization, they used flexible working hours as a tool rather than as an additional assistance.

Disadvantages of Flexible Working Hours

Along with so many benefits, their might some disadvantages associated with flexible working hours.

Violation of Employee Rules

The one of the major disadvantages of flexible working hours is violation of employee rules and polices in organization. As the flexible shift hour directly contrast with the discipline and punctuality in companies. Number of staff arrive at work station at different timing slots, so it does not create uniformity and harmonization in office environment. Employees and Staff who do not avail the flexible shift hours, they feel anger and annoyance as their colleagues and peers acquire this facility (Lainie Petersen, 2018).

Spoil Physical Interfaces among Staff

The physical interface badly spoils among employees is another negative impact of assigning the flexible working hours (Coenen and Kok, 2014). Faith on other is created by physical interaction, it also enhances the cooperation level with peers and co-workers as well as helping each other. On the other hand, employees and staff may get lees opportunity to meet because of their own flexible working hours. Moreover, it’s not certainly that the staff and employees got the time for their families and friend because of availing the flexible working hours (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012).

Communication and Availability Issues

The another issue emerge in flexible working hours is on time and proper communication, as different employees avail different shits so it’s difficult to maintain them a unified and stable communication. Especially in project meeting, the issues reached at dangerous level, the project may get unnecessary longer and delay due to lack of spontaneous information require to fulfilment and completion of project and official assignment on time. Moreover, it also creates and form the frustration among the staff and employees who need to work collaboratively with their peers and colleagues, but they are not timely available in office and factories.

Low Personal Interaction and poorer relationships

According to Coenen and Kok (2014), another important aspect in disadvantages of flexible working hours is lower personal interaction and poorer workplace relationship. Personal interaction and relationship is most important workplace tool, which form level of trust among employees and peers at workplace. As most of the employees avails the different timing slots and flexible working hours so they might get less opportunities to interact others. Furthermore, flexible working scheduling can also be the reasons to create complications and clashes with scheduled

meetings as staff are already allowed to work flexible hours however the meetings schedule restrict this control over own work schedules (Wheatley, 2016).

Work from Home

"Remotely Working and Work from Home" is not a novel term to utilize in these days. It has been about for lengthier than several years. The COVID19 disease has impelled extreme number of individuals broadly bound to work from home or remotely working. This idea has been termed several stuffs together with Working from home and Telecommuting. In any case the COVID-19 pandemic out of nowhere made this an urge instead of a choice. Recently the government has advised to implement and follow the remote working and working from home strategies in order to reduce the transmission of Corona Virus rapidly. Remote working and work from home provides the flexible hours of working to employees as the tasks for the organization is completed easily. Work from home is beneficial to transmission work life equality to the demonstrative, and additionally similar reasons the companies to accomplish the tasks. It provides the flexibilities in working environment and reduced hours of shift. Covid-19 forced remotely working in companies. Working from home may persist considerably afterwards the pandemic apprehension impressions. Human Resources Professionals of various companies reach a decision that the comparative success of working from home is one of the positive hope in the whole calamity.

Work from Home effects also provides liberty in performing tasks in which the staff is additional stretchy to regulate when and where she/he does work, on the other words, they have their work environment that will offer ease in performing their tasks to escalate the staff job satisfaction (Ma, 2018). Moreover, (Dockery & Bawa, 2018) who have confirmed that with Work from home, there is steadiness and fairness in the partition of domestic tasks and duties and makes personal relations healthier and much pleasant when staff perform Work from home but this is different from (Cantera, Cubells, Martínez, & Blanch, 2009) who indicated that domestic problems have a connection with advanced tasks valuations that are a sociologically usual state for male, but the issue is somewhat novel for females. Work from home also created the social alones among employees as they don't get the connection with their colleagues and peers. It also creates the fear about the lack of career growth opportunities and deprive of the development prospects. There must be mutual consent among staff and worker while designing the work from home shift to acquire the maximum advantage. Bosua et al. (2012) assumed the amalgamated model permits the staff and workers by providing them switch over their families and work, an unobstructed environment of work, work-life equilibrium and an optimistic atmosphere. The work from home also plays an important role in reduction of stress level of employees as they feel more comfortable to work in their home rather than in offices. The declining trend is also observed in Sickness and absence of employees in organizations (Jansen et al., 2006). Work from home can also cause the monitoring employee performance

Relationship between Work from Home and Employee Performance

Martin and MacDonnell (2012) stated that Work from Home supports enhancement in productivity, preserve their top talented employees and increase their performance and commitment. Some more benefit of working from home comprise emission decrease (due to decrease in travel) further reduction in carbon footprint, reduction in office supplies cost and work-family balance (Guyot and Sawhill, 2020), amplified effectiveness and lesser stress risk (Baert et al., 2020), affirmative impact on the quality and speed of the growth of innovative products (Coenen and Kok, 2014). Govender et al., (2018) reveal that employee performance and flexible work arrangements i.e. work from home have a compacted optimistic association. To one side from the uncertainties over advancement, coworker relationship and susceptible clusters, a few studies pointed out the probable issues of many organizations still not ready or prepared for

managing Work From Home cybersecurity and protection of data (Ahmad, 2020; Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garces, 2020; Martins, 2020).

Working from home, on the other hand, also having a few disadvantages i.e. fear of low promotion and advancement opportunities for employees, unavailability of professional environment which provide the support in polishing and enhancing the employee's skill level, managing the office politics and pressures, management and dealing of public relationship, development and enhancement of interpersonal skills etc. Work–family equilibrium philosophy has got a lot of consideration from the literature of human resources, with sufficient latent welfares projected or recognized such as assisting to retain and appeal the top talent in organizations (US Department of Labor, 1999).

The study inferred that flexible work schedules enhanced employee maintenance, and service satisfaction, which encouraged greater productivity at Eskom, Durban Westville's division of shared administrations, South Africa.

H2: There is a positive relationship between work from home and employee performance during COVID 19

Advantages of Work from Home

Work from home can be advantageous for both employers and employees simultaneously. A few of them are as under!

Cost saving

The organization may save millions of Rupees associated with the operations and maintenance cost by offering the work from home options to their staff and workers (Redcliffe, 2010). Saving of utility bills i.e. Telephone, water and electricity etc. Moreover a few operations i.e. cleaning activities, security related matters, communication and other activities may be reduced because of non-availability of staff in organizations. and security staff costs may also according to Radcliffe (2010), companies could cut back on costs while teleworking. Some examples of such savings include infrastructure, water, electricity, phone and Internet bills, cleaning and security staff costs. In addition, De Graaf and Rietveld (2007) stated that companies could also save on salary costs by having their employees work from home as opposed to employees working from the office.

Autonomy

It allows the freedom to the individual, independence, and choice to take verdicts and to select the technique by which job-related responsibilities should be accomplished (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). A relation among the telecommuting and employee performance has been found moderated (Golden et al., 2006). Teleworkers with sophisticated independence account for superior work happiness comparative to staff who has a reduced amount of autonomy in their jobs. It appears that though teleworking provisions may be helpful, the amount of advantage may be affected by the volume of autonomy in the teleworkers' job alongwith the result variable of interest.

Research Methodology

The research methodology will be described in this section. The procedure in this research provide us the techniques for information collecting and processing. This chapter provides an outline about the general research methodology and techniques which is utilized in this research along with precise approaches and tools used in data gathering and investigation.

Research Design

This research will be quantitative in nature and will be done through collecting the primary data. Since, the topic requires exploring the impact of flexible work environment and work from home on employee performance in Pakistan.

Research Purpose

Although there are numerous studies have already been conducted to classify the factors for flexible working hours and work from home in several other business and industries previously but in native business industries especially in Karachi, it is also necessary to find these aspects, whether these aspects and factors are impelling on employee performance and productivities.

Solving problems and reaching new knowledge are obtained by a method that is tool (Holme and Solvang, 1997). Yin (1994) has termed the determination of scientific research, which has three key determinations these are: explore, describe, or explain. These purposes have been categorized by the two scholars Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1997). Research has also been distributed into three diverse groupings which are same as formerly stated i.e. exploratory, descriptive and explanatory.

The motives of this research is descriptive in which all significant variables and elements (flexible working hours, Work from home & employees' well-being) have been described in numerous parts and components for enhanced insightful about the stuff and to discover its answer; the problem will be scrutinized on data and statistics collected by prime resource. After gathering of data and the requirement will be examined how elements are affecting employee performance and productivity, employees well-being with respect to flexible work hours, and work from home activities.

Population

The extent of this research is all organizations and companies situated at Karachi. All manufacturing, and services companies' management cadre staffs are selected as population for this research. Various manufacturing and services organizations based at Karachi will be exemplified and generalization will be applied for the population which consists of all manufacturing and services organizations based in Karachi. Moreover, the data will be gathered only from the various services and manufacturing companies based at Karachi in different industrial zone.

The primary objective for selecting them they are true representative and directly affected because of flexible working hours and work from home arrangement schedules. They will be experiencing and enjoying the restructure of shifts and work from home.

There are five big industrial zones are existing in Karachi. Federal Area, Sindh Industrial Trading state (SITE), Korangi Industrial Area (KIA), Ahsanabad, and Port Qasim. Each zone has number of organizations. Further the services sector is stretched among two main areas i.e. I.I. Chundrigir and Shakra-e-Faisal Karachi. All management cadre staff, both male and female, either probationary or confirmed employees will be population of this research.

Sample and Sampling Methods

A sample from the population is gathered to conduct this study. This has supported out to move on our study. Numerous techniques are available to pick samples from the population, will be used for the collection of data and statistics. Two major diverse types of, mathematical and non-mathematical, techniques called the 'probability sampling' and 'non-probability sampling' will be utilized to father the samples from population (Wikimedia Foundation web site; 2009).

When sample is collected from population without any favoritism and everyone has equal chances to be selected, is called the probability sample. It must be representative of the population. These samples provide the maximum precise or reliable outcomes since they reveal the key features of the population from which they are nominated (e.g., occupants of a specific public, students at basic university and colleges, etc.).

The another sample is Non-probability samples, which are not actually representation. Non-probability sample is usually less desirable for research scholar comparative to probability samples. In this type of probability, the chances of selection of respondent is not same. The major

drawback of non-probability sample is that it doesn't signify the actual features of whole population. The results are difficult to generalized in this type of sampling technique.

The simplest and easily useable sample techniques are convenient sampling method to gather the data in the research. This is the modest method to gather the samples from population. Under this type of sampling approach, the scholars ask questions with anybody who is accessible and ready to be respondent. This is cheap and quick procedures (Wikimedia Foundation web site; 2009). The procedures have been selected because of its convenience. Data gathering steps will be easily in this approach. However, the main drawback of such procedure of data collection is how much the sample is representative of population.

Data Collection

A questionnaire based on likert scale i.e. Strongly agree to Strongly Disagree will be designed to collect the data from the employees of leading manufacturing and services organization based at Karachi. HR Department representative, management staff, peers and colleagues will be sample of this study. The specifically designed Questionnaires will be circulated to employees of selected organizations. All the required and relevant information related to topic and questions will be disseminated accordingly, if they require. Organization web sites will be utilized for the gathering of secondary data related to company's basic information's.

Data Analysis

The study will be concluded on the base of the measures and statistics gathered by disseminating /visiting the manufacturing and services organizations and gathering the samples by the questionnaire. Various software will be utilized to analyze the data and perform the tests i.e. SPSS, SmartPLS, and Ms Excel etc. For model regression and checking the impact of variables SmartPls will be utilized in this research. Data insertion and creation will be done by MS Excel; data treatment will be conducted by the help of SPSS.

Data Analysis

The detail analysis has been performed on the basis of the data collected from the samples through distributed questionnaire. The data analysis has been performed by using various software i.e. MS Excel and SPSS etc.

The collected data was investigated in diverse stages. First, the twenty-four questions were analyzed, second the regression was applied on this data to find the relationship b/w dependent variable (Employee Performance) and independent variables (Work from Home) and (Flexible Shift Hours) finally the conclusion was discussed.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability Analysis was carried out to measure the internal consistency of the construct. The overall Cronbach's Alpha value 0.824 shows the construct reliability. Summarized result is presented in Table 1.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.824	24

The value of Cronbach's alpha reveals the good reliability of construct.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of work from home and flexible shift hours' strategies and its effect on employee performance on COVID 19 are as follows:

Table 4.2.1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Mean	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Emp_Per	34	21.4706	0.150	0.403	-0.445	0.788
WFH	34	24.4412	-0.405	0.403	-0.975	0.788
FWH	34	36.5882	1.366	0.403	1.959	0.788

The Table# 3 shows the descriptive analysis of data. Total 34 respondents' mean and standard deviation is calculated. The above mentioned analysis also represents the normality of data. As the value of kurtosis and skewness are between ± 3.5 which indicates the data is normally distributed.

Demographic Statistics

The demographic data of Employee Engagement programs and its effect on organizational performance are as follows:

Table 4.3.1: Demographics Statistics – Experience

Experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5 Years	3	8.8	8.8	8.8
	5-10 Years	5	14.7	14.7	23.5
	10-15 Years	14	41.2	41.2	64.7
	15-20 Years	10	29.4	29.4	94.1
	20 Plus	2	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

The table 4.3.1 is showing the respondent working experience. Two of them are having highest working experience i.e. more than 20 years, while of employees are having minimum less than years.

Table 4.3.2: Demographics Statistics – Gender

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	24	70.6	70.6	70.6
	Female	10	29.4	29.4	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

The second variable is gender. 24 (Twenty-Four) males and 10 (Ten) females are respondents in this research which is presented in Table 4.3.2.

Table 4.3.3: Demographics Statistics – Education

		Education			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	Intermediate	2	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Graduation	11	32.4	32.4	38.2
	Masters	14	41.2	41.2	79.4
	MS/PH D	7	20.6	20.6	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

The third demographic variable is qualification of the respondents which is shown in Table 4.3.3. Only 1 is holding matriculation degree, which has the 0.5 percent of total respondent, 15 are the intermediate having 6.8 percent, graduate which are 110 shows 49.8 percent of total respondent, 93 are the post graduate, which are the 42.1 percent and 2 is MS which is the 0.9 percent of total respondent.

Bivariate Correlation

Carl Pearson correlation test has been utilized to ascertain whether the constructs used in this study are unique and different whether the study has any issue of multicollinearity.

Table 4.4.1: Bivariate correlation

		Correlations		
		Emp_Per	WFH	FSH
Emp_Per	Pearson Correlation	1		
WFH	Pearson Correlation	.405*	1	
FSH	Pearson Correlation	.427*	0.114	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

The correlation is used to find out the relationship of the variables. Here the correlation values are representing a positive relationship with considerable significance. All these values are significant at (p = .01). All values are in positive which reflect all the variables have correlation with each other. Further as the values are less than .7000 so it means there is no issue of multicollinearity existing in this model.

Regressions Analysis

Regressions analysis explains the relationship among one or more variables which are represented by y (dependent variable) and one or more variables represented X (independent variable), and this model is depends on the unknown parameters which are to be assessed from the data. According to Guar (2006) when one dependent variable depends on one or more independent variables then it is named multiple regressions. More suitable, this analysis expresses us how the value of the dependent variable variates when any one of the independent variables is variated, while the other independent variables are held fixed (Gaur, 2006).

- Y = $\beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 \dots\dots\dots \beta_{1-n}X_{1-n}$
- Y = Dependent variable (Criterion)
- X_{1-n} = Independent variable (Predictor)
- β_0 = Constant
- β_{1-n} = Regression coefficients

The Table 4.5.1 represent the fitness of model. Values of R, R Square and Adjusted R Squared are presented in this table.

Table 4.5.1: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.558 ^a	0.311	0.267	3.06371

a. Predictors: (Constant), FWH, WFH

The table 4.5.1 is displaying the R-value which is 0.558 that represents the correlation between the predicted values and observed values of the dependent variable. R-Square is named coefficient of determination and it denotes the accuracy of model (Guar, 2006). The adjusted R-Square is 0.311 which represents independent variables in model can predict the 31.1 percent of the variance in dependent variable. The most fruitful measure of the model is delivered by the adjusted R-square. Standard error of the estimate is revealed by the last column which measures the accurateness of the prediction means that there are only 3.06 chances of error in predicting the model.

Table 4.5.2: ANOVA

ANOVA^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	131.494	2	65.747	7.005	.003 ^b
Residual	290.977	31	9.386		
Total	422.471	33			

a. Dependent Variable: Emp_Per
b. Predictors: (Constant), FWH, WFH

The table 4.5.2 shows the analysis of variance values (ANOVA). All three rows are displaying the result of the model. The P-value in this case is 0.003 which is less than 0.05 this mean the model is adequate for prediction purpose. The F-value in this case is 7.005.

Table 4.5.3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.807	4.218		1.377	0.178
1 WFH	0.306	0.127	0.361	2.406	0.022
FWH	0.224	0.087	0.386	2.574	0.015

The table 4.5.3 shows the regression coefficient and their significance. The following OLS equation can be assembled by using the above data for overall employee performance during COVID.

$$OEP = 5.807 + WFH (0.306) + FWH (0.224)$$

OEP = Over Employee Performance

WFH = Work from Home

FWH = Flexible Working Hours

The beta value signifies the measure of variance in dependent variable by a unit change in independent variables (Guar, 2006). The beta value is calculated in terms of standard deviation. The highest beta value in table is 0.306 for work from home that signifies a change in one standard deviation in the independent variable will result in a change of 0.306 standard deviations in dependent variable. The standardized regression coefficient must be used to solve this problem. Through the standardized coefficient the different measurement scale problem can be removed and variability can be overcome (Hair et al., 1995). Significance of betas is also supported by the t values and p values in the said table.

Hypothesis Testing For Employee Performance During COVID 19

The Table 4.6.1 shows the collective results of Simple Linear Regression. All hypothesis has been discussed in the light of results.

H1: There is a positive relationship between flexible working hours and employee performance during COVID 19

Table 4.6.1: Coefficients

Coefficients		
Model	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.377	0.178
FWH	2.574	0.015
WFH	2.406	0.022

The Table 4.6.1 represents the analysis that the Flexible Working Hours during COVID 19 ($t=2.574$, $P=0<0.05$) has significantly relationship on Employee Performance. The p-value is 0.01 which is less than 0.05 so it shows that hypothesis can be accepted for this case and there is positive effect of Flexible Working Hours on employee performance during COVID 19.

H2: There is a positive relationship between work from home and employee performance during COVID 19

The Table 6 represents the analysis that the Work from Home during COVID 19 ($t=2.406$, $P=0<0.05$) has significantly relationship on Employee Performance. The p-value is 0.02 which is less than 0.05 so it shows that hypothesis can be accepted for this case and there is positive effect of Work from Home on employee performance during COVID 19.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Discussions

Under this part the discussion and findings have been scrutinized based on information and data analysis. Used the statistics tools that help for conducting and exploring the analysis and also helpful for researcher to find the impact of work from home and flexible working hours activities on performance of employees cooperate sector. The overall model will also be discussed in detail. Both hypotheses are accepted on results basis. Discussions on each hypothesis and its relevance with earlier studies are presented below.

The table – represents the analysis that work from home activities has significantly relationship of performance of employees during COVID 19. The p value is less than 0.05, which embossed the acceptance of hypothesis. According to Martin and MacDonnell (2012) Work from Home backs

enhancement in output, efficiency and productivity, preserve their top talented staff and workers and surge their performance and level of commitment.

The table – denotes the analysis that flexible working hours' activities has significantly relationship of performance of employees during COVID 19. The p value is less than 0.05, which marked the acceptance of hypothesis. Abid and Barech (2017) establish a positive linking among Flexible Working Hours and quality of life for staff and workers. Flexible working hours can create them feel pleased and contented. Moreover, it can also be improved the worker efficiency, and their level of satisfaction which leads to staff retention which save gigantic amount in term of decrease in staffing cost. Cecilie & Linda (2013), establish that flexible working hours/arrangements (FWH) are a vibrant tool to complete and sanction the organizational range and implement it in an uneven way in UK services industry.

Conclusion

In this chapter the conclusion and recommendations are described. Various employees who are currently on job has been chosen to gather the data and statistics that help for investigative and conducting analysis and also helpful for researcher to the impact of independent variables on dependent variable.

The impact of work from home, and flexible working hours, have been examined on employee performance during the pandemic period COVID 19. It has been found the dependent variable have a statistically significant and positive effect on independent variables. The pandemic has left great impact on human psychology, it hits the most advanced economies of the world, the COVID has turn down the new leaf of life in corporate world. All over the world has adopted the various ways and technique to run their economies smoothly and curb the COVID 19 impact. Work from home is one of the ways designed and implemented in most of the economies in this new normal situations. It supported one side from employer point of view to carry out the necessary corporate/organizational activities on the other hand useful for employees to for their work and home life balance.

Moreover, flexible working hours is another helpful strategy for the corporate sector adopted to meet the requirement of pandemic period. Employees has the opportunity to choose their favorable hours to perform their duties. It gives them opportunity manage their personal and professional life easy.

Recommendations

In the light of results reveled from the research, a few recommendations are derived for the corporate sectors and organizations in Pakistan. They need to be focused on Work from Home Approaches, as these are the best fits strategies to cope up this pandemic i.e. COVID 19. Moreover, the flexible working hours are also valuable and supportive policy may help them to achieve both organizational and employee's goals and objectives simultaneously.

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