



Impact of Work Flexibility on Employee Performance

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Employee flexibility can be studied as a level which shows employee potential in the form of multi-tasking or their ability to work as an all-rounder. Employee flexibility means that a worker that can perform well in different job roles or work in different ways in a single job role. Employees that seem disinterested at work and unsatisfied are not flexible enough. A qualitative method of research has been followed to formulate this study with the assistance of secondary data. This research successfully identifies employee behaviour that is flexible and those employees that can be adjustable if provided with adequate training. However, some labourers are still not productive enough even after going through a trial and error period in an organization.

Key words: *Employee flexibility, behaviour, training, performance, satisfaction.*

Introduction

Overview

Businesses all around the globe are working towards adopting more flexible ways of conducting their firm's operations and hiring those individuals who behave assertively towards the rapid changes an organizations brings. The word flexible refers to the state in which the employee is adaptive by nature and positively behaves towards the challenges the organizational environment brings. Employee flexibility is assessed in order to evaluate and judge performance, on the basis of effectiveness, even through changes are in relation to new directive business procedures (Bhattacharya, Gibson & Doty, 2005). The formulation and implementation of strategies reflects the unique mission of an organization. This formulation of strategies requires seeking expert advice. The attainment of an organization's objectives and formulation of their strategies will have limited benefits unless there is a trait of flexibility in its employees (Das, 1995; Khan & Mohammad 2018). The nature of the



business affects whether employee flexibility is a lagging or leading indicator. Firms that change after the aggregate market has changed are led by the economy. If the aggregate market changes because of the change of one economic factor, this categorises it as a leading indicator, in which that factor is leading the aggregate market. Therefore, alterations that are predictable, and sometimes unexpected, are to be dealt with cautiously by employees. Employee performance can be in direct relation with organizational dynamics or it can react inversely to those changes (Valverde, Tregaskis & 2000).

Change is inevitable and takes place in every aspect of life, and the market is no exception. Because of the ever-changing trends in the market, it is essential for the employees of any organization to be able to adapt themselves to the change in preferences of customers in order to keep pace with the ongoing demands of the market (Eaton, 2003). This issue is exacerbated in this era of digitization as people increasingly want easy and quick ways of fulfilling their desires,. All organizations are supposed to bring about changes while still meeting their customer demands.

It is the duty of employees to display productive behaviour in handling rapid organizational changes; these changes test the employees' capability. Those workers that are satisfied with their job designation and workplace tend to act flexibly and are appreciated by their employers for it. But those employees that are working just to earn a living, or are not satisfied with their lives, or the business environment, are thought to be the ones that create delays in daily operational activities (Majid & Mahmud, 2019; Ahmed & Ogalo, 2019).

The influence of adjustable working hours on employees is taken positively because various social problems can arise which can affect an employee's ability to work, particularly those problems that arise on short notice. Hence, organizations that allow flexibility for employee leave show a level of understanding and further develop good employee relations, which can then lead to stronger employee commitment. The level of involvement of an employee in their job can be determined by evaluating their monthly performance, which is usually done by the human resource department and upper management (Anitha, 2014).

Significance of the study

The aim of this study is to find out the influence of flexibility on the performance of employees. Consideration should be given to how workers react to the changes in their organization (Eaton, 2003). Firms are accustomed to following market trends to fulfil their customers' demands. The idea behind this research is to spread awareness by gathering information on how employees react to innovative organizational dynamics.



Thesis statement

Employees that are flexible in nature are preferred over those who do not adjust to the adaptive environment of business. Some workers consume more time and training to understand and act appropriately in response to changes in the workplace. This behaviour can jeopardize their career if they want to grow as an employee in the future.

Research questions

Following research questions have been formulated in this study:

Research question 1: What is the relationship between flexibility and the performance of employees?

Research question 2: Why do organizations have to bring changes as per the aggregate market?

Research question 3: How can employees be satisfied with organizational dynamics?

Research question 4: To what extent can employees show engagement and compatibility towards flexible organizational objectives and processes?

Methodology

A secondary research method will be utilised in this research, this includes data extracted from distinctive books, internet sources, past research, journal essays and the like. Furthermore, qualitative data is included in this study that is constituted of arguments, opinions and debates brought forward by previous researchers to explain their point of views (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This article is a reflection of the existing subject material of employee flexibility. The research approach that will be used in this research methodology is inductive approach, which is also known as inductive reasoning (Thomas, 2006).

Discussion

Working environment

There are several business criterions that ask employees to follow their mission and management practices in accordance with the company's goals (Patterson, West, Lawthom & Nickell, 1997). When an employee is hired and is witness to organizational operations, they may become aware of various things which they have not comes across previously. Every individual has their own capacity to understand and work according to given instructions. When entering a work place, employees that are of heterogeneous mind sets work together in teams to achieve a common goal. The working environment is comprised of intrinsic factors, including: overall attitude of colleagues, personality of the supervisor, availability of hygiene,



management responsiveness towards queries and problems, process and department integration, communication ability, and compensation (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright & Neuman, 1999).

Internal aspects are important for employees to know, but one of the first thing that females may notice in an organization is the perceived glass ceiling. If female employees are not currently in the roles of director, manager, or CEO, then females will perceive that they have no future growth opportunities with this employer. However, the glass ceiling concept is long gone in most multi-national and local companies, though some are still of the belief that women should not be among an organisation's leaders. Moreover, an organization's past history is also examined by the new employees to see if there are any cases of work place bullying, harassment or molestation (Rayner & Hoel, 1997). There are some small-scale businesses in which both males and females have been the victims of harassment; this negatively impacted their flexibility. A number of these people opened up and voiced their bad experiences but the majority stayed mute (Faraday, 1994).

There are numerous organizations that employ people from diverse backgrounds so that the business can utilize their disparate expertise. There are cases of employees who were responsible for redesigning a business and whose actions ultimately made the organization double its' revenue; the actions of these employees occurred because of the encouragement they received from the business (Lindner, 1998). Bill Gates, who is the founder of Microsoft, had a brilliant mind and created many ideas that he then sold to the company and he is now one of the richest men in the world.

The invention of Enterprise Resource Planning systems changed organizational dynamics and became the latest market trend (Holsapple & Sena, 2005). The existence of SAP, ODOO and Oracle made inter-departmental processes more integrated and error free. The working environment should always be safe and encouraging, workers need reminding that they can accomplish their tasks and have the ability to improve. Ignorance of supervisors, and irritated attitudes shown by senior employees when asked for assistance, highly discourages employees' strength and potential.

Nature of the business

Nature of the business is a term which refers to the origin of a business and its' targets. A business can exist in a variety of forms including: trading, exporting and importing, retailing, exchanging currency, merchandising, textiles, industrial, clothing business, restaurants, manufacturing, marketing, software business, entrepreneurial, small-scale to large-scale, partnership or sole proprietorship, and corporation. Employees may cope differently with the multiple types of businesses (Stacey, 1996). It is up to the organization to assess if its'



operational activities are complex and then enable the managers to provide their employees with proper training, so that they can work well despite the firm's complexities (Svahn, 2004).

It is a business's choice to decide whether they prioritize human rights and the fulfilment of public needs over their bottom line. There are several businesses whose sole motive is to increase their wealth, like Apple, and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, both which earn billions (Turker, 2009). Some businesses that contribute to social welfare or are non-profit generating companies include; American Heart Association, GlobalGiving, Human Rights Watch, The Museum of Modern Art, Equal Justice Initiative, Young Life, Doctors Without Borders, International Rescue Committee, Friends of the Earth, CARE, Food and Water Watch, IKEA, Dell, Walt Disney Company, TOMS, and 3M. These organizations hire employees that are already motivated, willing and experienced so that they can show productivity and may be more motivated as they are working for an ethical cause (Svahn, 2004). Some of these firms that act on social responsibility give value to employee motivation. These firms arrange meetings in which they discuss further strategies and appraise employees for their hard work (Oh & Lewis, 2009).

Adaptability

Meeting organizational challenges requires employees to stay open minded, tensile, approachable, understanding, active, responsive and devoted. If workers do not display these behaviours, then they will not prove to be worthy of hiring. Some people around the world do not have the opportunity to attain higher education, and therefore they lack expertise, but if they are given proper guidance when hired they will be able to adapt to changes and work accordingly (Pulakos, Donovan & Plamondon, 2000). Often people are born with quick learning capabilities and can easily multi-task, therefore, they need adequate guidance to allow them to reach their real potential and show their various skills. However, some employees work for years but do not show any improvement or self-growth, their limitations may be due to the fact that they did not receive appropriate motivation or training (Gouliquer, 2000). In this century, businesses are moving towards digitization and automation of processes. The implementation of ERP led to some serious problems, as employees faced difficulties in learning how to use this system, and employers had to rightly justify the amount of money ERP systems cost. Several years ago, Vodafone Britain struggled with the implementation of ERP in crediting employees' accounts. Similarly, the supply chain of some companies, like Hershey's chocolates, lacked the ability to work under pressure. Hershey's Chocolates had to deliver a big order for Christmas and they were not able to produce in time, this resulted in the delaying of an order that cost them dearly and also lost them some of their loyal customers. Through the implementation of SAP, they were in the process of gradually improving and automating their methods of conduct. Other supply-chain related issues that

were considered by the Delphi study constituted of: flaws in the integration system, on-going changes needed more flexible IT skills, shipments were delayed, and duplication of orders charged excessive finances (Akkermans, Yücesan & Van Wassenhove, 2003).

Satisfaction in work place

Employees that are determined, workaholic and career-focused are the ones who wish to receive promotions in their work place, because they have reached their self-actualization stage as per the Maslow's hierarchy. Maintaining a balance between work-life and social-life is essential for employees, if they deal with complications in managing both then they become dull and less keen towards their duties (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). According to Herzberg's two factor theory, employee satisfaction is hinged upon: recognition, appropriately timing discussion of issues, opportunities for advancement, job security, payment of salaries on time, status, proper supervision, attention, support and appraisal. All in all, developing employee/employer relations gains the workers' trust, commitment to the organization and their persistent behaviour. Enthusiastic employees are highly satisfied with their working environment and are the ones that show real flexibility at work (Griffin & Hesketh, 2003).

Employee performance

Employee performance is directly proportional to employee motivation, it can be measured through the level of contentment the workers display (Svahn, 2004). Some employees are dependent upon an internal locus of control, in which they blame themselves for misconduct or for showing less productivity at work. Other employees place the responsibility of any problem to external factors, this may involve blaming the office surroundings and management. Workers that believe they were responsible for a small business loss or delayed activity, have the capacity to develop their full tenacity by becoming more flexible in terms of facing any hardships at work. Pierce and Newstrom (1983) reported a significant correlation between flexibility and performance of employees.

Training and development

Labourers that have an adaptable nature and learn in less time are more proficient (Griffin & Hesketh, 2003). Proper training is provided to those employees that require it, businesses that are equipped with modern technology are usually among those that set up training sessions for their workers so that the employees can adjust alongside the business environment. Training is a short term process that is done to develop the employees' true talent (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). Organizational dynamics consist of changes that arrive as per the seasonal demands of customers, hence, dealing and managing these alterations influences



the flexibilities of the labourers and affects their commitment (Eaton, 2003). If firms do not bring changes as per customer demand, then their work will be of limited value in the eyes of the consumer. Hence, different organizations are supposed to follow the market dynamics to engage more customer loyalty. There are no contradicting studies conducted in the past that are of the view that the customer demand should be overlooked and not cared for.

Results

This study shows that the impact of flexibility on employees' performance varies in relation with how they perceive organizational challenges. Every individual has distinctive capabilities and it is dependent on them as to that what their appropriate intensity level is with regard to flexibility. Restricted and strict job environments tend to pressurize employees and make them less concerned towards organizational real-time tasks. The above studies have shown that employees are all capable of improvising according to the genre of work they fit in. If they are forced to look after work that is out of their understanding level and calibre, then they will strive to perform well and may end up getting demotivated because of failures. Not every worker is highly educated, but some have more experience than the well-educated, and can outperform them. Free and safe environments are those in which labourers are more satisfied in, tend to evolve in and lead to making them more tenacious. These environments can only exist if proper time is given to employees to settle down and start meeting their deadlines. Eventually, all employees will show an ounce of improvement in the end. Those that are still dull and irresponsible, are the ones that are not interested in work or their job role.

Conclusion

This study facilitates readers, and other research analysts, to grasp a better understanding of the ways hurdles in employees' growth are created, so that they future research can be done on the steps that can be taken to prevent the existence of these obstacles and assist employees in becoming highly qualified professionals. A worker's actual performance can only be judged by considering all of the aspects related to their employment which constitutes of; job security, compensation benefits, house loans, and health insurance. We must not simply develop an opinion of an employee by how much productivity they show, but the reasons behind them not displaying efficiency in the organization should also be evaluated (Lindner, 1998).



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