
THE EFFECTS OF SCHEDULE MODIFICATIONS ON BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND LIFE

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ABSTRACT

"Adjustable work arrangements" are an important component of innovative organizations' ecosystem. The number of companies providing flexible work arrangements to their staff has skyrocketed. Flexible work arrangements include a number of elements that both separately and collectively contribute to raising employees' standard of living. The work-life balance of employees is considerably enhanced by the perks offered by flexible work arrangements.

KEYWORDS: Benefits, Work-Life Balance, Stress, Wellbeing, Flexible Work arrangements

INTRODUCTION

"Flexible work arrangements" are something that many companies offer to their staff [1]. According to academics, flexible work arrangements help workers reconcile their personal and professional lives [2, 3, and 4]. This essay will break down "flexible work arrangements" into its constituent parts and try to determine how each affects workers' ability to balance work and personal obligations. An inference about the overall influence of "flexible work arrangements" on employees' "work-life balance" will be made in the conclusion.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGMENTS

"Adjustable work arrangements" mean an employee's ability to change the schedule and place of his work shift. It also entails flexi-time working, compressed working hours, job sharing, sabbaticals, telecommuting and childcare provisions [5 and 6]. Each of the arrangement could be used individually; or they can be combined to complement each other [7].

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT COMPONENTS

Flexi-time working empowers employees to decide their check-in and check-out time of their work shifts.

Part-time working is one of the most common types of methods in which employees are agreeing to work less number of hours than the full-time.

Compressed working hours allows employees to work his hours over four days in a week instead of five.

Job-sharing is a mechanism under which two employees having the same job share the job and split the hours so that each one has a part-time position. They also split the remuneration, holidays and fringe benefits.

Sabbaticals allow employees to take career breaks for various purposes.

Telecommuting allows employees to do their job by using information and communication technology without being physically present at the workplace.

Childcare options are a means to help employees' with adequate care of their children when both the parents are at the workplace away from home. This may include crèche facility and day nursery for the children.

BENEFITS FOR THE ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations introduce “flexible work arrangements” as part of their work-life balance policy. Flexible working helps organizations in attracting, recruiting, and retaining highly qualified employees [8]. Flexible working leads to increased productivity, increased profitability, reduced employee turnover and absenteeism rate [9].

BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYEES

The various components of “flexible work arrangements” benefit employees in different ways. **Flexi-time** helps an employee to look after his personal activities without having to take time-off from work. **Compressed working hours** lead to additional free time for the employee during the working week. **Job-sharing** allows employees sufficient time to attend to their personal chores. **Sabbaticals** give employees career breaks and help them achieve work-life balance. **Telecommuting** allows employees to work from their home by using information and communication technology. This helps employees to look after their family and other personal chores. **Childcare** measures extended by employers help their employees achieve work-life balance, particularly in the backdrop of dual earning families. Therefore, all the benefits flowing from different components of the “flexible work arrangements” help employees in achieving work-life balance [10].

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance can be defined as “satisfaction and good functioning both at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict”. Work-life balance is a wide ranging concept involving proper prioritization work and personal life. It is essentially balancing between responsibilities at workplace, family responsibilities and leisure. It is, however, challenging to achieve work-life balance in this unpredictable and rapidly changing world today [11, 12 and 13].

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In the foregoing part of this paper, an attempt has been made to define broad components of “Flexible work arrangements”. However, flexible work arrangements may mean different things to different people. In general, flexibility in one’s work schedule typically depends on the life stage of the person. Employees who ask for flexibility in their work schedules include mothers with young children, people reaching retirement age, but who do not want to quit completely yet, and adults who are caring for their aging parents. People also ask for flexible work schedule who are going through major life change. For example, someone who is dealing with a loss of close family member or someone who is sick and needs accommodations for doctor’s appointments and treatments may need to have a flexible schedule for a short period or indefinitely. The idea of having a flexible work schedule is seen as a positive motivating factor that can lead to increased happiness and overall wellbeing which in turn promotes better work- life balance. It may therefore be fair to infer that implementation of flexible work arrangements have a positive relationship with work-life balance Opportunity for flexible work arrangement influence productivity, performance, job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment on the part of employees [14]. Flexi time give opportunities to the employees to accommodate their personal needs [15].

Part-time working empowers employees to work continuously while increasing their leisure time [16]

In compressed working, the employee can start work early and finish late so that they can build up additional hours and get a leave for a day from the work. This helps an employee enjoy a longer weekend / more time away from work without a reduction in pay. This promotes their mental and physical well being, which in turn leads to work-life balance [17].

In job-sharing, two employees share a job and split the remuneration as well as other fringe benefits proportionately. In case of personal exigencies, either one has the leeway to remain absent from work [18].

In telecommuting, all or part of the duties, tasks and responsibilities of the employees are carried out by them from their home using information and communication technology. It helps employees save on travelling cost and time, allow more flexibility in the working hours and consequently leads to increase in the job satisfaction [19].

WELLBEING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The definition of wellbeing is associated with health and wellness. It may be observed that all components of flexible work arrangements and the benefits for the employees flowing from them lead to physiological and mental wellbeing. Researchers have suggested that physiological and mental wellbeing significantly help to promote work-life balance [20 and 21].

DISCUSSION

Organizations have occasionally implemented flexible work arrangements in an effort to enhance the general well-being of their workforce, which in turn boosts productivity and, ultimately, the profitability of the business. According to research, workplace flexibility gives workers the freedom to decide for themselves how much, when, and where they work—giving them enough time to take care of their personal needs in between work hours. They feel more at ease mentally and are motivated to offer the company their all thanks to this kind of arrangement. Each and every element of a flexible work arrangement helps to meet these human requirements, which improves the employees' work-life balance.

CONCLUSION

This study looked at the connection between work-life balance and flexible work schedules. It demonstrated how flexible work schedules enhance workers' physical and emotional health. Employees that are able to achieve the ideal work-life balance are more productive, dedicated, and devoted to the company. Therefore, it can be concluded that having flexible work arrangements has a favorable effect on employees' life both at work and outside of it. Given the advantages of a positive work-life balance, the business and its employees both stand to gain from the flexible work arrangement strategy.

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