

Executives Perception of the Impact of Flexitime on Organizational Performance: Evidence from the Nigerian Private Sector

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the perception of Nigerian executives on the impact of flexitime on organizational performance. Effort is made to explore the attitudinal disposition of employees towards flexitime and how gender affects employee satisfaction with flexitime. The study, based on administered questionnaires as the main medium for data collection from managers in private sector of the Nigerian economy, utilizes correlations and multi-variate regression analysis to determine variables that significantly contribute to manager's satisfaction with flexible work arrangement. The study finds that marital status and gender exert significant negative impact on level of satisfaction with flexitime. In addition, gender, marital status and motivation capabilities of flexitime were found to be a significant determinant of satisfaction with flexitime. Therefore, given the cultural context of the study it does appear that organizations might find it profitable to adopt a flexitime policy so as to relieve their employees some family or domestic burden with the attendant motivation benefit that increases employee performances.

Keywords: Flexitime, Organizational Performance, Private Sector, Satisfaction, Work Life

INTRODUCTION

The design and maintenance of an environment in which people working together to achieve organizational goals can operate effectively and efficiently toward the achievement of group goal is of central interest in the management of people. Human resources management, as we

have come to understand, is responsible for the recruitment, selection and maintenance of right number and caliber of personnel and condition required for the pursuit of organization goal. It plays a pivotal role in the task of securing contributions and fusion of the varied capacities and powers of individuals employed in organization into effective work team with high productivity. Indeed, the major aim of human resource management is to ensure that organizations are able

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to achieve success through people (Armstrong, 2006). It does this by building stock of human capital that is supportive of organizational goal or mission; and this has become one critical area in which Human Resource Management is mainly interested and focused.

Human capital represents the human factor in the organization: the combination of intelligence, skills and expertise that determines the distinctive character of the organization. The human elements are the only resource of the organization that are capable of learning, changing, innovating and providing the creative thrust which if properly harnessed can ensure the long term survival of the organization (Bontis, Dragonetti, Jacobsen, & Roos, 1999). According to Abiodun (2009), the human element is the most resourceful, dynamic and complex of business resources and is responsible for framing the business pattern of resource acquisition, allocation and utilization. Consequently, the management of human resources, their capacities and contributions has far reaching implications for organizational performance and prosperity.

The capacities of the human element require that management design work environment that facilitates the free emission of productive energy. It is compelling to reason that management ability to harness and direct such productive energy to the achievement of organizational mission and goal will be enhanced by a work arrangement that recognizes the freedom of the human element in the work environment. Flexible working arrangement which permits employees some degree of freedom in choice of duty resumption time is one of such strategies that have potentials of freeing employees' productive energy to goal directed actions. The assumption is that if employees have reasonable freedom in terms of work commencement and finish times, he would have a sense of belonging to contribute and remain in the organization. Besides, integrating employees' interest and need with the organizations' needs hold a promise of enhancing management abilities to making the employees go to work willingly and enthusiastically and performing assigned tasks

creatively. According to Cole (1996) harmonization of organizations and individual goals will yield cooperative rather than defensive or antagonistic behaviours. However, achieving this desirable state has become a daunting task in employee management. The problem is compounded by the increasing levels of education of employees, advances in technology, gender diversity of the workforce and the power of the labour unions. Therefore one of the strategies intensely favoured for stimulating performance, appeasing employees and union apathy and for retention of organizations' capable employee in modern man-management is the flexitime arrangement.

Flexible work arrangement has time and employees' liberty as key variables of interest. It is often said that time plays a key role in the employment relations and in labour market studies time is often related to pay. Working hours has been a controversial issue among employees, unions and employers. While employees and their unions aspire for reduction in work hours, employers resist these aspirations. Admittedly, the interests of employers, employees and union may be difficult to be perfectly married but the concept of flexitime seems to be a human resource solution to alleviate this incompatibility of interests. It is attractive to posit that the concept of flexitime in organizations could increase the efficiency of employees and organizational performance.

However, with reference to history, flexitime programme was first introduced in America in the 1970s (Kim & Campagna, 1981). The assumption of work practice under which employees are able to choose their own work hours is that organizational performance is affected positively and employees have a sense of freedom of choice in determination of work hours. Notwithstanding the potential impact of flexitime on performance and the evident performance problems of organizations in most developing economy as evidenced by their inability to convert their resources to a thriving ventures or improving their output there have been scanty attempts at linking flexitime with performance in literatures from developing

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