

The Impact of Flexible Working Hours on Employee Productivity in The Private Sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

تأثير ساعات العمل المرنة على إنتاجية الموظفين في القطاع الخاص
بجدة، المملكة العربية السعودية

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Graduation Project – 1

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Chapter One

General Framework of The Study

1.1 Introduction

Research on project management has made a significant contribution towards the comprehension and improvement of various organizational operations. One specific area of interest in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, is the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity. This study aims to determine whether the introduction of flexible working hour policies has an effect on the performance levels of employees in private sector organizations in Jeddah.

The concept of flexible working hours has become a prominent factor in the corporate world, with organizations willing to maximize their employees' satisfaction, work-life balance, and boost productivity (Abid, S., & Barech, D. K. 2017). In Jeddah a key business center in Saudi Arabia companies from the private sector have started considering flexible work arrangements as an incentive for their employees to stay. Nevertheless, the actual influence of these policies on employees' efficiency continues to be controversial and calls for deeper analysis.

Technological progress and employees' demands have resulted in the transformation of work areas, forcing them to become more flexible in terms of schedules (Abdul Rahim, 2023). Although the effects of flexible working hours are widely explored and recognized, it is still necessary to study how these policies can bring about actual changes that will help improve employee performance, specifically in Jeddah's private sector.

It is true that the literature available on project management enlightens the practices of making changes in an organization and their impact on workers' performance. It can be noted from other research done on whether productivity is increased by having flexible working hours that this study has a good foundation since it discusses positive outcomes that come with flexible hours and also negative outcomes.

Though the interest in alternative working arrangements is increasing, limited

comprehensive research has specifically focused on this issue within Jeddah private sector. For the most part, existing researches generalize findings from other areas or sectors without considering the particularities of the local business environment and own culture that influence effectiveness of flexible working hour policies.

This study targets private sector organizations in Jeddah who want to optimize their workforce productivity via innovative HR practices. The gap in literature will be addressed with an aim of providing empirical evidence regarding how flexible working hours can impact employee productivity hence giving a direction for organizational leaders, HR professionals and policy makers in Saudi Arabia (Lazer, R. I. 1980).

The primary purpose of this proposed study is to examine the relationship between flexible working hours and employee productivity in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. By conducting a thorough investigation and analysis, this research seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge base, inform strategic decision-making within organizations, and promote a culture of continuous improvement in workplace practices.

1.2 Research Problem

The research problem addressed in this study focuses on understanding the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity within the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. While the concept of flexible work arrangements is gaining traction globally, there is a need to explore how the implementation of such policies specifically influences productivity levels in the context of Jeddah's business environment.

1.2.1 Theoretical Gaps

Existing literature provides insights into the potential benefits of flexible working hours in enhancing employee satisfaction and work-life balance. However, there is a theoretical gap in understanding the direct relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee productivity, particularly within the private sector in Jeddah. This research aims to bridge

this theoretical gap by investigating the specific effects of flexible working hours on productivity outcomes.

1.2.2 Empirical Gap

Despite the increasing interest in flexible working practices, there is a notable empirical gap in research focusing on the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Limited empirical studies have examined how flexible working hours impact employee productivity in this specific context, highlighting the need for empirical evidence to guide organizational decision-making and policy development.

The main research question driving this study is:

"How does the implementation of flexible working hours policies influence the productivity levels of employees within private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?"

1.3 Research Significance

This study's dual significance lies in its potential to advance theoretical understanding of the relationship between flexible work arrangements and productivity while also offering practical implications for organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. By shedding light on this important topic, the research aims to contribute to both academia and the real-world context, ultimately benefiting organizational performance and employee well-being in the private sector of Jeddah (John, W. 2017).

1.3.1 Theoretical Significance

This study holds theoretical significance by addressing the gap in the existing literature concerning the direct relationship between flexible working hours and employee productivity within the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. While previous research has explored the benefits of flexible work arrangements on employee satisfaction and work-life balance, there remains a lack of understanding regarding how these policies specifically

impact productivity outcomes. By investigating this relationship, this research aims to contribute to theoretical knowledge by providing insights into the effects of flexible working hours on productivity levels, filling a critical gap in the literature (Lewis, S. 2003).

1.3.2 Empirical Significance

In addition to its theoretical contributions, this study also carries empirical significance by addressing the lack of empirical research on the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity within the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. With limited studies focusing on this specific context, there is a clear need for empirical evidence to guide organizational decision-making and policy development in Jeddah's business environment. By examining how the implementation of flexible working hour policies influences productivity levels, this research aims to provide practical insights that can inform organizational practices and enhance workforce management strategies in the private sector of Jeddah (Qarni, H. 2022).

1.4 Research Questions

The main research question driving this study is:

"How does the implementation of flexible working hours policies influence the productivity levels of employees within private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?"

Sub-Question 1: How do flexible working hours policies affect employee satisfaction levels in private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

Sub-Question 2: What are the expected benefits of implementing flexible working hours policies for employees in private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

Sub-Question 3: What are the challenges expected from implementing flexible working hours policies for employees in private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

Sub-Question 4: What strategies can be implemented in private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to evaluate the impact of flexible working hours policies on the level of employee productivity?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. Studying the impact of the flexible working hours system on employee productivity in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
2. Identify the expected benefits to implement flexible working hours of employees in private sector organizations in Jeddah Saudi Arabia.
3. Exploring the expected challenges of implementing flexible working hours policies for employees in private sector organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
4. Evaluating the effectiveness of implementing the flexible working hours system on employee productivity in private sector institutions in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

Through reviewing previous studies and literature, these hypotheses were predicted:

Main hypothesis H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between the implementation of flexible working hours policies and employee productivity (Abid, S., & Barech, D. K. 2017).

The first sub-hypothesis Ha: There is a positive, statistically significant relationship with increasing employee productivity through implementing a flexible working hours system (Schein, V. E., Maurer, E. H., & Novak, J. F. 1977).

The second sub-hypothesis Hb: There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between implementing the flexible working hours system and employee satisfaction (Orpen, C. 1981).

1.7 Research Model

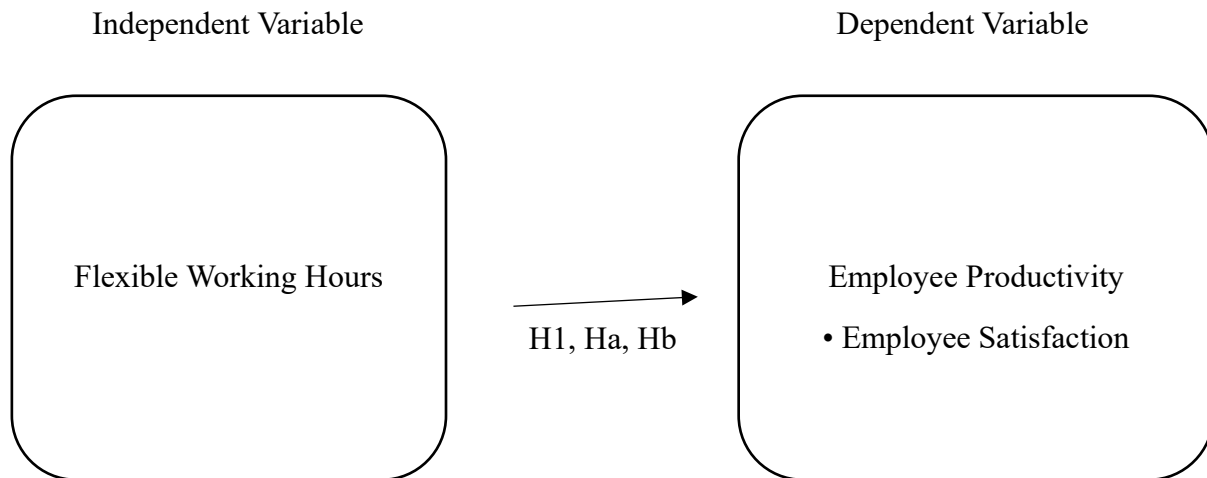


Figure 1: Suggested Research Model, Designed by Researcher

1.8 Research Methodology

1. Research Philosophy: Positivist
2. Research Approach: Deductive
3. Research Strategy: Survey

4. Research Choice: Quantitative
5. Time Horizon: Cross-sectional
6. Data Collection and Analysis Techniques: Questionnaires

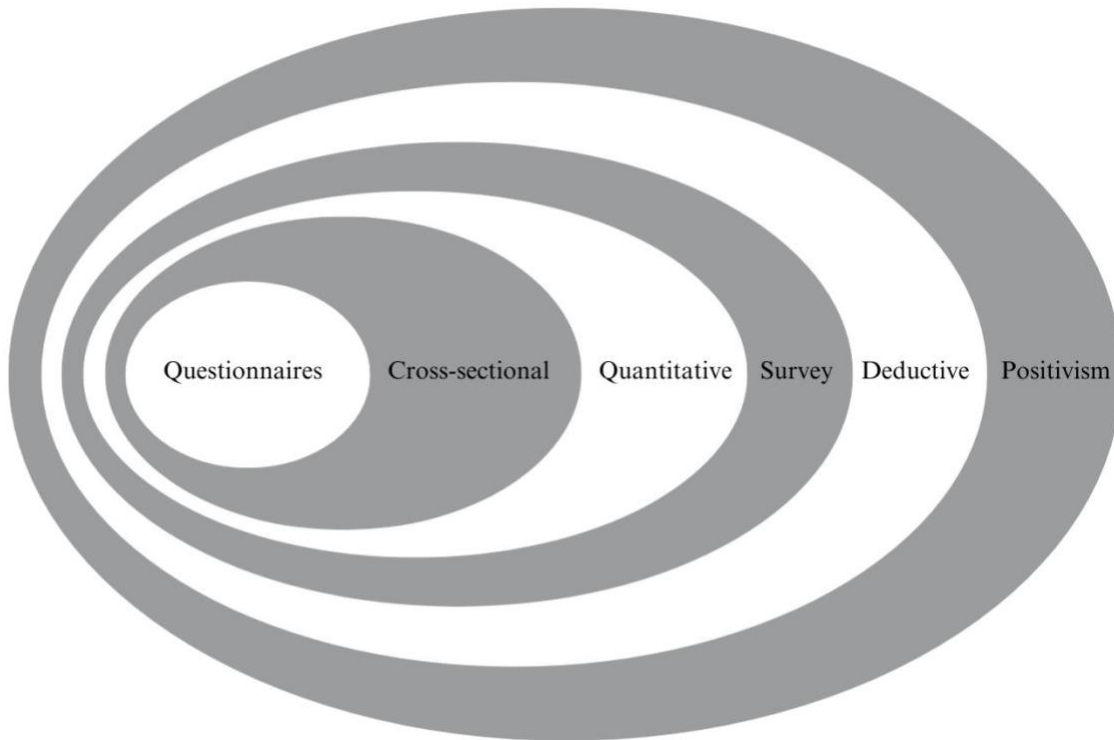


Figure 2: Research Methodology, Designed by Researcher

1.9 Empirical Study

This field study aims to explore the impact of flexible working hours on the productivity of employees in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This topic is of great importance given the recent developments in the labor market and the need to balance personal and work life. The study will include an analysis of past experiences and scientific research related to flexible working hours and their impact on employee productivity. Data will also be collected from employees in the private sector in Jeddah through questionnaires to find out

their opinions and experiences on the subject. Through this study, I hope to provide effective recommendations to companies and institutions in Jeddah to improve working hours policies and increase the productivity of their employees.

1.10 Suggested Project Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The concept of flexible working hours has received great attention in recent years, especially in the context of enhancing employee productivity in the private sector. This literature review aims to explore the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. By examining previous research studies, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how flexible work hours impact employee performance and overall organizational outcomes.

The potential benefits of implementing flexible working hours such as increased job satisfaction, work-life balance, and employee retention have been highlighted in previous studies. Understanding the results of these studies is crucial for organizations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, as they consider implementing or modifying their policies related to flexible work arrangements by drawing on existing research. The literature review aims to contribute to the current knowledge base and provide practical insights for organizations seeking to Enhancing employee productivity through flexible working hours.

The main variables that will be explored in this literature review are flexible working hours and employee productivity. Flexible work hours refer to the ability of employees to adjust their work schedules to better suit their personal needs and preferences. Employee productivity includes various factors such as task performance, efficiency and job satisfaction. Therefore, by examining the relationship between variables, this review aims to provide a deeper understanding of how flexible working hours affect employee productivity in the private sector in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

2.2 Research Variable 1: Flexible Working Hours

Flexible working hours refer to a work arrangement where employees have the flexibility to determine their start and end times for work within a certain range of hours. This arrangement allows employees to adjust their work schedules to better suit their personal needs, such as family responsibilities, commuting constraints, or personal preferences.

Flexible working hours can contribute to improved work-life balance, increased job satisfaction, and potentially higher productivity levels (Felstead, A., Jewson, N., Phizacklea, A., & Walters, S. 2002).

Flexible working hours system is an approach that allows employees to adjust their work schedules and locations to better suit their personal needs and preferences, which can lead to various positive outcomes such as improved productivity, morale, work-life balance, and employee wellbeing (Elbing, A., Gadon, H., & Gordon, J. 1974).

Flextime (also spelled flexitime (BE) or flex-time) is a flexible hour's schedule that allows workers to alter their workday and decid /adjust their start and finish times (Gariety, B. S., & Shaffer, S. 2001).

Flexible working hours refer to the incorporation of arrangements that modify the timing and location of work (In, Sik, Kim. 2022).

It is also known by the term “Flexible Work” and was defined by the Central Research Administration of the Central Organization for Organization and Administration as “it is an optional system that allows workers to determine the time in which they will work, whether specifying days - or specifying its hours or working times, provided that they adhere to the number of working hours in accordance with the law, so that it is not less than 35.” One hour and no more than 42 working hours per week” (Tawfiq, D. A., & Doaa Ahmed 2021).

The flexible working hours system has evolved significantly over the years:

In the 1960s, the idea came from German management consultant, Christel Kammerer in West Germany (1960). It was first implemented by German Aerospace firm, Messerschmitt-Boklow-Blohm in 1967. It was not until the 1970's that FWA practices began in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Stanley, A. 1995).

There was interest in the idea of providing flexibility in working hours, so some began researching the importance and how to enable employees to determine their working hours based on their needs and what suits them.

Then some leading companies began implementing a flexible working hours system and gave their employees the ability to determine their working hours flexibly.

Governments have also begun to pass laws that encourage the implementation of a flexible working hours system in order to improve the quality of life of employees and workers, which reflects increased productivity.

Currently, in recent years, with technical development and the emergence of new jobs that can adapt to the flexible working hours system, there has become what is called remote work, which allows the system to be implemented, as companies and institutions have begun to adopt the flexible working hours system for some jobs that allow this, and this is to increase job satisfaction and improve their quality of life, and thus is reflected in increased productivity (Hill, E. J., Erickson, J. J., Holmes, E. K., & Ferris, M. 2010).

The flexible working hours system has several dimensions, including:

Communication: Effective communication between employees and managers helps the success of the flexible working hours system whether it is via email, instant chat or video meetings.

Location: Employees can work from anywhere they choose whether from home, café, shared office or while traveling, increasing the flexibility of job sites.

Time: The system allows employees to set the appropriate working periods for them, thus enhancing their work-life balance and improving the quality of life.

Tasks: The flexible working hours system allows employees to arrange and perform tasks due to their importance and according to their personal abilities and priorities.

These dimensions all work together to enhance the efficiency and flexibility of the company and benefit from technical development, as well as to enhance employee productivity and job satisfaction.

Many theories regarding flexible working hours have been mentioned in previous studies. Some of these theories include:

1. Theory of the impact of working hours on productivity and corporate performance: Allowing workers to set their working hours based on times that are convenient for them may lead to increased productivity and efficiency.
2. Personal and professional life balance theory: Flexibility in working hours can help achieve a better balance between one's personal life and professional life leading to employee satisfaction and improved performance.
3. Health and well-being theory: Flexible working hours can reduce stress and increase stress in employees leading to improved health and psychological state being more balanced and raising their well-being.

There are many theories regarding the flexible working hours system and these are some of them to help us know the benefits and impact of the implementation of the flexible working hours system on employees and companies.

Table 1: Advantages of implementing a flexible work system

جدول رقم (١٣) إيجابيات تطبيق نظام العمل المرن (ن=٢٣٠)

الترتيب	الانحراف المعياري	المتوسط الحسابي	العبارات
١	1.424	3.12	١ حرية العامل في اختيار ساعات عمله.
٢	1.283	3.06	٢ يخلق بيئة محفزة للعمل.
٣	1.368	2.72	٣ ارتفاع الرضا الوظيفي لدى العامل.
٤	1.248	2.65	٤ ارتفاع مستوى الأداء الوظيفي للعاملين.
٥	1.199	2.47	٥ تجنب تأخر العاملين.
٦	1.231	2.46	٦ يخفف التزامات صاحب العمل تجاه العاملين.
٧	1.235	2.49	٧ عدم التعرض لمشكلات المواصلات.
٨	1.235	2.50	٨ تدريب العامل لأداء مهام متنوعة؛ ليتمكن العامل من تانية عمل زميله في حال خروجه.
٩	1.270	2.94	٩ قدرة العامل على التوفيق بين مهامه الشخصية ومهام العمل.
١٠	1.215	2.89	١٠ توفير عمالة وقت المواسم.
١١	1.353	2.31	١١ يقلل ضغط العمل.

مجلة كلية التربية- جامعة عين شمس (٢٩٤) العدد السابع والعشرون (الجزء الثالث) ٢٠٢١

الترتيب	الانحراف المعياري	المتوسط الحسابي	العبارات
١٢	1.488	2.83	١٢ انخفاض معدل الاختناقات المرورية.
١٣	1.323	2.17	١٣ تعزيز ثقة العامل بجهة العمل.
١٤	1.214	2.13	١٤ قيام العامل بواجبه تجاه أسرته.
١٥	1.362	2.36	١٥ العمل عن طريق التناوب بما يؤدي لاستمرار العمل.
١٦	1.267	2.53	١٦ يساعد على الاستفادة من ذوي الخبرات الذين يصعب عليهم العمل طوال الوقت.
١٧	1.266	2.71	١٧ يوفر مصدر دخل إضافي.

Designed by: (Tawfiq, D. A., & Doaa Ahmed 2021).

Table 2: Showing the increased willingness to work on flexible working hours for female and male employees.

Table 2 Flexible working patterns for employees; United Kingdom; spring quarters 2000 and 2003				
	Women		Men	
	2000	2003	2000	2003
Working pattern				
Flexitime	11	12	8	9
Term-time working	7	8	1	1
Annualised hours	4	5	4	5
Job sharing	1	2	~	~
Nine-day fortnight/four and a half day week	1	1	2	2
Zero hours	1	1	1	1
None of the above	75	73	84	82

Source: Labour Force Survey

~ Less than 0.5 per cent.

Designed by: (Hibbett, A., & Meager, N. 2003).

2.3 Research Variable 2: Employee Productivity

Employee Productivity is the amount of goods and services that a group of workers produce in a given amount of time. It is one of several types of productivity that economists measure. Workforce productivity, often referred to as labor productivity, is a measure for an organisation or company, a process, an industry, or a country.

Productivity is defined as: a term that refers to increasing the productivity of workers due to the “remote work” system’s focus in evaluating the performance of workers on the employee’s productivity to a very large extent instead of focusing on holding the employee accountable for his daily attendance at the workplace (Walter, 2013).

Employee productivity: the number of units produced divided by the number of workers (Qarni, H. 2022).

Employee productivity can evolve through several factors that affect employees, such as:

Apply an effective motivational system such as material rewards or giving thanks and motivating phrases for the achievements made.

Apply methods to time management and task management to employees to improve and increase their productivity.

Encourage effective employee communication with the work team and managers.

The presence of a comfortable and flexible work environment that helps to increase the productivity and efficiency of employees.

Providing continuous training and development to enhance the skills of employees and employees of the organization encourages increased productivity.

This is one of the ways to help develop and raise the efficiency of employee productivity in organizations.

Employee productivity has two dimensions:

Output: Refers to the extent to which the product and outputs are compatible with customer requirements and expectations and includes factors such as materials used in manufacturing, performance, design, speed and effectiveness of customer service, price, and other factors that may affect the customer experience of the product.

It is also considered good performance for user-based quality and the suitability and ability of the product/service to match consumer expectations and requirements (Alouti, 2008).

Production volume: It expresses the amount of production of a product during a certain period of time divided by the number of workers during this period (Babiker, 2007).

There are many theories of employee productivity, including:

Contingency Theory of Motivation:

It is that productivity depends on the compatibility between the individual's internal motivations and the variables of the external environment as well.

Social Motivation Theory:

It is that social relations within the team or organization affect the extent to which employees are motivated to increase the efficiency and efficiency of their productivity.

Expectancy Theory:

When employees believe that increasing their productivity and increasing the effort expended will lead to excellent performance, and thus obtain a desired reward such as a promotion, thanks and appreciation, or obtaining a financial reward, etc.

Achievement Need Theory:

Beliefs that employees work hard when the task is considered a challenge, which increases their desire to excel and succeed.

In short, employee productivity theories provide an understanding of what motivates employees and influences their productivity in the workplace. Some theories also focus on personal needs and individual ambitions, while others focus on environmental and social factors that affect employee behavior. Despite this diversity of theories, we can all use them as tools to improve employee productivity and enhance their performance in various organizations.

Table 3: It is clear from the previous table that there is a statistically significant effect of "remote work" on "productivity Workers.

اختبار الانحدار المتعدد القياس أثر تطبيق العمل عن بعد على إنتاجية العاملين

معامل الانحدار				ملحق النموذج		تحليل التباين			المتغير المستقل
B	الخطأ المعياري	T	مستوى الدلالة	المتغير التابع	معامل الارتباط	معامل التحديد	F	درجة الحرية	مستوى الدلالة
0.336	0.039	18.64	0.000						العمل عن بعد بشكل كلي
0.472	0.024	16.31	0.000	إنتاجية العاملين	0.895	0.82	674.3	37	0.000
0.572	0.23	16.21	0.000						العمل عن بعد عند الطلب

Designed by: (Ahmed, H. Q. 2022).

Table 4: Bibliometric coupling of top 10 countries published in employee productivity.

Table 5: Bibliometric Coupling of the Top 10 Countries Publishing in Employee Productivity.

Rank	Country	P	Citations	Link	Total link strength	Total Cooperation strength
1	United States	58	1264	22	705	12.15%
2	United Kingdom	25	478	19	530	21.2%
3	Australia	14	190	18	632	45.14%
4	India	13	8	13	45	3.46%
5	Canada	10	184	17	279	27.9%
6	Malaysia	10	140	20	325	32.5%
7	Netherlands	9	241	9	70	7.77%
8	Indonesia	8	11	14	109	13.62%
9	Iran	7	20	8	10	1.42%
10	South Africa	7	17	14	132	18.85%

Designed by: (Singh, S., Solkhe, A., & Gautam, P. 2022).

2.4 Relationship between flexible working hours and employee productivity

The impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity is an important and interesting topic that raises many questions and discussions in academic literature and scientific research. Here are some models, contradictions, and gaps that have been studied in previous literature:

Many studies indicate that flexible working hours can lead to increased employee productivity, as employees are able to organize their working times in a way that suits their personal needs, making them more comfortable and satisfied, and thus employees are more effective in performing their tasks. However, there are also studies that indicate that flexible working may lead to distraction and lack of concentration, especially when there is a lack of clarity about expected working hours or when work lacks a strict time structure, which can cause a decrease in the level of employee productivity and negatively affect their performance. the organization.

There are also studies that indicate that flexible working hours can lead to increased job satisfaction and loyalty to the company or organization, while other studies have shown a different effect, as flexible work can lead to a poor relationship between the employee and the manager or employer due to lack of communication and coordination between them, and this may indicate. Some research indicates that flexible working hours increase employee productivity in some fields and industries, such as creative, information technology, and the financial services sector, while other studies show that this effect may not be tangible in traditional industries or those that require direct interaction with customers, such as the retail sector.

In the end, it is possible to know and see how flexible working hours affect employee productivity based on the nature of the work and the requirements of each industry.

The variation in the definition of “flexible work” and its application from one company or organization to another is one of the main gaps in previous research, as its application can differ according to different cultures, contexts and practical fields. Some studies may lack control for other factors that may influence the relationship between flexible working hours and employee productivity, which can lead to inaccurate or impractical conclusions. It appears that the relationship between flexible working hours and employee productivity is complex and affected by several factors, including the nature of work, the culture of the company or organization, and the needs and preferences of employees.

Table 5: Increasing productivity is one of the reasons for implementing a flexible working hours system

جدول (٩) أسباب تطبيق نظام العمل المرن				
الترتيب	الانحراف المعياري	المتوسط الحسابي	العبارات	
١	1.373	3.29	١	تشغيل العاملين ذوى الكفاءة والاحتفاظ بهم
٦	1.416	3.09	٢	كثرة الغياب والخروج أثناء العمل
٢	1.363	3.27	٣	الاجهاد والتعب في العمل .
١٢	1.317	2.40	٤	يساعد على زيادة الانتاجية.
١٣	1.254	2.13	٥	التوفيق بين مهام العمل ومتطلبات الأسرة
٩	1.336	2.88	٦	مواجهة مشكلة كورونا
١١	1.366	2.49	٧	اجتياز الكوارث والأزمات
٥	1.280	3.11	٨	مراعاة الظروف الشخصية للعامل.
١٠	1.340	2.85	٩	مراعاة الظروف الصحية للعاملين
٤	1.202	3.15	١٠	خلق فرص عمل ملائمة للعاملين ذوى الإعاقة المؤهلين للعمل
٨	1.230	2.92	١١	خلق فرص عمل مناسبة للنساء الذين يتولون رعاية أطفالهم وأسرهم.
٣	1.277	3.19	١٢	تغطية النقص الطارئ في العاملين
٧	1.349	2.96	١٣	يواجه الطوارئ لسرعة وسهولة التعاقد بين الطرفين

Designed by: (Tawfiq, D. A., & Doaa Ahmed 2021).

2.5 Conclusion

Based on a review of the previous literature, it is clear that there is a positive impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity and studies show that flexibility in working hours increases the level of satisfaction and balance between personal and work life leading to increased productivity and higher performance rates. However, to ensure maximum benefit from them and avoid potential negative impacts, cultural and organizational considerations must be taken into account when implementing the flexible working hours policy.

Meta-analysis of studies showed that flexible working can provide a wide range of benefits for businesses such as increased performance, productivity and reduced absenteeism. That flexible work can prevent and show many opportunities.

Research on the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity indicates the importance of studying this area more widely in the future. Current research shows that there is a positive effect of flexible working hours on employee productivity, and this system has been adopted by some companies and institutions. But there are still many aspects that have not yet been studied in depth. Among these aspects, it is possible to study the impact of flexible working hours on achieving a balance between personal and work lives among employees, its impact on effective communication between the work team and managers, and knowing the challenges that companies face when implementing the working hours system. Flexible. In addition, future research could focus on finding out how flexible working hours can be better organized to improve and increase employee productivity. Therefore, we can say that there is an urgent need for more research to understand the factors that affect the effectiveness and success of applying flexible working hours in various professional fields and its benefits to employees and companies.

By exploring the impact of flexible working hours on employee productivity, previous research has made important contributions. By studying various factors such as employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and productive organizations, these studies contribute to a deeper understanding of how the flexible working hours system positively affects the productivity results of employees, companies, and institutions. In addition, the results provide valuable guidance to employers, managers, and entrepreneurs who seek to implement effective strategies to enhance productivity. And the well-being and wellbeing of employees in today's work environments.

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