

The Impact of the Application of Flexible Working Hours in the Civil Service on the Performance of Employees: An Empirical Study on the Employees of Employees Jordanian Government Sector

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between flexible working arrangements and employee job satisfaction and work-life balance. The study population consists of all employees of Jordanian government institutions in Irbid, where a stratified random sample of 50 individuals will be selected. The design of this study has a quantitative approach. The data were collected using survey design which is a questionnaire design. Random sampling technique used in this paper. The results confirmed that flexible working arrangements have a positive and significant impact on both employee job satisfaction and work-life balance. However, this paper contributes to providing decision makers and policy makers about the application of flexible working hours to be controls for employees in the civil service and working to implement the articles contained in the constitution to achieve the best performance and work to increase awareness of its flexibility.

Keywords: Flexible Working Hours, Civil Service, Employees Performance, Jordanian Government Sector

Introduction

In light of globalization and its repercussions, it has become necessary to focus on organizational policies in contemporary administrative processes, as there have been technological, political and economic developments that must be kept pace and coexist with them, as organizational policies are

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one of the most important entrances to administrative planning to face the continuous change in the business environment. Where modern regulations have become necessary in order to adopt regulatory policies that carry expertise, boldness and efficiency in decision-making. While government departments are a symbol of upgrading the level of services provided to citizens, the performance of employees is of great importance in the quality of those services, which contributes to the success of institutions and countries.

Whereas, the improvement in the productive efficiency of the individual leads to a higher wage, and thus increases his monthly income and raises his standard of living. This also leads to lower costs for enterprises and thus lowers product prices, enhances their competitive position, and ultimately increases profits. As for society, this leads to a rise in production efficiency, an increase in the volume of production and a reduction in prices, and consequently a higher standard of living for the people of society in general. From this point of view, many countries and their institutions are now aware of the importance of increasing productivity with creativity in their work in order to progress in their projects and their economy, and are working hard to provide all That is new in the era of modern technologies to speed up its business, facilitate the activities of its institutions, and use smart devices, robots and artificial intelligence when needed. In addition, governments stand behind their institutions and companies to develop their production capabilities to achieve more innovations, which drive the growth of employee performance.

Given the importance of productivity, the application of flexible working hours has been included in the civil service, which is based on giving employees the freedom to choose daily working hours according to operational needs and management approval. It can be flexible to whoever chooses it.

The government also indicated that it will allow civil servants to choose the start time of the official working hours, under the name of flexible working hours, and it will allow them to work part-time as well as work remotely, and these instructions have been published. In the Official Gazette, under the title Flexible Working Hours in the Civil Service for 2018, in accordance with Clause (3) of Paragraph (C) of Article (96) of the Civil Service Law No. (82) Of 2013, this is called "Flexible Working Hours in the Civil Service" for 2018" (the Constitution, 2018).

Where it became necessary to research the application of flexible working hours in the civil service to the performance of employees in the Jordanian government sector; this is in order to determine the effectiveness of the application and its impact on employee performance. The problem of the study is crystallized in the following main question: What is the impact of the application of flexible working hours in the civil service on the performance of employees in the Jordanian government sector.

Literature Review

Issa's study (2019) addressed the factors affecting labor productivity, and began by clarifying the concept of labor productivity and explaining its importance. This was followed by an attempt to identify the most important factors that affect labor productivity, as it was found that there is confusion between the factors that affect productivity in general and the factors that affect labor productivity in particular. While the study presented a simplified model that classifies these factors according to the channel of their impact on productivity, this model showed that there are three channels of influence: factors that affect workers' knowledge of work, factors that affect workers' ability to work, as well as factors affecting

workers' desire to work that helped Organizing efforts, programs and plans to improve labor productivity, whether in business organizations or at the state level.

The study of Ibrahim and Salman (2018) aimed to shed light on the impact of organizational commitment on the job performance of the Iraqi insurance company, as it is one of the service companies that provide many services to clients, whether they are internal (working individuals). or external. The applied results showed a significant and positive impact of organizational commitment on job performance, which is evident from its contribution to explaining the total variance of (81.463%), which is a good indicator of the impact of organizational commitment on job performance and the performance of the Iraqi insurance company.

Harrison and Pazi (2017) demonstrate that organizational culture should be an integral factor when considering human resource management strategies. This study presents a conceptual model as a proposal for organizational culture as a supervisor of the relationship between the organization's strategy and human resource management strategies. The results of the study showed that, in addition to the conceptual model, the study made a number of testable suggestions for determining how a company's performance and effectiveness might depend on the correlation between organizational strategy and the use of human resources as a competitive advantage.

Atyani and Abu Salma (2014) conducted a study aimed at identifying the impact of the ethical practices of human resources departments on the satisfaction of workers in cellular communications companies in Jordan. The study concluded that there is a statistically significant effect of ethical practices in all areas practiced by human resources departments on the satisfaction of workers in Communication companies and that the practice of human resources departments of the ethical aspects that are based on the foundations of justice, equality, transparency and integrity in their activities has a great impact on raising morale, which in turn is reflected in the state of job satisfaction.

Al-Rajoudi (2013) pointed out in his study to identify the concept of flexibility in the workplace, by studying the effect of five types of flexible work arrangements on the performance of employees in the information and communication technology sector in the Gaza Strip. The study found that flexible working arrangements had a positive impact on worker productivity with 65.68% of employees rated this component positively. The study recommended that ICT companies educate management and employees about the importance of flexi-time programs and their significant impact on employee productivity. The study also recommended the necessity of supporting a friendly organizational culture and adopting the company's written policies and policies.

The study of Scarna (2011) concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the ethics of the public job and the laws and regulations that govern the work of the ministry. There is a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and commitment to work ethics. While the study recommended the need to tighten laws and procedures related to the application of public office ethics, as well as the need to combat inaction and administrative corruption, because this would motivate employees to bribery and not adhere to public office ethics.

Flexible Work System (Flexible Shift)

Flexible work system (flexible time) is a system in which workers are left free to choose the time to work within the limits of the working hours they commit to daily or weekly, and this degree of freedom varies according to the nature of the work. Work and the level of his job, he may leave complete freedom in some jobs and may benefit in other jobs and may specify a certain period during which some workers

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are obligated to attend according to their working conditions, or all workers in the organization according to the nature of the organization's work, while leaving the freedom to be outside this period to choose workers.

Whereas most employees suffer from functional inflexibility in two ways either by not being able to know when to start and when to end work or by not choosing a location that suits them. Therefore, employers must involve their employees in any decision to adjust time, working conditions and location. When the management of the organization fails to inform the employees of any changes, the company may face a breach of a lawsuit related to the employment contract; which leads to potential employee turnover. (Jo, 2008) endorses the situation at a private university in a northeastern US city, the inability of employees to negotiate flexible working hours has left them quitting - this suggests that implementing flexible work policies could have improved the situation.

Where the Jordanian government allowed employees to work flexible, which is based on the system of determining official working hours, and will allow them to work partially, that is, work remotely. Through this system employees are given a degree of freedom in choosing their daily working hours, according to which the employee chooses the start time and the hour of departure, according to operational needs and management approval, provided that the number of days is. and the end of the working hours set by his department, and the institution also sets the starting hours of the official working hours and the hours that can be flexible for whomever so chooses.

Part-time: Reducing the number of official working days and hours from the number of days and hours specified for the department, provided that it is not less than (21) actual working hours per week. Through the applications of modern technology or personally handed over to the department (Al-Humaisat, 2018).

While Al-Shweika (2018) confirmed the issuance in the Official Gazette of all the instructions for flexible working hours in the civil service for the year 2018. The instructions were received from the system issued under Clause (3) of Paragraph (C) of Article (96) of Civil Service Law No. (82) for the year 2013:

Article 1: which deals with the instructions for flexible working hours in the civil service for the year 2018.

Article 2: (a) Provided that the following words and phrases, wherever they appear in these instructions, have the meanings assigned to them below, unless the context indicates otherwise:

The system: the civil service system.

Flexible working hours: The employee chooses the time to start the official working hours as determined by the department, provided that he completes the prescribed number of days and hours stipulated in Article (96) of the system.

Part-time: Reducing the number of official working days and hours from the number of days and hours specified for the department, provided that it is not less than (21) actual working hours per week.

Remote work: Work outside the department's offices, whether from home or towards it, so that the job tasks required to be performed through modern technology applications are delivered or delivered personally to the department.

Article 4: (A) The Civil Service Council, upon the recommendation of the competent minister, applies the provisions of part-time work and remote work to departments that require the nature of their work, sectoral activity, geographical distribution, or work interest in them. That during the first year of their approval, and they may extend their work after the expiry of this period for the period it deems appropriate.

B- For the purposes of implementing the provisions of Paragraph (a) of this Article, the Planning, Coordination and Follow-up Committee formed in the department determines the jobs that these instructions may include, taking into account the compatibility between the requirements of the service recipient and the nature of the work of the department to ensure that the service is not interrupted and the jobs that constitute an integrated circuit.

Article 5: With the exception of remote work, the department concerned with human resources management must follow up on the working hours of the employees covered by these instructions, and submit periodic reports in this regard to the competent reference.

Article 6: The employee covered by the provisions of these instructions is obligated to attend his place of work if the interest of the work requires his attendance at any time determined by the department.

Article 7: A. The Secretary General may approve setting the start and end times for the employee who wishes to benefit from flexible working hours based on the recommendation of the HR unit official in the department and upon a written request from the employee.

B- A part-time employee is allowed by a decision of the Secretary-General based on the placement of the head of the human resources unit in the department based on a written request from the employee and the approval of the references related to the administrative work in which the employee works.

Article 8: (A) An employee may benefit from part-time work for a period of not less than six months per year during the period from 1/2 to 12/30 of each year (B) An employee covered by the provisions of part-time may not work in any other department.

Article 9: (A) The financial rights of the employee covered by the part-time provisions are calculated according to the following equation:

Gross salary + housing allowance + transportation allowance and transportation allowance (140 hours per month) x the total number of part-time hours per month.

Article 10: The following shall not apply to the employee covered by the part-time provisions:

A- Working according to the concept of overtime.

B - Provisions for promotion and competition for leadership or supervisory positions.

C- Compete for the Excellence Awards mentioned in the Law or obtain any of the incentives prescribed under it, if in both cases he has not spent an actual period of service of at least eight months in the year

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in which the Department received the award or for the purposes of benefiting from the incentives prescribed under the articles 30, 31, 32, 34 and 35 of the system.

D- Candidacy for any course or mission.

e- Private and personal departures, with the exception of justified departures, and with no more than two departures per month, for a maximum period of (4) hours for each departure. If a single departure exceeds the period specified for it, an annual leave is calculated.

Article 11: (A) The employee covered by the part-time provisions shall be entitled to his annual leave as a percentage of the annual leaves prescribed for him according to the following equation:

$$\frac{\textit{Total part – time working hours per year}}{\textit{Total annual working hours}} \\ = \textit{The result x the number of vacation days granted to the employee under the system}$$

Work Ethics

Business ethics depend on human behavior to know what is right and what is wrong and what are the standards and rules that govern this behavior, and they make considerations when applying ethics in business that are summed up in a balance between profits and the needs of society, and it cannot succeed without achieving this balance (Abu Juma, 2002).

Ethics, good conduct and behavior are among the most important things which the Service Regulations emphasize as a condition of hiring employees. In light of this, whoever holds a public office or otherwise is required to be morally and ethically sound to carry out his duties and exercise his authority. The general public, as each job has its own professional and ethical rules to which the employee is bound.

Work ethics studies human actions in terms of their conformity with the required duty. With the increase in the number of universities in Jordan and the high rate of enrollment in Jordanian universities, we find that working to develop a system of work ethics in universities or government departments represents the ideal and the right beacon in administrative and professional commitment (Mahmoud, 2005).

Business organizations suffer from fears of instability in their work environment, which results in the lack of full employment of production elements, and among the most important reasons that contribute to poor productivity, is the lack of awareness of the importance of the concept of work ethics and social communication between the levels of management and work in the organization, and published studies indicate that 80% of workers lose their jobs in the United States due to poor work ethic, and this reflects the extent to which the rules of ethics affect not only the level of business institutions, but also the economy as a whole.

Structures, policies, systems, a set of ethical principles, reward systems, testing and training constitute one of the forces that contribute to the formation of management ethics, which would counter behavior in a particular direction, and that each system of the organization has a special influence on the nature of employee behavior, and in all these influences a force is generated that pulls behavior and push it in the direction that may strengthen or weaken the work of management ethics, and because of the abundance of these. Systems, for which it is not possible to expand the narrative of their influence in a

broader way, the impact of the field for other studies or research that is uniquely covered (Qorari and Sophie, 2015).

The reason for the decline in ethics at work according to (Daoud, 2016) is due to three reasons: first, ideological pollution, intellectual pollution, and value pollution.

Staff Performance

The concept of productivity generally refers to the ratio of output to input. Inputs include production costs, labor hours, equipment and machinery costs, and outputs include market share, income, and sales, and although the term productivity may vary according to the type of activity, it is always related to the quantity or value of resources used in the production of those services or goods. Expressing productivity by the following equation: (Salah Abdel-Baqi: 2000: 20).

Productivity = input/output

High productivity means more production with the same amount of resources. There are several factors that control productivity improvement, and they can be divided into two main groups, endogenous factors and endogenous factors.

External factors are those which are outside the control of the enterprise alone, while internal factors are those which are within the control of the enterprise.

There are many factors that control the development and improvement of productivity, some of which are outside the control of the organization, and others within the organization can be dealt with, and among the entrances that organizations can use to improve the level of productivity is what is at the level of the organization as a whole, such as process re-engineering, or reducing the size of employment , including at the level of individuals, so that the benefit is to increase the capacity of individuals and their desire to work, here it is necessary to determine productivity improvement and productivity entrances (Mustafa Abu Bakr: 2006), which is the optimal use of production elements in order to achieve the largest possible amount of production at a certain level and in given time as little as possible cost.

Productivity is a major and governing variable for social progress, real economic growth, and improvement in the standard of living of a country. Productivity determines how competitive international products are, both internationally and at home. The productivity of a country is lower compared to the productivity of other countries that produce the same commodity. This country produces a third of the commodity at a high cost, and as the cost of production continues to rise, we find that this country loses its sales, and customers turn to sellers at the lowest cost. This measure leads to a reduction in the real income of these countries and leads to a rise in the costs of imported goods and increases the level of imbalance and inflation in the balance of payments, in addition to the deterioration of growth rates and high levels of unemployment in these countries. (Abdul Baqi: 2000)

Based on the literature, this paper suggests the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a statistically significant effect on the level of application of flexible working hours in the civil service on the performance of workers in the Jordanian government sector.

H2: The response of employees in the government sector to the application of flexible working hours.

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Study Methodology

The descriptive-analytical approach will be relied on in this study, an approach that relies on scientific analysis of scientific sources from research and applied studies. The descriptive-analytical approach is the one most appropriate to the nature of the current study; It allows to test a number of questions and hypotheses that describe the nature of the relationships between the variables of the study, through the survey method; Where it allows comparison, interpretation and evaluation to reach purposeful generalizations that increase the balance of knowledge about the topic, and it studies an existing phenomenon or issue from which information can be obtained that answers the study questions without the intervention of the researcher in it (Dalen, 1994: 64). Quantitative methods (statistical tools and tests) will also be used to analyze the data. While the theoretical primary data (secondary data) published in books and scientific references, and previous research and studies conducted in the field of determining the factors that affect flexibility in the civil service, as well as the performance of employees will be used.

Study population and sample

The study population consists of all employees of Jordanian government institutions in the city of Irbid, where a stratified random sample of 50 individuals will be selected.

Information gathering sources

The questionnaire will be relied upon as the main tool for data collection in the current study, in line with the quantitative design of the study and the survey strategy followed, and the questions were arranged in proportion to the study's objectives and questions. Scientific, years of experience. As for the second part of the questionnaire, it consists of two main axes, explained as follows: the flexible work axis (7 paragraphs), and the employee's performance axis (7 paragraphs).

Where the paragraphs of the questionnaire will be judged by a group of faculty members at Yarmouk University who are specialists and have sufficient knowledge of flexible working hours in the civil service, as well as productivity, and the researcher will apply the survey to random layers of the study population sample.

The questionnaire in its final form consists of (14) items, where the Likert scale will be used for quantitative analysis and measurement of responses to the study axes, which contains a set of five categories designed to obtain preliminary information from the respondents. Likert scale is one of the methods used in research and quantitative studies, as it represents the measurement of study variables in statistical tests based on questionnaires based on the opinions of the study sample members, and the scale contains answers indicating the degree of agreement or objection. to a formula (Hunter and Leahey, 2008: 78).

Hypothesis testing

In assessing the measurement model. Researchers must examines five criteria that are the factor loading (FL) (>0.70) as well as the reliabilities (Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite reliability (CR) both >0.70). In addition, the validities such as the convergent validity which is achieved if the average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.50 and the discriminant validity which is achieved if the root square of AVE is greater than the cross loading. In Table 1, it can be seen that all the criteria has been

achieved indicating that the measurement of this study is reliable as well as valid. Some of the items were removed due to low factor loading.

TABLE 1: FACTOR LOADING, CRONBACH'S ALPHA, COMPOSITE RELIABILITY, AND AVE

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)>0.70	Composite Reliability (CR)>0.70	AVE >0.50
Flexible working hours	0.918	0.938	0.752
Staff performance	0.924	0.940	0.725
Staff response	0.922	0.939	0.720

Structural Model and hypotheses testing

The evaluation of structural model was conducted by assessing the r-square, q-square, and F-square. The r-square value accounted to 0.55 indicating that 55% of the variation in BI can be explained using the variables of this study. Further, the qsquare showed value greater than zero indicating that there is a productivity of the variables toward BI. Effect size of all the variable is acceptable. This study developed seven direct effect hypotheses. Table 2 presents the result of direct effect hypotheses. The table shows the path of the hypothesis, path coefficient (β), standard deviation (STDEV), T-values, and Pvalues.

TABLE 2: RESULTS OF DIRECT HYPOTHESES

Path	β	Stdev	T-values	P-values
Flexible working hours	0.28	0.04	7.69	0.00
Staff performance	0.15	0.04	4.00	0.00
Staff response	0.23	0.04	5.66	0.00

In the first hypothesis, it is expected that there will be an impact on the level of application of flexible working hours in the civil service on the performance of workers in the Jordanian government sector. The effect of applying flexible working hours on workers' performance is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.28$, T-value = 7.69, P-value < 0.01) as shown in Table 2.

Modify the impact of employee response

The second hypothesis of this study suggested the response of workers in the government sector to the application of bitter working hours. Table 3 shows the result of the effect of the response of the workers. The moderation effect (factor response *BI ->TCB) was negative and significant ($\beta = -0.09$, T-value = -2.43, P-value < 0.01). This showed that H2 is supported.

TABLE 3: MODERATING EFFECT OF response of workers

Path	β	Stdev	T-values	P-values
Staff response ->Flexible working hours	0.48	0.04	10.91	0.00
Staff response -> Staff performance	-0.08	0.07	-1.15	0.23
Staff response -> Staff performance	-0.09	0.03	-2.43	0.02

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Table 3 shows that an interaction occurred, and this indicates an effect of the response of the two factors. This means that the application of flexible working hours has a positive impact, which will increase the positive impact of the response of workers in the Jordanian government sector.

Discussion

The study found that there is a statistically significant effect on the level of application of flexible working hours in the civil service on the performance of workers in the Jordanian government sector. Issa's study (2019) supported this theory, as he examined the factors affecting labor productivity, and began by clarifying the concept of labor productivity and explaining its importance. In addition, this study supported the theory of response of workers in the government sector to the application of flexible working hours. Looking at the study of Ibrahim and Salman (2018), which aimed to shed light on the impact of organizational commitment on the job performance of the Iraqi insurance company, the applied results showed a significant and positive impact of organizational commitment on job performance, which is evident from its contribution to explaining the total variance of (81.463%), which is a good indicator of the impact of organizational commitment on job performance and performance. The study Atyani and Abu Salma (2014) concluded that there is a statistically significant impact of ethical practices in all areas practiced by human resources departments on the satisfaction of workers in telecommunications companies, and that the practice of human resources departments for aspects Ethical based on the foundations of justice, equality, transparency and integrity in their activities have a great impact in raising morale, which in turn is reflected in the case of job satisfaction. Moreover, the most of studies conform the same findings of this paper such as Alaaraj (2018); Al-Zaqeba (2019); Al-Zaqeba et al. (2018); Al-Zaqeba and AL-Rashdan (2020).

Conclusion

Interest in the topic of work-family conflict and the programs that can help alleviate it has grown significantly in recent years, particularly in Western countries. Flexible working arrangements have attracted a lot of attention as part of these schemes. To our knowledge, there are few studies that have looked at the link between flexible work arrangements and health. Previous research has found a positive and significant effect of flexible working arrangements on employee job satisfaction and work-life balance, and my research supports these findings.

The study found a statistically significant impact on the level of application of flexible working hours in the civil service on the performance of workers in the Jordanian government sector, and the study supported the theory of response of workers in the government sector to the application of flexible working hours. Surprisingly, with the introduction of flexible working arrangements, the management of the company must ensure that important considerations are taken into account. These include evaluating company goals, evaluating how flexibility can help achieve those goals, and determining the impact on employees. They can do this by creating standard operating procedures to assist in the application and implementation process. They also need to create a system to track problems and benefits. Employees must be actively involved in the planning and design phase in order to attract and retain talent and motivate them to stay longer with the company.

The results of this study benefit all workers in the sectors, especially the government sector, and the paper contributes to providing decision makers and policy makers about the application of flexible

working hours to be controls for employees in the civil service and thus intensifying efforts around working hours to avoid duplication and improve the best performance

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