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Flexitime and Employee Happiness at Workplace in Software Houses

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Abstract

Employee happiness is an emerging concept that has been incorporated with internal workplace flexibility or flexitime. The aim of this study is to find out the relationship of internal workplace flexibility with employee happiness. Employee happiness at the workplace has been studied through the lens of three components, including affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction. These constructs have been studied collectively to acquire a comprehensive understanding regarding their relationships, outcomes and influences on one another. For this study, data have been collected from ten registered software houses of Lahore, Pakistan, through self-administrated questionnaire, 358 participants participated in the survey. Non-parametric analysis of the data shows that flexitime has a positive relationship with affective organizational commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction and thus employee happiness. Thus it can be concluded that when organizations give discretion to its employees to decide about when, where, what and how to work, it makes employees more committed, engaged, satisfied and thus happier.

Keywords: Flexitime, employee happiness, affective organizational commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Moving from personnel management to strategic human resource management and dynamic working environment along with its uncertainties induce organizations to introduce workplace flexibility. Organizations implement workplace flexibility via different methods and tactics to meet employer and employee needs. An increasing use of workplace flexibility grabs researchers' attention to study its influence, consequences and effects over employee and organizational outcomes. Internal workplace flexibility and external workplace flexibility are the two main categories in which researchers divide workplace flexibility to study; only internal workplace flexibility is the focus of this study. Organizations use different practices to implement internal workplace flexibility, flexitime is one of such practices that have been studied in relation to employee

happiness. Flexitime helps the employees to have their discretion regarding what, when, where and how to work (Atkinson, 2011). Flexitime has positive consequences for the employer as well as for employees. In most of the previous researches, researchers study flexitime as a high performance work system or as a tool to improve overall organizational performance. However, the studies that cater employee concerns and consider how such practices of internal workplace flexibility influence employees are limited in number and more research is required in this area. Moreover, uncertain dynamic environment increases competition for recruiting and retaining competent and satisfied employees, so, organizations employ human resource (HR) specialists and generalists to keep their employees motivated, satisfied, engaged, committed and happy. There is a room for research to study how flexitime and other workplace flexibility practices influence HR related aspects like motivation, satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee engagement, and employee happiness. This room for more research was the reason behind conducting this research. In the current scenario of strategic human resource management, where policies are focused to be people oriented and when employees are considered as an asset instead of workers only; it becomes really important to focus on the psychological aspects of the employees. Employee happiness is one of such psychological construct that is gaining attention in the field of psychology. This concept was needed to incorporate with the recent trend of management that is workplace flexibility. Therefore, this research studies the influence of flexitime over employee happiness. Objective of this study was to find out the relationship of internal workplace flexibility particularly flexitime with employee happiness.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Workplace Flexibility

Increasing female workforce, dual career families, desire of employees to pursue for higher education and increasing workforce diversity along with other economic and social changes creates a need for the organizations to change their strategies in order to be successful and to have some competitive advantage (Uglanova, 2018). For this purpose, organizations may have three strategies, *firstly*, they can transform themselves, *secondly*, they can adopt some high performance work system, and *thirdly*, they may become highly flexible to give quick response to uncertain environment. These strategies results in having high profits, improved quality products and services as well as productive and happy employees (Gittleman, Horrigan, & Joyce, 1998). ‘Flexibility’ term that was coined in post-Fordism era (Ono, 2001) has different meanings in different contexts (Pitt-Catsoupes & Matz-Costa, 2008), and organizations can use it as an *active approach* as well as a *defensive response* (Sánchez, Pérez, Carnicer, & Jiménez, 2007).

Workplace flexibility can be defined as adaptability to dynamic environments (Svensson, 2011), or the ability to reconfigure resources to respond environmental dynamics (Sánchez *et al.*, 2007). It is a situation of moving away from the traditional way of producing goods and providing services (Gittleman *et al.*, 1998). Workplace flexibility provides choice and control to employees regarding when, where and how to work (Pitt-Catsoupes & Matz-Costa, 2008) and how much time to spend in performing tasks and duties at workplace (Choo, Desa, & Asaari, 2016). Four major dimensions of workplace flexibility includes flexibility in income i.e. *financial flexibility*, flexibility in working hour i.e. *temporal flexibility*, flexibility in workplace i.e. *spatial flexibility* and flexibility in headcount i.e. *numerical flexibility* (Chiu, So, & Tam, 2008). Among these various

types of workplace flexibility, organization choose the one that matches with their needs of the hour (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008). Some other types include task or functional flexibility, flexitime and contractual flexibility (Rubin, 1979). It can also refer to flexibility in place of job, time of job, job sharing, part time working, career breaks. These different types can also be used in different combinations to meet employer as well as employee needs (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014), however, in such situations an integration, alignment and synergy is required among various types (Gittleman *et al.*, 1998).

Different types of workplace flexibility like flexitime, compressed weeks, telework etc. helps the employees to maintain work-life balance (Prowse, 2015). Workplace flexibility helps the employees to reduce the level of stress that they face due to their work and it leads to organizational commitment. Having workplace flexibility is the indication that employees would have a higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions (Choo *et al.*, 2016).

2.2 Internal and External Workplace Flexibility

To meet the vibrant needs of the hour, organizations move from hierarchical structure to flat organizational structure along with non-standard, alternative and untraditional practices of doing work. In this scenario, organizations either make changes in the organization and utilization of internal labor market i.e. already recruited employees, through the practices of transfers, rotations, job enrichment or enlargement, team works or flexible working hours (Grenier, Giles, & Bélanger, 1997). This flexibility of internal labor market refers to '*internal workplace flexibility*', which is also known as 'flexible work practices' or 'functional flexibility' (Grenier *et al.*, 1997; Sánchez *et al.*, 2007). Among various practices of internal workplace flexibility 'flexitime' or 'flexible working practices' is most widely used (Wickramasinghe & Jayabandu, 2007). On the other hand, an organization can respond to environmental dynamics by making changes in the external labor market, where variation can be made in the number of employees by making adjustment in the flow of employee to the organization as well as out of the organization through the practices of contract based employment, temporary employment, part time employment, hiring, firing, outsourcing etc. (Grenier *et al.*, 1997). Such flexibility in the external labor market is referred as '*external workplace flexibility*' and is also known as 'numerical flexibility'. Among these two types of internal and external workplace flexibility, internal workplace flexibility is the focus of this paper.

2.3 Flexitime

The concept of flexitime was introduced in 1960 by German Economist Christel Kraemerer to manage the scarcity of skillful employee (Rubin, 1979) and to reduce absenteeism of the female workforce (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014), however later on it was executed by various organizations by making changes in the process of its implementation. The fundamental notion of the concept is, flexible working hours can be more beneficial as compared to following rigid work schedule (Rubin, 1979).

The family friendly policy of flexitime (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014) is the *management practice where employees are allowed to choose starting and ending time of their job*' (Wickramasinghe & Jayabandu, 2007), that is also referred as flex-time and flexible hour. 'Standard' practices of working from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm has been replacing with the alternative and nonstandard modes of working (Rubin, 1979).

The concept of flexitime has five constituents; *firstly*, a band i.e. a time period in which all employees are required to work. *Second* one is the core time, i.e. the time when employees are required to be present at the workplace, essentially. *Third* constituent is the flexible time i.e. the time when employees are free to enter and exit the workplace, employees can have this choice before, after or between the core time (Rubin, 1979). Employees can also carry over their surplus or deficient working hours, if there would be any; this is called *banking* i.e. fourth constituent of flexitime. Last constituent is *schedule variability* that allows the employees to make changes in their schedule without the prior approval of managers (Wickramasinghe & Jayabandu, 2007).

Flexitime provides benefits to employee as well as to the employer. It increases employee performance (Atkinson, 2011), and organizational productivity (Uglanova, 2018). Flexitime helps the employees to maintain work-life balance (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014; Prowse, 2015). It reduces absenteeism as employees can manage the time for medical checkup or banking etc. with their working hours (Rubin, 1979). Flexitime allows the employees to work when they are most productive (Leslie, Manchester, Park, & Mehng, 2012). Employees score high on positive attitude, satisfaction (Hicks & Klimoski, 1981), engagement (Uglanova, 2018), loyalty, commitment and productivity and they score low on turnover intention (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014), absenteeism and sick leaves (Uglanova, 2018). It helps the organization to maintain a culture of trust; it also helps to perform the HR functions of attracting and retaining the competent employees. It provides convenience in work planning. Flexitime also allows the employees to choose their break time along with core working hours (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). Flexitime is effective and give more positive outcomes as compare to the flex place (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2009).

2.4 Employee Happiness

In the previous researches, social researchers have studied the response of employees toward the roles that they perform at workplace. However, current social scientists are focusing on the context and practices of workplace that influence employee emotions, feelings, outcomes and attitude. That's why researchers are now focusing on employee happiness at workplace instead of studying absenteeism, performance or turnover, etc. (Staw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1994). Reason for studying employee happiness is '*Happy - productive worker*' thesis, according to which happy employees show more positive outcomes than those who are not happy (Wright, 2006).

Rise of positive psychology brings attention towards employee happiness (Fisher, 2010), the term is originated from two Greek words '*eu*' i.e. 'good' and '*daimon*' i.e. 'God Spirit'. It not only means feeling good, but it also means doing good (Gupta, 2012). It is the frequency and not the intensity of positive emotions that helps to define a happy person, it is a relative construct (Rego, Ribeiro, & Cunha, 2010) where it is measured relative to negative feelings and emotions (Lyubomirsky, Tkach, & DiMatteo, 2006).

A positive psychologist, Dr. Barbara Fredrickson defines happiness as, "*the fuel to thrive and to flourish, and to leave this world in better shape than you found it*". Feeling positive emotions, feeling meaningful and engaged are the characteristics that help to define a happy person (Gupta, 2012). Concern of organizations towards employee happiness at the workplace has been increasing. To keep the employees happy, organizations are investing many resources in arranging assistance programs, in

providing health benefits and in adopting recognition practices. The trend of keeping an eye on the level of employee happiness is also increasing, for this purpose human resource professional conducts surveys and arrange development programs for the employees (Grant, Christianson, & Price, 2007).

At organizational end, employee happiness results in higher productivity, profitability, performance, commitment and teamwork. At employees' end it helps to focus on work (Gupta, 2012). Employee happiness and positive organizational and employee outcomes are positively related to one another. It is also significantly related to employee and organizational performance, commitment and organizational survival (Grant, Christianson, & Price, 2007).

Working environment, peers, supervisors, social support can some of the reasons for employee happiness (Lyubomirsky *et al.*, 2006), others may include acknowledgment, appreciation, recognition and expressing positive expressions (Gupta, 2012). Happy employee gets both materialistic and interpersonal benefits and rewards. They score less on negative employee outcomes like stress, burnout and withdrawal behavior, and score high on performance (Lyubomirsky *et al.*, 2006) productivity, innovation, success, satisfaction, and helpful behavior towards others (Gupta, 2012).

Transient, individual and unit level happiness are the three levels at which concept of happiness is measured. *Transient* is the variation of happiness within an individual at different points in time, *individual* is the variation of happiness among different individuals at one point in time, and the *unit* is the variation in happiness among different working units within an organization at one point in time (Fisher, 2010). In this study, individual level happiness has been studied. Fisher (2010) described three components of the person's level happiness including affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction. In this study employee happiness has been measured through these components.

2.5 Affective Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment can be defined as a force that gives direction to the behavior of the employees and makes them act in a particular way (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). It is a state of mind i.e. psychological in nature, which binds the employee with the employer. Affective organizational commitment is the emotional attachment of the employee with the employer, here employee show acceptance towards the values of the organization. Employees stay with the employer because of their willingness to stay (Peene & de Jong, 2009). Due to emotional attachment of the employee with the organization, affective organizational commitment is the most desired form of organizational commitment (Choo *et al.*, 2016), other types include continuance and normative organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990 as cited in Jaros, 2007).

2.6 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the physical, cognitive and emotional involvement of the employee in their work (Kahn, 1990). Fully engaged employees contribute towards organizational goals (Koyuncu, Burke & Fiksenbaum, 2006). 'Engaged employee', 'not engaged employee', and 'disengaged employee' are the three types of employee engagement. All of these three types lie along a continuum. The focus of this study is on engaged employee, who feels connected with their organization, are innovative, and help

to move their organization forward. Moreover, they ensure physical, emotional and cognitive involvement in their work (Meere, 2005).

2.7 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the emotional state of an employee that arises because of fulfillment of one’s job value (Islam, Mohajan, & Datta, 2012; Mahdi, Zin, Nor, Sakat, & Naim, 2012; Reisel, Probst, Chia, Maloles, & König, 2010). It is employee response towards job aspects (Williams & Hazer, 1986). It is the general attitude of the employee towards job. It is the effective response towards the differences between expected and actual job related awards and outcomes (Mahdi *et al.*, 2012). It is the emotion that can be felt but can’t be seen and it shows a number of related attitudes. Job satisfaction is determined by job aspects and working environment (Islam *et al.*, 2012). Job satisfaction includes many facets like pay, promotion, coworkers, supervision, rewards, working procedures and communication (Yamazakia, 2015).

Existing literature shows a positive relationship of flexitime with job satisfaction, job performance, organizational commitment, employee engagement, employee motivation and organizational citizenship behavior, while flexitime has a negative relationship with turnover and absenteeism (Sharpe, Hermsen, & Billings, 2002). However, the relationship between flexitime and employee happiness needs to be studied more. This is the gap that this study has aimed towards contributing. Affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction and work engagement are the three basic components through which employee happiness has been measured in this study. In the light of the literature, following hypotheses were developed for this study.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and employee happiness at the workplace.

Hypothesis 1a: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and affective organizational commitment of the employees.

Hypothesis 1b: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 1c: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and job satisfaction of the employees.

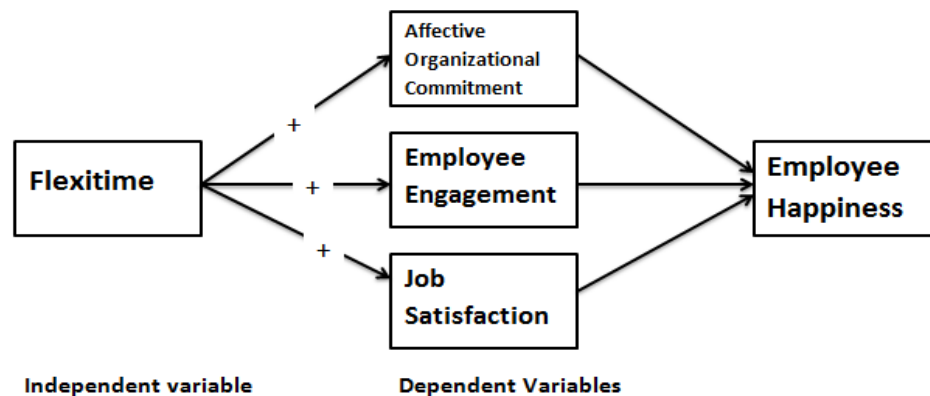


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework; Flexitime and Employee Happiness

In the conceptual framework, it was proposed that flexitime is positively related to affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work engagement and thus positively related to employee happiness at the workplace.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participant

The total number of participants of this study was 358, 67% were male, 33% were female. 69.3% of total participants were enjoying flexitime at their workplace; it includes all of those participants who had any formal or informal discretion of making decision about their working schedule, job location, working hours, timings of entering and exiting the workplace. 30.7% of the participants had to start and end their working day at a definite time, and they didn't have any choice of deciding about job location and they didn't enjoy any formal or informal policy of flexitime.

3.2 Research design

Research was deductive and explanatory in nature. It followed objectivism and positivism approach of ontology and epistemology (Bryman, 2012). Hypothesis testing was the purpose of this study, and hypotheses were focused on the relationship of internal workplace flexibility and employee happiness at workplace. Primary information was collected from the participants of the study by following *survey method*, it was *cross sectional* and data was collected at one point in time only. Unit of analysis was individual.

3.3 Measures

Data was collected through *self-administrated* questionnaire comprises of 33 items, reverse statements were added to avoid response acquiescence, biasness and response sets. Questions were close ended and pre-coded, not only to facilitate respondents, but also to facilitate comparison among responses. *Personal factual questions* were asked about gender, marital status, qualification, designation, age and number of years of experience. *The informant factual question* was asked about the availability of flexitime. Respondents were required to answer the question 'your organization (company) provides you flexibility in when you start or end your workday' in 'yes' and 'no'. 'Yes' was coded as '1', 'no' was coded as 'zero'. It was consistent with the existing studies, like Grover & Crooker (1995), Batt & Valcour (2003) and Thomas & Ganster (1995) as cited in McNall *et al.*, (2009). *Questions about the attitudes* of the respondents regarding job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment and employee engagement were asked by using five points Likert scale ranging from strongly disagrees to strongly agree through pre developed tools that were valid and reliable too. Pre developed tools were reviewed to verify that there was no ambiguous, leading, double-barreled or too long statement. Synonym and explanations of the terms like vigorous, immersed, carried away, and red tape were also provided.

Affective organizational commitment was measured by the scale developed by Allen and Myer in 1990, from the original scale of 24 items (Jaros, 2007) only 8 items of affective commitment were used in this study. Employee engagement was measured through Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES), instead of using the original scale of 24 items, a short version of the scale comprises of 9 items suggested by (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) was used. 'Job Satisfaction Survey' developed by Paul Spector was used

to measure job satisfaction, original scale comprise of nine facets, but in this study only four facets (i.e. pay, coworker, work environment and supervisor) were included, that were relevant to employee happiness as described by Fisher (2000). It was comprised of 16 items.

Reliability of the scale comprising of 33 items came out to be .893 which means scale of this study has high internal consistency.

3.4 Procedure

Software houses were the most relevant setting for this research, as the industry is highly dynamic because of rapid technological changes. To survive in such highly dynamic environment, software houses demand creativity, novelty and innovation from their employees; that essentially needs to avoid rigid and inelastic structure within the organization. Software houses thus provide workplace flexibility to its employees to be innovative and creative.

Multistage sampling was used to select participants of this study. Regulatory and representative body of software houses of Pakistan i.e. Pakistan software house association (PSHA) divides the industry into six regions, among which 'Lahore' was selected, because it was time and cost effective for the researcher to collect the data from the city of residence. At the second stage of multistage sampling, software houses were selected on the basis of 'population density' i.e. organizations with 500 or more headcount were selected, they were 10 in number, purpose was to have a representative sample in a cost effective manner, and in relatively less time.

A sampling frame of all individuals employed in selected 10 organizations wasn't available, therefore, at the last stage of multistage sampling, participants were selected on convenience basis i.e. who were available and willing to participate at the time of data collection.

4. Results

Data was processed and analyzed through SPSS 20. 78% was the response rate of this study. Prior to analysis, data was screened out for response sets, missing values and outliers. 7 questionnaires were removed from the data set because of response set, and 2 cases were removed because of significant outliers, missing values were treated via imputation. Reverse coding for reverse statements was made before the calculation of the total score of the variables.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Demographics		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	234	67
	Female	115	33
Marital Status	Single	144	41.3
	Married	185	53
	Separated	6	1.7

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	Widowed	14	4
Qualification	Certification	27	7.7
	Graduation	112	32.1
	Masters	165	47.3
	Higher Degree	45	12.9
Age	Below 20 years	13	3.7
	21-25 years	105	30.1
	26-30 years	80	22.9
	31-35 years	76	21.8
	36-40 years	48	13.8
	40+ years	27	7.7
Total work Experience	Less than 1 year	53	15.2
	1-5 years	134	38.4
	6-10 years	97	27.8
	11-15 years	41	11.7
	15+ years	24	6.9
Designation	Trainee/Officer	75	21.5
	Executive	92	26.4
	Assistant Manager	42	12
	Manager	22	6.3
	Other	118	33.8
Flexitime Availability	No	107	30.7
	Yes	242	69.3

The majority of the participants of this study were male i.e. 67%, most of them were married i.e. 53%, nearly half of the participants of this study, i.e. 47.3% were having a Masters' degree as highest level of their qualification. Most of the participants were from the age bracket 21-25 years. Most of them were serving with an experience of one to five years. Managers were having least participation in this study because of their busy schedules, 'others' designation include software engineers, developers and designers like PHP developer, senior PHP developer, web developer, PHP wordpress, Front end developer, Android developer, IOS developer, Graphic designer, SEO experts, chairman, directors and head of departments etc.

4.2 Normality of the Data

Before analyzing the data, choice needs to be made between parametric and non-parametric statistical analysis as without making this choice inference, results and interpretations wouldn't be valid and reliable. Parametric statistical tests and their analysis assume the data to be normally distributed, therefore before applying any parametric or non-parametric test normality of the data was checked.

Shapiro-Wilk normality test shows, for affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction $p = .000 < .05$, numerical tests of kurtosis and skewness (shown in table 2), graphical tests of histogram and p-plot clearly shows that data was not distributed normally; it was flat with light tail and data values deviated much from diagonal in p-plots. In the light of all of these three tests, an informed decision has been made that data was not distributed normally; hence, non-parametric test has been used for the analysis of the collected data.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistics	Std. Error	Statistics	Std. Error
Affective Organizational Commitment	349	-3.81	.131	-1.561	.260
Employee Engagement	349	.205	.131	-1.237	.260
Job Satisfaction	349	-3.00	.131	-.750	.260

4.3 Mann-Whitney Test

Mann-Whitney test, also known as ‘Wilcoxon test’ has been used for the analysis of the collected data. This helps to determine whether an observation in two independent groups of participants, i.e. with and without flexitime available, has same or different mean. Results are reported below.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and employee happiness at the workplace.

Employee happiness at workplace has been measured with the help of three components, namely the affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction; therefore, hypothesis 1a, hypothesis 1b, and hypothesis 1c constitutes hypothesis 1. Results of Mann-Whitney statistical test, and its analysis showed that flexitime is positively and significantly related to all the components of employee happiness at workplace, i.e. affective organizational commitment $U = 5518.500$ ($Z = -8.569$), $p < .001$, employee engagement $U = 8830.500$ ($Z = -4.756$), $p < .001$ and job satisfaction $U = 8738.000$ ($Z = -4.846$), $p < .001$. As all the components of employee happiness at the workplace have a positive and significant relationship with flexitime, therefore, it can be concluded that flexitime also has a positive and significant relationship with employee happiness at the workplace.

Hypothesis 1a: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and affective organizational commitment of the employees.

Table 3: Mann Whitney Mean Ranks- Flexitime & AOC

	Flexitime Availability	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Affective Organizational Commitment	No	107	105.57	11296.50
	Yes	242	205.70	49778.50
	Total	349		

The table 3 shows, employees to whom flexitime is available has a high level of Mean Rank (205.70) as compared to those employees to whom no flexitime is available (Mean Rank = 105.57). A difference in the level of Mean Rank of both the groups shows that affective organizational commitment is affected by the availability and unavailability of flexitime. An employee to whom no flexitime is available has a lower level of affective organizational commitment, while the employee to whom flexitime is available has a high level of affective organizational commitment. This means that providing flexitime to employees increases their affective organizational commitment. This also means that moving from no flexitime to flexitime i.e. internal workplace flexibility increases affective organizational commitment of the employees within an organization. Hence, there is a positive relationship between flexitime and affective organizational commitment.

Table 4: Mann Whitney Test Statistics- Flexitime & AOC

	Affective Organizational Commitment
Mann-Whitney U	5518.500
Wilcoxon W	11296.500
Z	-8.569
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

The table 4 shows Mann-Whitney U = 5518.500, $p = .000 < .001$, shows the influence of flexitime availability and unavailability on affective organizational commitment is statistically significant and is not occurring by chance. Therefore, hypothesis 1a has been supported i.e. ‘There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and affective organizational commitment of the employees’.

Hypothesis 1b: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and employee engagement.

Table 5: Mann Whitney Test Ranks- Flexitime & EE

	Flexitime Availability	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Employee Engagement	No	107	136.53	14608.50
	Yes	242	192.01	46466.50
	Total	349		

The table 5, shows that the employees to whom flexitime is available at workplace have higher levels of employee engagement (Mean Rank = 192.01, Sum of Mean Ranks = 46466.50) as compared to the employees to whom no flexitime is provided (Mean Rank = 136.53, Sum of Mean Ranks = 14608.50). This means that employee engagement is affected by the availability of the flexitime, and providing flexitime to employees increases their engagement level. This means that flexitime is positively related to employee engagement.

Table 6: Mann Whitney Test Statistics- Flexitime & EE

	Employee Engagement
Mann-Whitney U	8830.500
Wilcoxon W	14608.500
Z	-4.756
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Mann-Whitney U = 8830.500, $p = .000 < .001$ in the table 6 shows influence of flexitime on employee engagement is not occurring by chance and the relationship is statistically significant. Hence, it can be concluded that hypothesis 1b has been supported i.e. There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and employee engagement.

Hypothesis 1c: There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and job satisfaction of the employees.

Table 7: Mann Whitney Test Ranks- Flexitime & JS

	Flexitime Availability	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Job Satisfaction	No	107	135.66	14516.00
	Yes	242	192.39	46559.00
	Total	349		

This table 7, shows Mean Rank = 135.66, Sum of Mean Ranks = 14516 of the employees to whom flexitime is available is higher than the employees to whom no flexitime is available Mean Rank = 192.39, Sum of Mean Ranks = 46559. This means that job satisfaction of the employees to whom flexitime is available at their workplace is high as compared to the employees to whom no flexitime is available at their workplace. A difference in the level of job satisfaction of both the types of the employees shows that job satisfaction of the employees is influenced by the availability of flexitime at their workplace, where level of job satisfaction increases when flexitime is provided to the employees. This means that flexitime and job satisfaction are positively related to each other.

Table 8: Mann Whitney Test Statistics- Flexitime & JS

	Job Satisfaction
Mann-Whitney U	8738.000
Wilcoxon W	14516.000
Z	-4.846
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Mann-Whitney value $U = 8738.000$, $p = .000 < .001$ in the table 8 shows that flexitime and job satisfaction are not randomly related to each other, or the relationship is not occurring by chance; in fact, it is statistically significant. On the basis of these results, it can be concluded that the hypothesis 1c has been supported, i.e. There is a significant positive relationship between flexitime (internal workplace flexibility) and job satisfaction of the employees. This also means that when an organization provides discretion to make decisions about working hours, job location and job responsibilities, employees become more satisfied with their job as compared to the situation when they don't have any option to decide about their working hours, place of work and tasks to perform at the workplace.

5. Discussion

This study attempted to find out the relationship between internal workplace flexibility i.e. flexitime and employee happiness at their workplace, where employee happiness has been studied through three components, i.e. affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction. Results of the study show that flexitime has a positive relationship with affective organizational commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction and thus employee happiness at the workplace. This means that, within an organization when employees are provided with the discretion of deciding about their working hours, starting and ending time of their work day i.e. core and band time, work schedule, job location, and job responsibilities, it results in a higher level of employee happiness, and also makes them more engaged, more satisfied and more committed. These results are in line with the study of McNall *et al.*, (2009) which states that flexitime results in positive employee outcomes; and in this study employee happiness, affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction and employee engagement are the positive employee outcomes. This study also conforms to the results of Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, (2014), which states that higher job satisfaction, more engagement and loyalty are the outcomes of flexitime. It also provides supporting evidence for the study of Hicks & Klimoski (1981), according to which flexitime results in positive employee attitude and job satisfaction. Flexitime helps the employees to maintain a balance between professional and personal life, and such assistance in retaining balance between work and private life can be a possible reason for a positive relationship between flexitime and employee happiness.

5.1 Limitations

Although, the results of the study are statistically significant, and are in line with the previous researches; however this study was cross sectional in nature, where data was

collected at one point in time through self-administrated questionnaire and only one practice of internal workplace flexibility i.e. flexitime has been studied. Other practices of internal workplace flexibility like compressed workweeks, part time work/ reduced hours schedule, shift/ break arrangements, part year work, telework/homework, transition period part time, job share, etc. may have a different relationship with employee happiness at workplace. It needs to determine, whether other types of workplace flexibility i.e. external workplace flexibility and its practices e.g. contract based employment etc. have same or different type of influence over employee happiness. The study is also limited in its scope and generalization of its results, data have been collected from the registered software houses of Lahore only, and therefore results can generalize within the same, because other industries may have a different level of implementation of workplace flexibility practices depending upon the contextual needs and differences. The study was also limited in terms of time and resources, moreover sampling frame of employees working in all the selected software houses wasn't available, therefore, last stage of multistage sampling was convenience rather than systematic random sampling or simple random sampling.

5.2 Theoretical Contribution

This study is significant in terms of its contribution to the literature. In the previous studies, researchers had studied internal workplace flexibility as a high performance work system, where they attempt to find out how an organization can improve its overall performance by following the practices of internal workplace flexibility. However, it has been neglected at the researchers end, that how such practices of internal workplace flexibility influence the employees within an organization. As in the era of people oriented management and strategic human resource management, no management policy can be formulated and implemented without considering employees' concern. Only a limited number of studies cater the influence of such practices over employee outcomes, although the results of this study show that the influence of flexitime over employee happiness is positive, but still it was needed to be determined. This study fills this gap of catering employees' concern by studying the relationship between flexitime and employee happiness, i.e. affective organizational commitment, employee engagement and job satisfaction. This study also combines the constructs from the field of management, human resource management and psychology, it shows how the current trend of internal workplace flexibility is influencing HR, and psychology related constructs.

5.3 Practical Contribution

Retaining competent employee is the key to survive in current dynamic and uncertain working environment. For this purpose, organizations are following the trend and thus implementing the practices of workplace flexibility. However, prior to the implementation they need to know both positive and negative outcomes of such practices. The results of this study show that the practice of flexitime positively influences employee outcomes. Knowledge of this positive relationship and positive outcomes would give more confidence to the professionals, while choosing and implementing workplace flexibility practices within their organization. They would be knowing the key to keep their employees happy, and thus to retain them; not only to ensure survival, but also to excel in the uncertain working environment.

5.4 Conclusion

Internal workplace flexibility has a significant relationship with employee happiness at the workplace, this means that employee outcomes like affective organizational commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction and happiness is significantly influenced when an organization implement the practice of flexitime. Internal workplace flexibility that is flexitime has a positive relationship with affective organizational commitment, employee engagement, job satisfaction and employee happiness. It means giving discretion to employees about deciding their working hours, job location and job responsibilities makes them happy.

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