

# **Impacts of Late Working Hours on Employee's Performance: A Case Study on Engineers in Telecom Company of Pakistan**

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## **Abstract:**

*The research was conducted to realize the impact of late working hours and employee performance on engineers of Telecom Company of Pakistan. Performance is the major concern for all business organization. High performer individual are the productive asset of any organization. The research was carried out to find out the relation of late working hours on employee's performance. There are many other factors like pay, promotion, training experience, stress, physical abilities, organizational culture, reward, and workload that influence the performance of an employee. Structured close ended questionnaires were used to calculate the workload and performance. Around 65 questionnaires were distributed to the engineers of Telecom Company of Pakistan. 51 useable questionnaires were received and the data was analyzed in SPSS. Statistical analysis showed the negative correlation between long working hours and employees performance. The result shows the negative impact of late working hours on performance of the engineers and eventually effecting organization performance of the Company.*

**Keywords:** engineers, work hours, work schedule, health, performance, telecom, organization, Pakistan

## **Introduction:**

For many years, employee performance is a key issue in all organizations worldwide. There have been many researches done for measuring the performance of employee especially in public sector. Organizations in most countries focus on employee's individual performance. Business organizations in Pakistan like in any other country, striving to achieve high performance to become competitive globally. Best human resources are being acquired by organization which leads to achieve the performance goals of organization. The scholarly attention to job satisfaction is not surprising because of it being a strong predictor of productivity (Gordon and Denisi 1995) and job performance which ultimately leads to high employee retention (Theodossiou and Zangelidis 2006). To increase productive performance and reduce jobs abandonment, organizations should improve job satisfaction in their employees. Performance is defined by oxford dictionary as the completion or accomplishment of any task efficiently. Performance is looked as behavior or the way of work done by people of an organization. Performance is the combination of outcomes with work done. For performance measurement both efficient and effectiveness should be considered. Overall performance of any organization entirely depends on the human resource of that organization. Collis and Montgomery in their research conclude that behind success of giant organization, employees play the fundamental role. High level of efficiency of individual performer can lead the organization to achieve their targeted goals as stated by (Armstrong and Baron, 2004). Vroom (1964) suggests that performance is a function of ability and motivation. To ensure organizational performance, effective performance management of individual and team within organization must be consistent with team and individual's objectives. It develops the common understanding among teams and individual about what and how to attain those goals in organization. People having high percentage of working long hours belong to countries like Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Central/South America. In Europe, Eastern European countries percentage is not very high as compared to other regions perhaps because they might influenced by membership in the European Union (EU). If we have a closer look within regions, in Asia and Oceania, Korea, Pakistan, and Thailand all have high proportions ranging from 35 percent to 45 percent of men and women (except Indonesia at more than 45 percent).

Major effect of long working hours include sleeplessness and fatigue, empirical studies (Olson & Ambrogetti 1998) shows that there are high number of unregulated deals of overtime and shifts resulting lowering in production

efficiency. Human body possess biological cadence, these sets the psychological and behavioral functions in a clock day (Rogers, Roberts & Dawson 1997). The study reveals that considerable decline in the performance is measured when there is a loss one night sleep; continuous sleeplessness result in sever behavioral and psychological set back in human. Extended working hours can result in increasing employee stress level. Workload rises rational anxiety in employees: as consequence, perceived performance get hammered (Robbins, 1996).

The extent of our research based on computing the relationship between effect of late working hours on engineers performance in Telecom Company of Pakistan. Many researches were done for measuring employee's performance, we find it hard but there were very few researches done on measuring engineer's performance of Telecom Company especially the engineers of Telecom Company of Pakistan. This research definitely helps the telecom sector of Pakistan to formulate strategies and policies for their employees to increase employee's performance to achieve overall targeted goals and for conducting future research.

## **Literature Review**

Human resource is the strength of any successful organization. Organizations have always tends to improve their human resources to bring efficiency and effectiveness in their business. Late working, working in long shifts and over working in organization is common problem in today's world. People are sometimes compelled to work extra to meet the targets; cost saving in organizational culture is also one of the reasons in many other reasons of working late and long. Other causes are poverty, high inflation, and unemployment, threat of job firing, to attain financial benefits, political unrest and work overload. In few countries there is segregation between allocated work hours for male and female workers e.g. Indonesia, Thailand and Zimbabwe, al-though we cannot say conclusively, this may suggest that women work differently in countries where higher percentages of the workforce are in primary industries as opposed to countries where more of the population works in secondary and tertiary industries. Organization have almost same work for both men and women, therefore, if men have to work late hours, women have to do so as most organization have rivalry strategy among both genders. There is a limitation of working hour in organizations of countries around the globe. France has a limit of 180 hours in year; similarly Italy has higher limits of 250 hours, Spain, 80 hours per year. In Europe, breaks are legally provided in working hours over a set

time per day (more than eleven hours). In 1990, the European Commission enacted a law that not only “regulates the upper limit of labor hours” but also sets the “minimum limit for breaks” in view of occupational health and safety. Study reveal commonly accepted theory among economists is that “if the labor market is completely competitive, regulations on working hours are not necessary.” Long working hours have severely affected the performance of employee and overall degrading the organizational performance.

Inefficient workers are always avoided by the organizations and often replaced to being efficiency in the system. The workload history analysis reveals that preceding work activity has imperative effect on subsequent work activity in organizational process.

Job performance is often defined as the productivity and endeavors of an employee, which are recognized by the association (Robbins, 1996). In highly demanding US organization 26% of men and 11% of women worked fifty hours or more per week in 2000. In US, employees who work long hours are highly rewarded and compensated financially and motivationally. On the other side, employer is more concerned about its own incentives e.g. meeting the demand challenge, cost of hiring a new skilled worker, and other related benefits.

Long working hours have negative effect on employee’s performance as well as on their families, the employer and community. Researcher indicate that long working hours have more complex relationship with risk, as long working hours may influence by the variety of factors including job, employee control, employee performance, non-work responsibilities and social life abnormalities.

The threats of long work hours are initiated by several factors: sleeplessness, less time for the family and other personal life responsibilities. These aspects have adverse effects on human body, like fatigue, negative attitude, turbulences, and uneasiness that leads to poor performance activities.

Pitiable performance negatively influences the employer as, increased production cost and cheap quality of goods and services. Similarly, community is also affected by such worker through their retarded approach to life, people around him, and environment by unintentional medial errors, automobile accidents, and industrial mishaps. Medical studies reveal severe effects on immune and endocrine system of workers suffer sleeplessness and extremity fatigue due to overworking (Akerstedt T, Nilsson PM 2003). Extend working hours, especially in medical residents worker

who worker 24-hours shifts at times, result in decline in alertness, attention and constant concentration resulting medical errors and poor diagnosis of diseases (Leonard C, Buckley M (1998)).Its revealed that employees exhibited substantial deterioration in alertness after10th hour of either work shifts. Mitchell and Williamson also reported more vigilance task errors occurred at the end of 12-h day and night shifts when compared to the beginning of the shifts in Australian power plant workers, while no effect was reported for an 8-h schedule. Studies showed that long working hours severely affect the performance of an employee in public sector companies of Pakistan. During research we come across the fact that one of the engineers working in Telecom Company had a severe headache and restlessness due to long working hours in 2003. The scan and MRI report showed no physiological affect but the pain getting severer, doctors then diagnose that due long hours work and usage of mobile phone causes the stress and neck nerves got stretched due to long sitting. This results in overall degradation of business and also the performance of employee. The study also shows that rewards also have a positive impact on performance of an employee.

Research described long work hours result in unhealthy life style and causes unhealthy weight gain, smoking, alcohol use, increase in blood pressure, and development of diabetes, but some studies never report a significant relation (Nakamura et al, Anderson K (2001)).

Studies investigating effects of long working over years reported more on-the-job injuries and health related issues among workers (Simpson CL, Severson RK (2000)). Another aspect reveal by researchers for employers to face were higher pays at time, increased absenteeism, and demotivation for assigned work.

This research was done on engineers of Telecom Company in Pakistan who work late hours and they are heavily bombarded with workload with high perceived performance level. Favoritism is also observed during the research in organization, undistributed workload, unbounded time activities were major reasons for employee to work over long hours.

**Hypothesis:** Late working hours negatively affect the performance of the engineer in the organization.

## **Research Methodology**

A derived close ended likert scale WHO Employee Health and performance Questionnaire 2002 (HPQ) was used to evaluate the performance of the employee. Only the performance evaluation part of the questionnaire was used in this research article. The questionnaire can be viewed at <http://www.hcp.med.harvard.edu/hpq>.

### **Sample Size:**

A sample size of 65 engineers was selected on the basis of the population of initial level career engineers.

### **Respondents:**

Population selected for this research is consisting of Electrical and Communication Engineers working in largest Telecom Operator Company of Pakistan. Most of them hold bachelor degree in engineering; four of them hold MS degree in communication engineering, and two of them hold MBA degrees as well. All of them are experienced from 2-6Years in the field of telecom; population includes field engineers, remote stationed engineer, and office engineer. No female employee was involved since they are insignificant in population.

### **Data Collection and Analysis Technique:**

Field survey was conducted by using structured questionnaires with close ended questions on likert scales. 65 questionnaires were distributed among populations. Few were filled instantly while many of them were collected after several visits and reminders. 51 usable questionnaires were received which were used to perform statistical analysis on SPSS v17.

For performance evaluation of employee; interview of their respective supervisor were also conducted; also a single question on the likert scale was added to questionnaire for this purpose which was filled by the line manager of respective employee.

Pearson's Correlation analysis, as suggested by Berry Benn in his book, Business research methodology chapter of "Quantitative data analysis", for collected data was employed to investigate the relation among Employee performance and late working hours of employee.

## **Measures**

Following measures were used to study the variables under consideration.

### **Employee Performance**

Employee performance indicates the effectiveness of employee's specific actions that contribute to attain organizational goals. Organizations that shine in their field are nothing but the consequence of their employee's meticulous efforts. Managers must be concerned about the welfare of their employees since this could be the core reason to their business success.

About 10 questions on likert scale from 1 (Worst Performance) to 5 (Excellent Performance) was used to tap employee performance: in addition, 5 question on nominal scale (Yes/No) were asked to gauge special success and work accident or damaged and delay on employees.

### **Late Working Hours**

Employee's long working hours trend continues to be an apprehension for the health and welfare of working people around the globe [Bosch, 1999]. One hundred years ago 16-hr work days, 6 days a week were relatively common [Foner, 1947]. At that time the campaign for reduced working hours galvanized the labor movement in the United States and in Europe to demand the 8-hr day [Hunnicut, 1984].

One open end question was used to determine the number of work hours the employee works on average in a week. 45 working hours per week (5 days a week, 9 Hours a day) are considered to be normal working hours for this research.

## **Results**

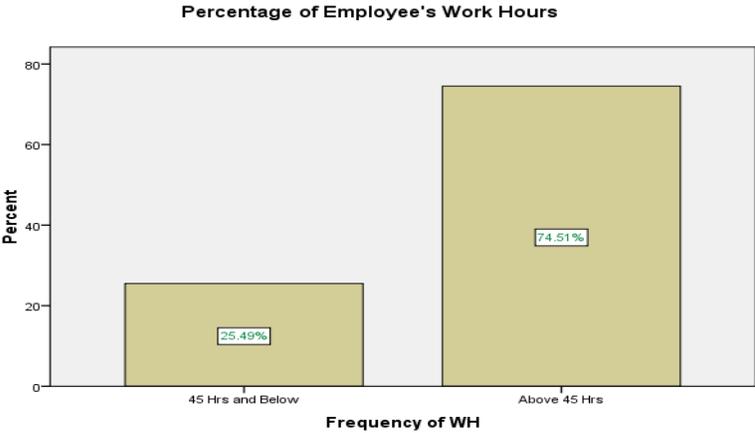
### **Descriptive Analysis:**

The descriptive analysis is shown in Table 1 with mean and standard deviation of employee's works hours and performance and work accidents and damages. It clearly indicates the higher percentages of employees are working

late hours. Frequency analysis in Fig.1 of the working hours shows that 74.1% of engineers are working more than standard working hours.

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Actual Working Hours	51	58.55	17.032
Performance	51	2.76	.335
Special Success	51	1.41	.497
Work Accident, damage, delay	51	1.90	.300
Valid N (listwise)	51		



The interesting information that can be deduce from descriptive analysis is that, mean for Special success is approaching to 2 (value) showing convergence of respondent to special success/innovation at their work is very low.

**Correlation:**

The descriptive analysis shows a relation of employee performance is effected by the late working hours. To confirm the relationship between the two, Pearson Correlation analysis was done on two variables. The p value ( $P < 0.05$ ) prove that the two variables are significantly correlated with significance level of 5%. The correlation coefficient ( $\gamma = -0.43$ ) prove a linear correlation between employee performance and late working hours. Table 2 shows the details of correlation.

Hence the result shows that employee performance is linearly negatively correlated ( $P < 0.05$ ;  $\gamma = -0.43$ ) with late working hour resulting in proving the research only hypothesis.

		Actual Working Hours	Performance	Special Success
Actual Working Hours	Pearson Correlation	1	-.431	-.306
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.029	0.041
Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.431	1	.416
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.029		0.029
Special Success	Pearson Correlation	-.306	.416	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.041	0.029	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Actual working hours (late working hours) are also linearly negative correlated ( $P < 0.05$ ;  $\gamma = -0.306$ ) with special success/innovation of employee in organization.

## **Conclusion:**

On the basis of the results of the research it has been proved that employee performance in the organization gets badly damaged by his extra working hours in a week. Since about 75% of engineer in this organization are overworking so the combined effect is also damaging the performance of department and eventually the organization.

Overworking not only damaging the performance of these employee but also when inquired these employees were also suffering with health issues, sleep inertia, fatigue and lack of innovative solution to their daily work. The trend of absenteeism and missing a part of day due to health problems was found more than those who don't work overtime.

Studies also revealed that higher percentage of employees who work long hours were more involved in unethical activities e.g. miss use of organizational assets, authority, sexual harassment and breaching the code of conduct of the organization. Interview with two recent separated employees reveal that overworking and less salary ignite them to indulge unethical activities they were doing over years.

## **IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY:**

With intense analysis on the basis of study following recommendations were suggested:

- Manager must lead from the front to encourage worker to finish the work in time, for this every work must be realistically time bounded
- Time management training and techniques must be delivered to these workers.
- Truly important activities must be clearly separated from ordinary and worthless activities
- Encourage open communication horizontally and vertically in organization.

- Managers should have a clear vision and develop objectives accordingly with mutual consensus of the employees. Furthermore, he should empower all employees and give them confidence to achieve stated goals.
- Managers need to express satisfaction when desired level of performance are achieved and reward all performers equitably.
- For effective managerial operation, a manager needs to be vigilant, responsible and effective decision maker.
- Managers should avoid biasness in assigning key tasks to his/her teams
- Managers should use management tools for effective and efficient activities perform by their teams
- Alternative strategies should be designed for employees working late hours for having effective productivity in performance
- Managers should encourage employees to avail their leaves to minimize stress

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