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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF FLEXIBLE WORK ON WORK LIFE BALANCE FOR WOMEN IN SAUDI ARABIA

Abstract:

In recent years, the increasing demands of organisations on their employees, together with more family and non-work commitments, raise questions of how to balance these conflicting demands. This is especially relevant currently for women in Saudi Arabia as they have high levels of educational attainment and are being encouraged into the workforce by government initiatives, yet are still expected to perform the traditional domestic roles assigned to them by religion and culture. Flexible work is considered in some cultures as one of the solutions that might resolve conflicts between employees' family life and work. The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of flexible work on work life balance for women in Saudi Arabia. To achieve this aim four questions are raised: 1) to what extent do women in Saudi Arabia have flexibility in their work in terms of where, when, and how long they work? 2) To what extent do women in Saudi Arabia desire to craft their work? 3) Does flexible work lead to work life balance for women in Saudi Arabia? And why? 4) What barriers do women in Saudi Arabia face to achieving flexibility? The research questions have been formulated to enable different factors in the study to be explored. Semi-structured interviews are to be used in collecting data. Thirty working women in the health, education, and banking sectors are to be interviewed; these are the most important sectors that employ women in Saudi Arabia, and have a significant number of female workers in them. Moreover, this study will explore the effect of religion and national culture in the context of flexible work, and the effects of job crafting for achieving an environment of flexible work. The researcher will adopt a qualitative approach to explore women's experiences. This will give different points of view and many opportunities for the researcher to expand current knowledge.

Keywords:

flexible work, work life balance. women work, job crafting