

## Mediating Role of Work Flexibility Between Organizational Culture and Organizational Productivity

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### Abstract

This study explores the mediating role of work flexibility between organizational culture and productivity in Oman's manufacturing sector. Using survey data from 385 employees and managers, findings reveal that a positive organizational culture significantly enhances productivity, and this effect is partially mediated by work flexibility. The results highlight that flexible work arrangements contribute to improved job satisfaction and organizational performance. These insights suggest that integrating flexibility into workplace culture can be a strategic tool for boosting productivity.

**Keywords** - Organizational Culture, Work Flexibility, Organizational Productivity, Mediation Analysis

### 1. Introduction

In an environment of rapid business transformations, organizations increasingly concur that work flexibility promotes employee satisfaction and enhances overall performance. In its broader meaning, work flexibility means flexible hours, remote work, or job sharing, becoming one of the key components in favour of employees' well-being and productivity. Organizational culture and productivity have been heavily researched; however, the precise role of work flexibility as a mediator within this relationship remains elusive. Organizational culture is the set of values, beliefs, and basic assumptions shared by its members. The essence of organizational culture is that it defines the work environment of the company and influences employee behaviour (Schein, 2010). It is believed that organizations could potentially enhance their employee engagement and productivity levels even more when work flexibility is promoted (Lund, 2003).

Studies have shown that a positive culture that encourages flexibility can bring about better work results, including job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Denison, 1990). However, the role of work flexibility as a mediator between organizational culture and productivity remains rather uncertain. This research investigated the linkages of work flexibility among the two variables in seeking to expand the literature related to organizational behaviour and productivity improvement strategies. The study investigates if work flexibility can mediate the positive impact of organizational culture on productivity, thereby offering important insights for practitioners and policymakers interested in enhancing workplace efficiency.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Organizational Culture and Organizational Productivity**

Studies on different aspects of organizational culture have been extensive, and it is generally agreed upon that culture impacts the performance of both the individual and the organization significantly. According to Schein (2010), organizational culture consists of shared values and beliefs that shape the employees' attitudes and behaviour, influencing the organization's outcome. Denison (1990) said that a strong positive culture promotes effective communication, higher morale, and increased productivity. Whereas weak or negative cultures result in disengagement, low morale, and poor productivity (Kotter & Heskett, 2008).

Indeed, there is a strong connection between the culture and productivity of organizations. The view of Lund (2003) conveys that any organization with a strong culture that emphasizes innovation, teamwork, and employee empowerment will be able to uphold higher levels of productivity. However, the culture-productivity link may not be a straightforward one. Other factors such as flexibility at work may underpin the connection with increased motivation and satisfaction among employees, which will then ease the flow into productivity (Schein, 2010).

### **Mediating role of Work Flexibility**

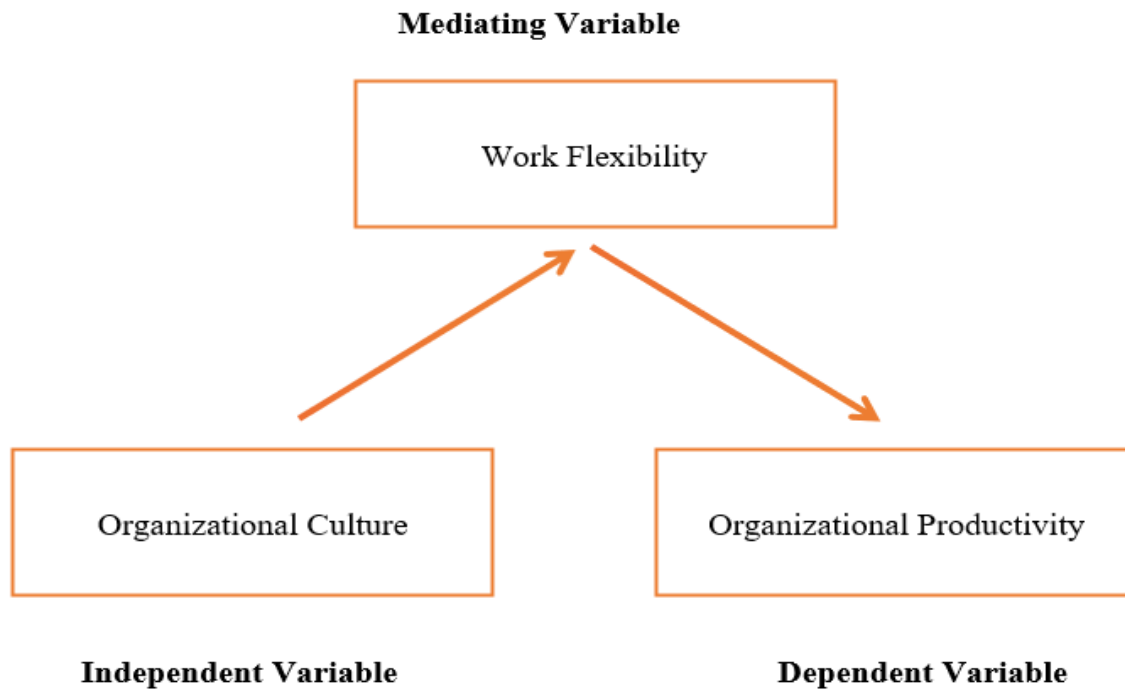
Flexibility in the workplace is gradually gaining recognition as an increasingly important aspect of modern-day organizational practices. Flexible work practices, such as teleworking, flextime, and job sharing, allow employees to balance their work and personal lives better so that they gain greater job satisfaction and commitment to the organization (Hill et al., 2008). Study findings show that work flexibility plays a role in enhancing productivity by relieving stress, improving company engagement, and fostering a healthier work-life balance (Kossek et al., 2014).

### **Organizational Culture, Work Flexibility and Organizational Productivity**

The literature outlines the relationship between organizational culture and work flexibility to improve organizational productivity. Through the cultivation of flexible and supportive work-life balance cultures, organisations establish a system of trust and empowerment for their employees; this leads to heightened job satisfaction and increased productivity levels (Kossek et al., 2014).

Beyond this, studies have shown that organisational culture can influence the implementation and effectiveness of flexible work policies. For instance, organisations with a culture of trust and openness are more likely to adopt alternative work arrangements and such an arrangement would have a positive impact on productivity (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). However, if an organisation has an inflexible and hierarchical culture, it most probably will adopt no flexible work practices at all, therefore gaining all these benefits will be very limited (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Consequently, work flexibility interacts as a mediator, becoming the channel through which organisational culture is translated into successful productivity outcomes. When an organisation promotes such flexibility in their culture, job satisfaction for employees will generally enhance their productivity (Kossek et al., 2014). In this light, work flexibility will also act as a duplicitous means of developing individual employee outcomes and enhancing overall productivity for the organisation.



**Figure 1: Research Framework**

### 3. Methodology

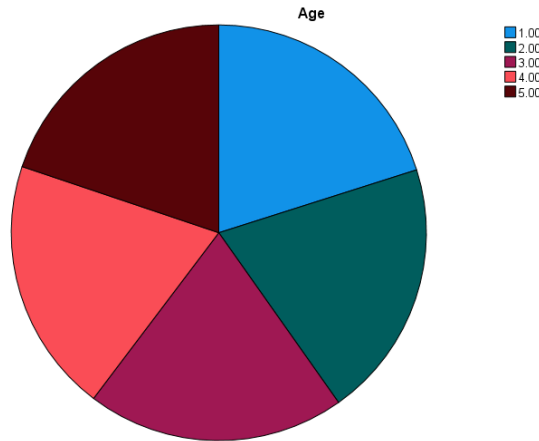
The current study seeks to determine the perspective of the employees in the manufacturing industry in Oman. Hence a Survey research approach was adopted where for the manufacturing employees, more focus was on quantitative analysis. The primary focus of this study is on manufacturing workers and managers, who constitute the target population. The researcher has chosen a sample size of 385 respondents. This sample size is sufficient for a convenience sample, as it is large enough to provide reliable results while still being relatively easy to recruit. The sample was composed of 40% managers and 60% employees from 5 different manufacturing companies operating in Oman. This is a good representation of the Omani manufacturing industry, which is composed of a mix of large and small companies. Scales include Organizational culture assessment questionnaire, Satisfaction with Work Schedule Flexibility and Organizational Productivity. Mediation analysis was used to report the analysis.

### 4. Results

**Table 1. Distribution of Respondents according to the Age**

	Frequency	Per cent
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	77	20.1%
26-33	77	20.1%
34-41	77	20.1%
42-49	76	19.8%
50 and Above	76	19.8%

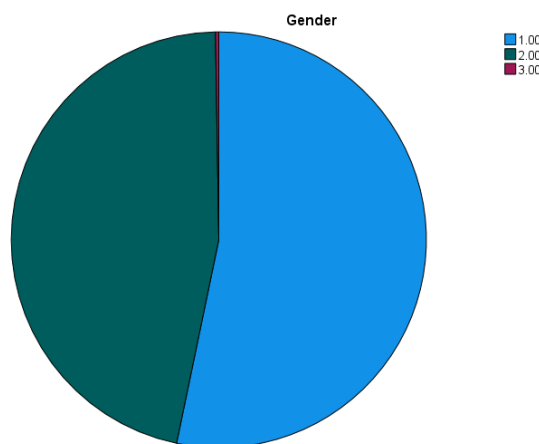
Table 1 revealed the age distribution among the study's 383 people. The age categories are equally portrayed, having 77 people who participated in the 18-25,26-33 and 34-41 age categories, which makes up 20.1% of the whole survey. The age sections 42-49 and 50 and higher each have 76 people who participated, which makes up for 19.8% of the whole survey. This fairly uniform distribution over all the age categories ensures that the results of this study are valid for a broad range of age categories, which allows an adequate understanding of the factors within investigation at all stages of life.



**Table 2 Distribution of Respondents according to the Gender**

Gender		
Male	204	53.3
Female	178	46.5

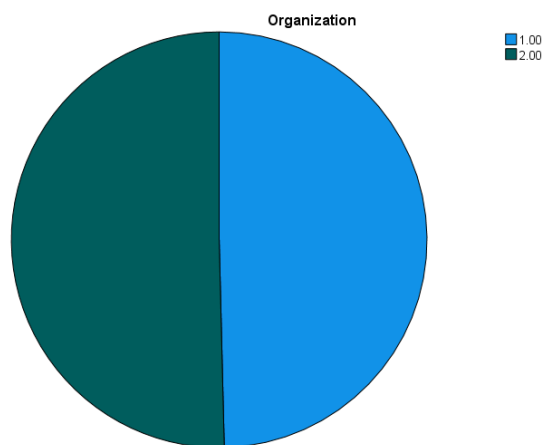
Table 2 shows that the greatest number of participants are men, with 204 making up 53.3% of the total number of responses. Female participants account for 46.5% of the total number of responses. Also, one participant selected not to disclose their gender, making up 0.3% of the total number of participants. This distribution reveals a slight diversity of male participants and an extremely equal number of participants, assuring an equal variety of gender-based viewpoints.



**Table 3. Distribution of Respondents according to the Organization**

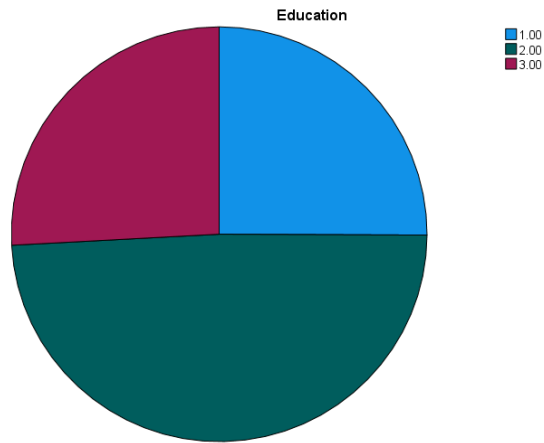
Organization		
Public	190	50.8
Private	193	49.2

Table 3 shows that of all 383 individuals, 190, or 50.8% are connected with government agencies. Additionally, 193 answers (49.2%) originate from private companies. This nearly even ratio among both private and public sector participants indicates an equal number of viewpoints from both groups, which may contribute to gaining a deeper knowledge of the research's factors throughout different types of organizations.

**Table 4. Distribution of Respondents according to the Education**

Education		
General Diploma	96	25.1
Bachelor	188	49.1
Postgraduate	99	25.8

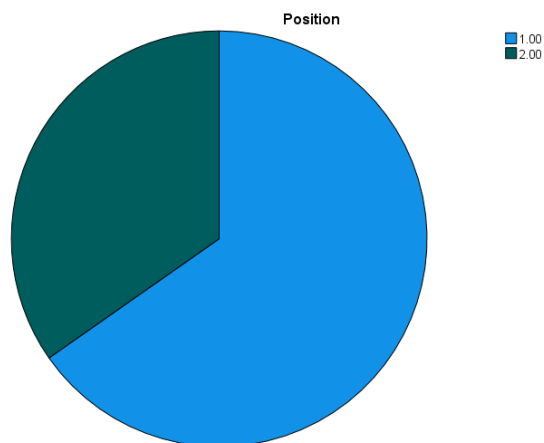
Table 4 shows that out of 383 people who participated, 96 (25.1%) had a matric degree education. College students represent the biggest category, making up for 188 answers (49.1% of the total). A total of 99 undergraduate those who participated, making p for 25.8% of the total number of participants. This distribution indicates an important proportion of college-educated individuals, proving a broad spectrum of educational backgrounds within the people who responded. This scope in education levels may offer multiple perspectives on the research's factors.



**Table 5. Distribution of Respondents according to the Position Level**

Position Level		
Employee	250	65.3
Manager	133	34.7

Table 5 shows that out of all 383 those who participated, 250 are workers, making up 65.3% of the total number of surveys. The rest of the 133 those who responded are supervisors, making up 34.7% of the total number of surveys. This distribution reveals a greater share of workers vs supervisors. The visualization of data from both degrees of identification gives an extensive overview of the investigation factors at different levels of hierarchy throughout organisations.



### Reliability Analysis

The second step to evaluation is to estimate the internal consistency. Hair et al. (2017) recommended two major criteria (i.e., Cronbach alpha and composite reliability) to check the internal consistency. Reliability talks about an instrument providing the same results when it is employed each time with the same subject and in the same settings. In other words, instruments measure what it is intended to measure consistently.

**Table 6. Cronbach Alpha Values of Study Variable**

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Work Flexibility (WRK)	0.932
Organizational Culture (ORC)	0.960
Organizational Productivity (PRO)	0.986

The Cronbach's Alpha results indicate high internal consistency for all the variables assessed in the study. Work Flexibility (WRK) shows a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.932, which is considered excellent, demonstrating that the items measuring this construct are highly reliable. Organizational Culture (ORC) has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.960, indicating an exceptional level of internal consistency and reliability for this variable as well. Finally, Organizational Productivity (PRO) shows the highest value at 0.986, which is also excellent and suggests a very high degree of reliability in the measurement of this variable.

**Table 7. Mediation Effect of Work Flexibility between Organizational Culture and Organizational Productivity**

Variable	B	95% CI	S.E.B	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1					.77	.77
(Constant)	-8.266	[-11.07, -5.45]	1.428			
Organizational Culture	.315	[.29, .33]	.009	.880		
Step 2					.78	.01
(Constant)	-8.946	-11.73, -6.16]	1.416			
Organizational Culture	.273	[.24,.30]	.014	.762		
Flexibility	.120	[.05,.18]	.032	.148		

The mediation analysis results indicate that Organizational Culture has a notable direct impact on Organizational Productivity, shown by a regression coefficient of 0.315 and a 95% confidence interval of [0.29, 0.33]. This effect is statistically significant, with a strong beta value of 0.880, suggesting that Organizational Culture has a considerable influence on Organizational Productivity. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.77 indicates that Organizational Culture accounts for 77% of the variance in Organizational Productivity. When Work Flexibility is added as a mediator in the model, the coefficient for Organizational Culture decreases slightly to 0.273, with a confidence interval of [0.24, 0.30], yet it remains statistically significant. This suggests that while the direct relationship between Organizational Culture and Organizational Productivity weakens slightly with the inclusion of Work Flexibility, it still maintains a strong positive effect. The Work Flexibility variable itself has a positive coefficient of 0.120, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.05, 0.18], indicating a significant effect on Organizational Productivity. The beta coefficient for Work Flexibility is 0.148, showing that it plays a moderate role in influencing Organizational Productivity.

The  $R^2$  value for the second model, which includes Work Flexibility, increases to 0.78, while the  $\Delta R^2$  is 0.01, indicating that the inclusion of Work Flexibility as a mediator results in a small increase in explanatory power. This suggests that Work Flexibility partially mediates the relationship between Organizational Culture and Organizational Productivity. Although it contributes to the relationship, the effect size is modest, indicating that Work Flexibility enhances, but does not fully account for, the influence of Organizational Culture on Organizational Productivity.

## 5. Conclusion

This study focuses on building an understanding of organizational culture, work flexibility, and productivity specifically in the context of the manufacturing sector in Oman. From the results, it is clear that the pillars for successful employee engagement and productivity were trust, team spirit, and open communication; these are the features of a positive organizational culture. Further, the aspect of flexibility in assigning work comes as a vital mediator that connects organizational culture and productivity by easing work-life stress and promoting employee empowerment and satisfaction. Such an analysis shows that organizations providing work flexibility are likely to create environments that empower, motivate, and align employees with organizational goals. Such flexibility not only enhances individual performance but also affirms organizational success. The near-equal representation of the various demographic groups regarding age, gender, type of organization, educational background, and level of position enables one to generalize the results across various segments of the workforce.

It would do well for organizational leaders to channel investments into a supportive culture and flexible work arrangements to maximize productivity. Specifically, managers and decision-makers from the manufacturing industry should integrate the aspect of flexibility in strategic planning to effectively address issues around employee burnout, absenteeism, and turnover.

Future studies may apply these findings by examining other additional mediating factors as identifiers of technological integration or styles of leadership in an effort to build a more conclusive picture of how organizational culture affects productivity. In essence, the study serves as open and useful insights for organizations willing to create friendly, productive, and sustainable workplace conditions.

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