

The Notion Of “Premium Friday” And “Shining Monday”: An Effective Initiative To Eliminate Employees Related Issues

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to find out how “Premium Friday” and “Shining Monday” can be helpful in minimizing the employee related issues such Employee Motivation, Turnover, Stress, Absenteeism, Conflict, Awful Performance, and Work Life Balance. Paper is theoretical in nature and concepts have been described by relevant literature. The main outcome of the paper showed that if “Premium Friday” and “Shining Monday” programmes are implemented by management of various concerns in appropriate way, it may produce positive results with regard to employee related issues and it could be effective in eliminating employee problems, which in turn would increase the employee efficiency and productivity.

Keywords: Employee issues, Premium Friday, Shining Monday, Japan Government

INTRODUCTION

One of the most challenging tasks for the organizations across the globe is related to their employees. Companies spend large amount of time and money to get the best employees, however very soon they face number of problems such as employee turnover, lack of motivation, absenteeism, stress at work, employee conflict, inefficiency etc. In such time when the world is facing these problems Japan initiated employee’s management through two new programs namely, “Premium Friday” and “Shining Monday”. These programmes are developed by Japan government and cooperate to overcome various employees’ problems and these initiatives are getting tested after implementation that how much effective are they regarding their objectives. These two programmes b Japan government and various employee related problems has been discussed as below.

“Premium Friday”

The concept of “Premium Friday” has been introduced by Government of Japan for their working people. “Premium Friday” is a movement to encourage consumer spending advocated by the Japanese government and Japanese business organizations (The Guardian, 2018). It had been expected to have a positive impact to the movement to improve work life balance. This scheme was launched on February 24, 2017. It is a movement sponsored by the Japanese business sector with the help of Japan government. In this scheme employees are encouraged to leave their job at 15:00 hours every last Friday of the month. The objective behind this was to encourage employees to go to their home some time before the prescribed hours so that they can spend more time with their family, they can do their personal work conveniently, they can reduce their work load up to some extent and also they can spend their quality time with their loving ones.

“Shining Monday”

The concept of “Shining Monday” is a scheme which has been introduced by Japan government for its working employees. In the year 2015 Japan was forced to confront its work culture by the suicide of a young advertising employee who had clocked up more than 100 hours’ overtime in the months before her death and this death was termed as “Karoshi”, or death by overwork (The Guardian, 2018). It is part of the Japanese government's broader plan to encourage companies to cut down on employees’ overtime and get them out of the office earlier while at the same time tackling the persistent problem of “Karoshi”. In this scheme employees are allowed to come after lunch hour on the starting Monday of their working month. In Japan researches shows that people are going to be extra loaded of work and many work life imbalance in the life of employees is observed and also their negative consequences has also been found. To overcome from all these negative results government of Japan has introduced the concept of shining Monday. The main objective of this scheme is to reduce its employees’ fear of extra work load, to assist employees to come late on the first Monday on their convenience after lunch hour, to encourage employees for making their work life balance more effective and also make employee to enjoy with their families with extra time.

LITERATURE REGARDING EMPLOYEE ISSUES

Employee Motivation

Employee motivation is a burning issue in organizations nowadays. In any organization work is done by employees and being human employees need motivation to perform their work in best manner. Motivation plays a significant role in organization which is asserted by many studies. In his study Bhattacharyya (2007) shows that motivation either intrinsic or extrinsic contribute to employee satisfaction and thus enhances performance and productivity in organization. In another study Kreisman (2002) argued that the most valuable and volatile asset of any institution is a well- motivated and stable workforce which is competent, dedicated and productive. According to Gallagher and Einhorn (1976) in any organizations business activity, manager’s main focus regarding the human capital problem is employee motivation which should be most emphasized. Study conclusions of Carragher et al. (2006) and Hafiza et al. (2011) reveals that there are several factors that can affect employee performance like training and development opportunities, working conditions, worker-employer relationship, job security and company over all policies and procedures for rewarding employees. Among all the factors that affect employee performance, motivation that comes with rewards is of utmost importance.

Employee Turnover

With regards to employees in the organization, employee turnover is a serious issue for organizations because it has many effects on organizations performance. Fahad et al. (2013) revealed that employee’s job turnover a considerable issue for many academics and researchers because it has a negative impact on organizational performance. Various previous research studies have revealed that employee turnover has a negative impact on the organization’s overall performance with the help of empirical and theoretical analysis. It is due to organization’s daily routines interruption (Dalton & W, 1979). Osteraker (1999) explained that organization’s success depends on two essential pillars which are retention and employee satisfaction. In his study Faruk (2011) publicized that there is a negative relationship between employee turnover and job satisfaction. According to the study results of Mathis & Jackson (2007) the effect of employee turnover results extra work load on the remaining employees, on their work performance and an organization’s effectiveness. They concluded said that those employees who are in the organization have to put extra efforts and have to work extra hours to balance the work of those who left the organization. Increased workload of employees leads to decrease employee morale and increases stress level, which in turn increases employee

absenteeism. In conclusion it can be observed that employee turnover is a big issue related to employees.

Employee Stress

In the context of issues relating to employees, employee stress is also a great problem on organizations are worried about. This is in line with the studies that have been conducted on the effect of job stress in terms of medical matters such as heart disease, gastroenteritis, sleep disorders and other accidents that will decrease the rate of job performance, and the increased rate of absence and job displacement (McVicar, 2003; Mitoma et al., 2008). Stress at work is seen as one of the major psychosocial risks of work. Work-related stress is one of the problems confronting employees. It is of great concern to employees, employers and psychologists, because of its high growing rate in ill- health, as a result of long working hours of some employees (Joseph, 2007). Some of the researchers i.e., Donaldson-Feilder E. et al. (2011) found in their study that work stress is ubiquitous and has become a universal phenomenon in every work place. Work stress has become a major challenge facing organizations and now becoming the global issue which is affecting all the countries, all categories of employees and societies. According to Dyck, (2001, 52.) an employee quality of life can be affected by a couple of job stress factors which can make an assigned task difficult and stressful for the employee to accomplish no matter the environment.

Employees Absenteeism

Employee absenteeism is also a problematic issue in business organizations and it creates many difficulties to the employees and organizations. Steers and Rhodes (1978) concluded that employee dissatisfaction, and pressure to work leads to employee absenteeism which leads decrease in motivation towards job. According to Report on Workplace Attendance and Absenteeism (1999) there are various there are many negative effects and consequences of employee's absenteeism which include: (1) increased costs (2) lower morale (3) increased workloads (4) frustrated managers and supervisors (5) loss of productivity (6) non achievement of objectives (7) reduced provision of services (8) decreased product quality (9) increased training costs and loss of key skills and personnel (10) increased supervisory and administrative costs (11) adverse public perception and confidence (12) adverse effects on consumers. Additional to this various statistics and research reflect that employee absenteeism produces dramatic costs to national economies in terms of lost productivity (Statists Canada 2014; Stevens, 2013).

Employee Conflict

It is very obvious that where various human being with various individual differences and opinion has some conflict among them. This conflict among employees is also a serious issue for the organizations. Litterer (1966) defines conflict as "a type of behavior which occurs when two or more parties are in opposition or in battle as a result of a perceived relative deprivation from the activities of or interacting with another person or group". Akanji (2005) opined that constructively managed conflict induces a positive performance, while destructively managed conflict heats up the work environment to bring about dislocation and polarization of the entire group with reduction in productivity and job performance. Empirical evidence from the study did confirm that conflict in work relations could arise over multiple factors of organizational experiences based on economic and goal incompatibility orientations in the workplace (Olukayode L., 2015). In the study result of Runde (2014) it had been found that managers spend 20% or more of their time dealing with conflict. Anna M. (2005) found in her research that conflict resolution facilitates healthier work environments for staff. According to her research findings workload and conflict are the two biggest sources of workplace stress and in organizations productivity, creativity and wellbeing are all damaged by unmanaged

conflict. De Carsten et. al (2004) revealed in their study that if conflict is managed poorly then it has a negative long term consequence for the individual health and wellbeing, producing psychometric complain & feeling of burnout. Work overload and interpersonal conflict mediate the impact of role stress on emotional exhaustion, job attitudes & behaviours (Jaramillo et al., 2011).

Employee Inefficiency or Awful Performance

Employee inefficiency or awful performance is also a problem of concern for organizations because it has a wider impact on organizational goals. Research carried out by Tuten and Neidermeyer (2004) shows that due to various reasons i.e., such as environment, organizational and individual (employee) factors employees are feeling stress which is affecting one's performance in a great extent which causes various hurdles in achieving organizational goals. Study of Feddock et al., (2007) shows that each individual is exposed to a range of stressors both at work and in his or her personal life which ultimately affects work performance.

Employee Work Life Balance

Work Life balance (WLB) is a very confronting issue for employees all over the world whether that is public sector or private sector. In some studies i.e., Parasuraman and Simmers (2001); Hardy and Adnett (2002) it had been found that Work life balance is a problematic issue for individuals especially woman who is in corporate employment and has family obligations. Some studies revealed that not only for women but also for men Work life balance is a key issue due to the problems caused by inability to balance work and non-work life which may cause dissatisfaction, job turnover and absenteeism in their job (Hughes and Bozionelos 2007). Research findings show that better Work Life Balance Policies (WLBPs) help employees manage their work and family better (Thomas and Gangster, 1995) and enhance their attitudes and behaviors such as organizational attachment (Grover & Crooker, 1995), job satisfaction (Kossek and Ozeki, 1998) and intention to stay (Lobel and Kossek, 1996).

APPLICATION AND IMPACT OF PREMIUM FRIDAY AND SHINING MONDAY IN MANAGING EMPLOYEE ISSUES

As stated in the literature that nowadays employees are facing many problems related to Motivation, Turnover, Stress, Absenteeism, Conflict, Awful Performance, and Work Life Balance in their work places and also in their personal life. The concept of Premium Friday and Shining Monday could be somehow beneficial to overcome from various employee related issues. When employees would depart to their homes early than the prescribed hours on last Friday of the month and also when they reach after the lunch hour on the coming Monday, they would think that they are finding much time for their people. It will also affect the employees in many ways i.e., first of all employees would be happy that on the last day of the month they are going some time earlier, second is that it would make them psychological satisfied that they are getting some more time from their employer, third is that there would be no burden of reaching early on next Monday of the coming month, and fourth is that employee would think they are getting much time for their personal work. This all will make a significant effect in reducing the employee related issues and also would be helpful in managing employees work life balance. Hence there is no concrete research on this topic around the globe because this is a new initiative taken by Japan government but this is sure that this concept will absolutely going to affect the employees' personal as well as professional lives.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The concept of "Premium Friday" and "Shining Monday" is very new. The Japan government makes an initiative to overcome their employee related issues. It would be very helpful and

beneficial for management in various areas to cope up with their employee related issues because every employee wants a better work environment, a good employer, a better work life balance and also some better employee related initiative. This is also a new concept in HR area. It is hoped that these issues will somehow help in reducing various interrelated employee issues. It is also assumed that employees will be satisfied by going early and coming late in the last and first of the months. Management can catch these issue and they can use these new initiative in their organizations properly with a well planned manner and from this they can make their employees much satisfied and effective in their work and personal lives.

CONCLUSIONS

Japan government has introduced two new employee related initiatives captioned "Premium Friday" and "Shining Monday" after suicide of a young advertising employee who had clocked up more than 100 hours' overtime and this incident was known as "Karoshi", or death by overwork. The main objective behind introducing these concepts was to reduce various employee related issues i.e., Employee Motivation, Turnover, Stress, Absenteeism, Conflict, Awful Performance, and Work Life Balance etc. These initiatives by Japan government could be very useful for management of various concerns in eliminating employee problems and could be very useful to fulfill employee satisfaction with their job and personal life.

FUTURE STUDY/RESEARCH

These two concepts i.e., "Premium Friday" and "Shining Monday" are very new in academic area and researcher has made an endeavour only theoretical examination of these issues. There is a huge scope of research in this area of concern. Keeping in mind various aspects of these issues empirical research could be carried out from employees' perspective and Management Perspectives.

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