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The Role of Productivity in Enhancing Employee Performance: A Perspective from Administrative Staff

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Received 10 January 2024 Received in revised form 14 March 2024 Accepted 5 May 2024 Available online 11 June 2024</p>	<p>Human resources are recognized as a vital asset in any organization. The significance of human resources lies in their ability to drive efficiency and productivity, distinguishing them from other resources such as physical assets and capital. The purpose of human resource management is to implement policies and actions necessary to fulfill a part of the management's responsibilities, heavily dependent on the activities of employees. In today's competitive environment, increasing employee productivity stands out as one of the most crucial goals for an organization, as it leads to numerous benefits for both the organization and its workforce. Higher productivity contributes to hopeful economic growth, increased profitability, and healthy social progress. This research, conducted as a descriptive-applied study, focuses on administrative staff at Kabul University as the target population. A randomized questionnaire was distributed among 120 administrative employees, and the collected data were processed using SPSS software. The findings indicate that managerial and socio-educational factors have the most significant impact on human resource productivity within the organization. According to respondents, goal setting (6.321), flexible work environments (5.425), and fostering commitment and motivation (4.325) are among the key factors influencing productivity from the perspective of administrative staff.</p>
<p>Keywords: Productivity, Employees, Performance, Goal Setting, Independence, Employee Freedom</p>	

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive environment, enhancing employee productivity stands out as one of the most crucial objectives for organizations. Increased productivity not only provides numerous benefits for the organization and its employees but also becomes a driving force for hopeful economic growth, higher profitability, and healthy social progress (Addelwahed et al., 2023: 2) [1]. Well-educated and developed employees form the foundation of organizational success (Abdulraheem Sal et al., 2016: 1) [2].

Given the accelerated changes in various economic and social fields and the heightened competition among industrial and service organizations, human resource productivity has become a determining factor. The survival and prosperity of any organization are directly proportional to the level of achieving productivity. Therefore, for an

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organization to take steps towards growth and improved productivity, it is essential to identify influential factors and, based on their importance, take appropriate actions. The aim of this research is to examine the role of productivity in the performance of administrative employees from the perspective of administrative employees.

1.1. Obstacles to Productivity in the Administrative System

Management Weakness: Weakness in management is a significant factor contributing to low productivity in administrative organizations. Managerial unfamiliarity with planning techniques, organization, human resource management, reward and punishment, motivational methods, control, inappropriate selection of managers at various levels with frequent reassignments, and lack of planning for training programs result in managerial weakness and ultimately lead to reduced productivity.

Unspecialized Human Resources: Employees with knowledge and skills are crucial for properly performing assigned tasks and responsibilities. Therefore, to enhance productivity, organizational structuring of employees should prioritize expertise as one of the fundamental principles in personnel selection. It is worth noting that attracting and hiring competent employees requires establishing a human resource system where meritocracy prevails (Azeem, 2016: 297) [3].

Lack of an Appropriate Employee Evaluation System: Some objectives of employee evaluation systems include identifying employee weaknesses in tasks and developing training programs to rectify them at the organizational level, creating interest among employees by establishing a rational reward and incentive system within the organization, setting logical criteria for allocating benefits and privileges, and reducing dissatisfaction and complaints resulting from biased opinions about employees. Therefore, employee evaluation systems should assess their performance and use it as a criterion to improve inefficient methods. Having a suitable evaluation system can be a factor in enhancing work motivation.

Lack of Work Motivation in Employees: The direct correlation between increased productivity in an organization and the presence of employee motivation is evident. Motivated employees are capable of striving towards organizational goals, reducing costs, and making proper and efficient use of resources. Unfortunately, low work motivation has been a self-evident problem for years.

Dominance of Individualistic Profit-Seeking Attitudes: If individuals in an organization pursue individual and personal goals and use the organization's facilities and resources to achieve personal intentions and objectives, the organization's productivity, which comes from paying attention to organizational goals, will ultimately be jeopardized (Byen, 2010: 116) [4].

Underperformance: Statistics will shed light on this issue. The useful working hours per week range from 6 to 9 hours. "A study conducted in 1986 on the useful working hours of employees in an administrative organization showed that the official working hours in the organization were 52 hours per week. This means that, in addition to the 44 hours stipulated for employees, they also had 8 hours of overtime. However, the actual useful working hours for employees in that organization were only 8.7 hours per week, which is even less than the 8 hours of overtime they receive."

Various Rent-Seeking Practices: "Rent refers to the additional value that accrues to the supplier of a production factor or product in absolute or relative scarcity conditions compared to demand in the market." Rent is applied to any payment that exceeds the real value of products or services. Many individuals and groups become the recipients of income due to rent, exerting less effort and diligence in earning it. The existence of rent (which is, of course, available to a specific group of individuals in society) and discriminatory payments weaken the spirit of effort and diligence among members of society. Rent undermines motivations for creativity, innovation, production, and entrepreneurship, as it removes the logical connection between effort and performance. Rent, in various forms, creates a reduction in productivity as it questions the rational connection between effort and performance. Rent, through various methods, leads to a decline in work motivation and ultimately a decrease in productivity in society. Extra payments for goods and services (economic rent) create an atmosphere of credentialism, disregarding technical competence, individuals' skills, and their efficiency in obtaining job positions. This prompts individuals to focus on acquiring university credentials as a license for employment (academic rent). The allocation of positions based on

personal connections, nepotism, and neglect of competence criteria in the selection of individuals in specialized matters also contributes to rent-seeking practices (Douglas, et al., 2016: 12) [5].

Excessive Workload of Managers: Many managers within administrative systems simultaneously bear significant responsibilities. The overwhelming workload prevents them from competently performing many assigned tasks within specified timeframes. This leads to several issues:

- a. **Impaired managerial performance:** Human capacity and capability are not unlimited and endless. Managers with various responsibilities, due to task overlaps, tend to incomplete execution of their duties.
- b. **Causes public dissatisfaction:** The manager's inconsistent presence due to excessive workload results in delays and interruptions in carrying out tasks, ultimately leading to dissatisfaction among those they serve.
- c. **Hinders the emergence of talented individuals with dynamic and innovative ideas.**
- d. **Promotes a culture of favoritism within government organizations.**
- e. **Leads to the prevalence of distrust-based relationships:** Excessive administrative controls, multiple redundant record-keeping, numerous formalities in correspondence, traditional attendance systems, and more, stemming from trust-deficient relationships, have led to significant resource wastage within organizations.

Work Methods: Work methods in traditional government organizations are often non-scientific and empirical. This poses numerous challenges within the administrative system, including confusion among superiors and employee fatigue from task execution.

1.2. Factors Influencing Efficiency

Factors influencing the efficiency of government organizations can be categorized into two groups: external and internal factors. The following will discuss these two categories:

1.2.1. External Factors

Cultural Factors: Culture, as a vital factor, guides behaviors within a society. The prevailing culture shapes our actions collectively. Discussing efficiency without considering the culture in which we live is futile. If cultural norms are established in contradiction to productivity, striving for efficiency becomes challenging. The alignment of cultural values, habits, and other cultural elements with proper and effective functioning is closely intertwined. A society that values efficiency, creativity, innovation, prevention of organizational waste, avoidance of extravagance, and optimal use of time has a clear path towards better days (Zhao, A., 2023) [6].

Economic Factors: Economic fluctuations and changes in a country, such as overall salary and wage levels, general economic conditions like unemployment and inflation, can impact organizational efficiency. For instance, in inflationary conditions, individuals may be forced to work more due to the decreasing value of the country's currency. The phenomenon of multiple jobs may lead to reduced efficiency (Salimi, 2014: 2) [7].

Social Factors: Social relationships based on cooperation and friendship, social discipline, the general education level of society, population composition, population growth rate, literacy and health levels, and unemployment rates all influence the efficiency of organizations.

1.2.2. Internal Factors

Human Resources: The relationship between organizational efficiency and human resources is undeniable. Material factors are shaped by capable human hands. Humans possess knowledge and expertise that can make the best use of organizational resources. Therefore, human capital is of high quality, and a high-quality human is knowledgeable and skilled.

Organizational Space: The placement of equipment, tools, and machinery within the organization, as well as the arrangement of individuals in organizational spaces, can significantly impact how tasks are carried out.

Compensation and Benefits: The compensation and benefits provided to employees must create the necessary motivation. Employees should perceive the amount of compensation and benefits as fair and directly related to their work. In the governmental payment system, salary increases for employees are usually uniform and occur annually, which does not create a direct relationship with employee performance. Numerous studies have shown a correlation between compensation and benefits and increased efficiency and productivity in organizations. The organization's payments to employees must be based on fairness. What is considered motivational in terms of compensation and benefits is the fair and just perception of employees. The existence of a payment system that employees can clearly sense as fair and just is crucial for enhancing efficiency. In general, individuals, based on Adams' Equity Theory, examine their inputs (education, experience, effort, and loyalty) and compare them with the outputs received from the organization, with the most significant and tangible being salary and benefits. If individuals perceive fairness in their inputs and outputs, motivation will be created (Mahdiyari, 1402: 2) [8].

Employee Training: Employee training and development, aimed at empowering those working in governmental institutions, are recognized globally as a strategic management program today. This is because everything is tied to the quality of training.

Technology: The selection and deployment of appropriate technology as tools and methods that facilitate work can be effective in increasing or decreasing efficiency. The choice of tools, machinery, methods, and other production tools for goods or service providers can be influential in reducing costs and increasing organizational outputs (Zheng et al., 2017)[9].

Encouragement and Rewards: Employees must receive appropriate rewards for performing tasks satisfactorily and consistently improving their work. In many instances, managers are unaware that even small rewards can influence employee performance. Consider this example: suppose you have overlooked your rest and family time to complete a part of your organization's tasks, and when you deliver the completed work to your manager, they don't even give a smile or a simple expression of appreciation. Would you continue to perform tasks as effectively as before, or would you become discouraged? Many studies show that not receiving rewards for job performance reduces the continuity of performing tasks satisfactorily. Managers may believe that employees' salaries and benefits are sufficient rewards. While salaries and benefits are essential for retaining and motivating employees, employees also seek various and diverse rewards related to their performance. Rewards can be material or non-material and may include simple gestures like smiling, verbal appreciation, or a pat on the back. It is up to managers to develop desirable organizational performance by using various and diverse incentives and rewards (Hosseini et al., 2015: 2).

Organizational Culture: Organizational culture plays a significant role in enhancing or reducing organizational productivity. Organizational culture can either encourage laziness and indolence or promote hard work, quality, and accuracy in performing tasks, among other aspects. Organizational culture can act as a barrier to or a facilitator of productivity within the organization as a whole.

Quality of Work Life: The quality of work life refers to the efforts of psychologists, sociologists, and other social scientists to address human needs and incorporate them into job content. In addition to specialization in tasks, which owes much to the efforts of individuals like Adam Smith and Frederick Taylor, attention to the psychological needs of employees is considered. Redesigning jobs through job rotation programs, job enrichment, and job enlargement to create a meaningful work life is part of efforts to improve the quality and quantity of tasks performed by employees. Other programs to enhance the quality of work life include creating a stress-free work environment, fostering relationships based on intimacy, allowing employees to express their opinions, and involving them in decision-making. Generally, an organization that pursues quality of work life programs will witness an increase in productivity and improvement within itself (Al-Amiri et al., 2013: 2) [11].

Management Style and Approach: The management style and approach of an organization have a direct impact on productivity. For example, a mechanical management style in the short term will bring productivity to the organization and will show high productivity indicators in all factors (production and services). However, this management approach will not lead to sustainable productivity growth, and soon its speed and stability will be compromised (Salimi, 2014: 2) [7].

1.3. The Role and Importance of Human Resources in Organizations

One of the significant reasons highlighting the importance of human resources in organizations is that human resource management, for effective survival and competition, must anticipate fundamental issues, challenges, and opportunities that organizations will face in the future. Moreover, organizations, without human resources, not only lack a meaningful concept but also their administration becomes impractical. Even with the advent of new technologies transforming organizations into masses of equipment and machinery, the role of humans as a vital and strategic factor in the survival of the organization remains entirely evident. Thus, human resources are considered the most valuable asset today, shaping organizational decisions and contributing to problem-solving, thereby enhancing organizational efficiency.

Continuous improvement and increased efficiency of an organization are contingent upon the growth and productivity of its employees and the reinforcement of their motivation. In essence, motivation can be considered the driving force or the propelling energy of humans. The growth, development, and success of an organization are significantly dependent on the attitudes, efforts, motivation, and satisfaction of its human resources. In other words, the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization have a direct correlation with the effectiveness and efficiency of its human resources. Human resources must possess both motivation and be adequately stimulated. This can only be achieved by identifying behavioral motives and the reasons behind the motivation and satisfaction of employees. The guidance of their behavior towards achieving organizational goals and the judicious utilization of their potential by competent and deserving managers is crucial for establishing a desirable and suitable work environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee performance is a crucial determinant of organizational success, with a plethora of factors influencing and shaping it. This literature review aims to synthesize and integrate research findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of productivity in enhancing employee performance, particularly from the perspective of administrative staff.

A study by Khoreva and Wechtler (2018) found a significant positive correlation between employees' satisfaction with their company and employee productivity, customer loyalty, and business-unit level profitability. This suggests that employee satisfaction and productivity are closely interconnected, and organizations should focus on enhancing employee satisfaction to improve productivity [12].

Similarly, Krekel, Ward, and De Neve (2019) highlighted the strong positive correlation between employee well-being and productivity, as well as firm performance. This implies that investing in employee well-being can lead to improved productivity and overall organizational performance [13].

Ismail, Iqbal, and Nasr (2019) investigated the mediating role of creativity in the relationship between employee engagement and job performance. Their findings suggest that fostering employee engagement and creativity can positively impact job performance, emphasizing the importance of promoting a conducive work environment for enhancing productivity [14].

Moreover, Amjad et al. (2021) and Saffar and Obeidat (2020) examined the effects of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices on employee performance. Both studies found that TQM practices positively influence employee performance through knowledge sharing, underscoring the significance of organizational practices and knowledge management in enhancing productivity [15].

In addition, Tong, Jia, Luo, and Fang (2021) explored the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) feedback on employee performance. Their study revealed that AI feedback deployment has both positive and negative effects on employee performance, indicating the complex nature of technological interventions in shaping productivity [16].

Furthermore, Hafee et al. (2019) investigated the mediating role of employee health in the relationship between workplace environment and employee performance. The findings suggest that a conducive workplace environment positively influences employee health, subsequently enhancing employee performance [17].

On the other hand, Khan and Abdullah (2019) found that staff training and development have a significant impact on teachers' productivity, highlighting the importance of continuous learning and skill development in improving employee performance [18].

The study by Hajiali et al. (2022) examined the determinants of work motivation, leadership style, and employee competence on job satisfaction and employee performance. Their findings provide insights into the multifaceted nature of factors influencing employee performance, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to productivity enhancement [19].

Moreover, Grosser et al. (2018) emphasized the role of political skill and network structure in shaping employee innovativeness and job performance, shedding light on the sociopolitical perspective of employee productivity [20].

Additionally, Camilleri (2020) investigated the utilization of the balanced scorecard as a performance management tool in higher education, highlighting the need for effective performance measurement and management systems to enhance employee productivity [21].

Cherian, Gaikar, Paul, and Pech (2021) conducted an analysis of corporate culture and its impact on employees' attitude, performance, productivity, and behavior. Their findings underscore the significance of organizational culture in influencing employee performance and productivity [22].

Furthermore, Kallio, Kallio, and Blomberg (2020) examined the impact of compensation and work environment on job satisfaction and employee performance. Their study revealed that compensation has no direct impact on job satisfaction and employee performance, while the work environment significantly affects both, with job satisfaction acting as a potential mediator [23].

Finally, Ajayi (2018) and Idris, Adi, Soetjipto, and Supriyanto (2020) explored the effects of stress, compensation, work environment, and job satisfaction on employee performance. Their findings highlight the complex interplay of these factors in shaping employee productivity and emphasize the need for a holistic approach to managing employee well-being and performance [24].

While the existing literature provides valuable insights into the relationship between productivity and employee performance, several knowledge gaps and potential future research directions can be identified. Firstly, there is a need for further research to explore the nuanced effects of technological interventions, such as AI feedback, on employee performance, considering the dual impact revealed by Tong et al. (2021) [16].

Secondly, future studies could delve into the specific mechanisms through which organizational practices, such as TQM and green human resource management, influence employee performance, with a focus on knowledge sharing and environmental sustainability, as highlighted by Amjad et al. (2021) and Saffar and Obeidat (2020) [15,26].

Moreover, the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between the work environment and employee performance, as indicated by Kallio, Kallio, and Blomberg (2020), presents an avenue for further investigation into the underlying processes that link these factors [24].

Additionally, the role of leadership style, work motivation, and employee competence in shaping employee performance, as explored by Hajiali et al. (2022), warrants further exploration to provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted determinants of productivity [19].

Furthermore, the impact of organizational culture on employee performance, as well as the potential role of political skill and network structure, as highlighted by Cherian, Gaikar, Paul, Pech (2021) and Grosser et al. (2018), presents an intriguing area for future research to uncover the sociopolitical dynamics of productivity enhancement [20, 22].

Overall, the literature review provides a comprehensive overview of the role of productivity in enhancing employee performance, offering valuable insights and delineating potential future research directions to advance our understanding of this critical relationship.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive-applied research conducted on the administrative staff of Kabul University. The statistical population of this research consists of administrative employees. A questionnaire was randomly distributed among 120 administrative employees, and then the collected data were entered into the SPSS software for analysis.

1.4. Data Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Employees' Opinions on Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30	30	25.0	25.0	25.0
	31-40	36	30.0	30.0	55.0
	41-50	32	26.7	26.7	81.7
	51-60	22	18.3	18.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table (1) shows the descriptive statistics of employees based on age. Out of 120 employees, 30 are between 20-30 years old, 36 are between 31-40 years old, 32 are between 41-50 years old, and 22 are between 51-60 years old.

Table 2. descriptive statistics of employees based on the level of education.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bachelor's degree	66	55.0	55.0	55.0
master	32	26.7	26.7	81.7
the doctor	22	18.3	18.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table (2) displays the descriptive statistics of employees in relation to their level of education. Out of 120 employees, there are 66 with a bachelor's degree, 32 with a master's degree, and 22 with a doctorate, representing 55%, 32%, and 22% respectively.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha test table.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.776	9

Table (3) shows the value of Cronbach's alpha. Since the alpha value is greater than 0.7, our questionnaire is considered reliable, meaning it is at an acceptable level.

Table 4. the descriptive statistics of factors affecting productivity from the respondents' perspective.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Management factors	120	4.1250	0.55855	0.05099
social factors	120	4.4250	0.92275	0.08424
Individual factors	120	3.6083	0.61214	0.05588
cultural factors	120	3.0917	0.85990	0.07850
Environmental factors	120	3.4667	0.50098	0.04573
Economic factors	120	3.80000	1.260919	0.115106
Personality characteristics	120	3.4500	0.61970	0.05657
Education	120	4.5167	0.50182	0.04581

The results of the one-sample t-test indicate that, from the respondents' perspective, managerial and socio-educational factors have the most significant impact on human resource productivity within the organization.

Table 5. Presents Descriptive statistics of the factors affecting the performance of administrative staff.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Goal setting	120	6.321	0.55855	0.05099
Flexible work environment	120	5.425	0.92275	0.08424
Create commitment and motivation	120	4.325	0.61214	0.05588
Independence and freedom of employees	120	3.521	0.85990	0.07850
Sharing experiences with team members	120	2.532	0.50098	0.04573
Increasing skill and time management	120	3.415	0.50182	0.04581

Results of Table (5) indicate that, from the respondents' perspective, managerial and socio-educational factors have the most significant impact on the efficiency and performance of administrative staff. According to the respondents, goal setting (6.321), flexible work environment (5.425), and fostering commitment and motivation (4.325) are among the influential factors on the efficiency and performance of administrative staff.

4. FINDINGS

Efficiency, as a key concept in organizational management, has always been a subject of attention and study. Currently, in a competitive and dynamic work environment, efficiency is recognized as a crucial determinant of organizational performance and success. Therefore, examining the role and effects of efficiency on the performance of administrative staff is highly important. Administrative staff, as the foundation and core of an organization, play a fundamental role in the execution of daily activities and the implementation of managerial strategies. In this regard, their efficiency in utilizing vital resources directly affects the organization's performance and profitability. The efficiency of administrative staff can contribute to quality task execution, increased productivity, and reduced resource wastage.

The present study is descriptive-applied research conducted on the administrative staff as well as the population. A random sample of 120 administrative employees was selected, and the data were collected through questionnaires and entered into the SPSS software for analysis. Descriptive statistics show that among the 120 respondents, 30 were between the ages of 20-30, 36 between 31-40, 32 between 41-50, and 22 between 51-60 years old. Furthermore, based on educational qualifications, 66 had a bachelor's degree, 32 had a master's degree, and 22 had a doctoral degree. The findings suggest that managerial, socio-educational factors have the most significant impact on the efficiency of human resources in the organization. From the perspective of the respondents, goal setting (6.321), a flexible work environment (5.425), and fostering commitment and motivation (4.325) are among the factors that most influence efficiency, according to administrative staff.

Declaration

We acknowledge that we used ChatGPT to enhance the academic writing of our manuscript while ensuring the originality and integrity of our work.

Transparency Statement

The data supporting this study are available upon reasonable request to the corresponding author, subject to ethical and confidentiality considerations.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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