

Trust-based working time: a victory or loss for employee and employer?

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About me

- Focusing on workplace dynamics and organizational structures
- Working for “Gesellschaft für Arbeitsmedizin GmbH” (occupational health)

Main tasks:

- psychological risk assessment
- seminars:

stress/ work-life balance/ managerial practices/ resilience/
addiction and dependence

Interests:

- flexible work time schedules/ leadership behavior

What do you think?

Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg:

“I always made sure that I was the first one to arrive in the morning and the last one to leave in the afternoon“

→ emphasizing hours over results?

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Changing world of work

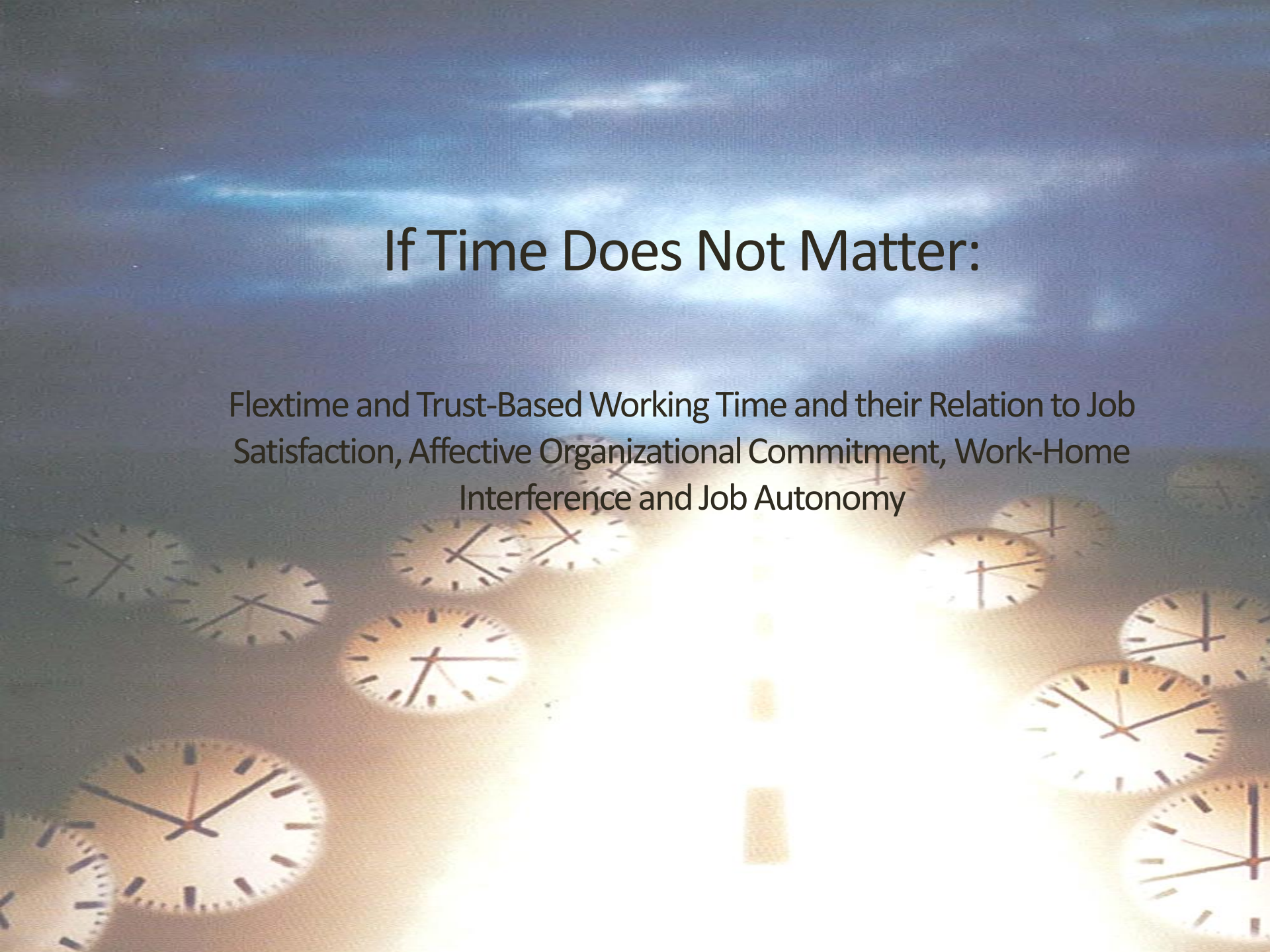
Demographic, economical and social changes like:

- Competition of global economy
- Technological innovations
- Decline in manufacturing
- Increasing number of working women (and working mothers)
- Dual-earner families
- Demographic shift
- Labor shortage as baby boomers retire
- Flexibility abounds (digital work)
- 24/7 World (Globalization)

- **-> more flexibility necessary!**

If Time Does Not Matter:

Flextime and Trust-Based Working Time and their Relation to Job Satisfaction, Affective Organizational Commitment, Work-Home Interference and Job Autonomy



Master thesis

Aim of this study:

- Analyze possible different effects of flexible work time schedule arrangements on the employee

More specifically:

- Flextime and trust-based working time and their possible different relations to the employees' affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction and work-life interference are researched, under consideration of their perceived autonomy

Definitions

Regular employment:

- No uniform definition
- Durably conceived relationship which is carried out fulltime (Süß & Kleiner, 2010)
- Weekly working base of 35-42 hours
- Regular employment usually excludes shift work and flexitime

Flexitime

- Variability in starting and ending times
- Core times
- Banking
- 65 % of German organizations

Effects of Flextime

positive effects of flextime e.g.:

- Greater loyalty, fewer reported symptoms of stress, reduced costs due to reductions in days late for work (Halpern 2005)
- Increase in employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, decreased absenteeism, turnover (Rogier & Padgett, 2004)
- Decreased work family conflict (Hammer, 1997)
- Increase in productivity (Baltes, 1999)

Negative effects:

- Flextime and work intensification (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010)

Trust-based working time

- No consistent definition
- Trust as a key concept of the post-bureaucratic organization
- Trust applied to flexible work time scheduling
- Managerial renouncement of (time-) control / abandonment of time registration
- Employees' responsibility to organize working time according to their tasks and workload
- A shift from time- to a result-driven organization
- 50 % of German organizations (mostly higher management)

Effects of TBWT

Almost no empirical based research

- Literature is often published by governmental or management institutions
- Positive effects often based on the economic performance (such as reduction in administrative costs of work time recording and decrease in overtime costs)
- Increased autonomy to balance work and non-work requirements
- Reduced turnover, positive effects on motivation, more job satisfaction (Hoff, 2002)
- Fair performance appraisal (Weidinger 2002)

Possible negative consequences:

- “Arbeit ohne Ende” – open end working time
- More difficulties to dissociate themselves from work

Researched Variables

- Flextime and trust-based working time and their possible different relations to:
 - **Employees' commitment**
 - **Job satisfaction**
 - **Work-life interference**
 - **Perceived job autonomy**

Method

- Survey paper questionnaire
- Employees of a German organization specialized in information technology and travel industry (n=80)
- 55 usable surveys (24 male/ 31 female)
- 40% younger than 35; 60% older than 35
- Flextime= 38
- Trust based working time= 17

Sample items

- Sample items job satisfaction: “Being able to do something worthwhile (i.e. achievement)”, “The chance to make as much money as my friends (i.e. compensation)”, “The chance to develop close friendships with my co-workers (i.e. co-workers)”
- Sample items for affective commitment: “I am emotional attached to the organization” and “This organization means a lot to me”
- Work-home interference: „You find it difficult to fulfill your domestic obligations because you are constantly thinking about your work (i.e. negative work-home spillover)?”, “The situation at home makes you so irritable that you take your frustrations out on your colleagues (i.e. negative home-work spillover)?”
- Job autonomy: “I decide how hard I work” and “I make my own decisions at work”

Hypothesis

Employees working under trust-based working time conditions

- 1...are on average more satisfied with their job ...**
- 2...are on average more affectively committed to the organization**
- 3...experience on average more positive work-home spillover**
- 4.....more positive home-work spillover**
- 5...experience on average less negative work-home spillover**
- 6.....less negative home-work spillover**
- 7. ...perceive on average more job autonomy**

than employees working under flextime conditions

Results:

job satisfaction and affective commitment

Employees working under trust-based working time conditions

1...are on average more satisfied with their job

→supported

2...are on average more affectively committed to the organization

→supported

Results :

work home interference

Employees working under trust-based working time conditions

3...experience on average more positive work-home spillover

4.....more positive home-work spillover

5...experience on average less negative work-home spillover

6.....less negative home-work spillover

→rejected

Employees working under trust-based working time conditions reported more negative work-home spillover!!!

???

Why are employees working under trust-based working time conditions on average more satisfied and more affective committed to the organization than employees working under flextime conditions?

Job autonomy

- Job control / employee control
- Experienced meaningfulness of work
- Time-autonomy
- Task-autonomy
- Responsibility
- Active job/ more learning possibilities

Job Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979)

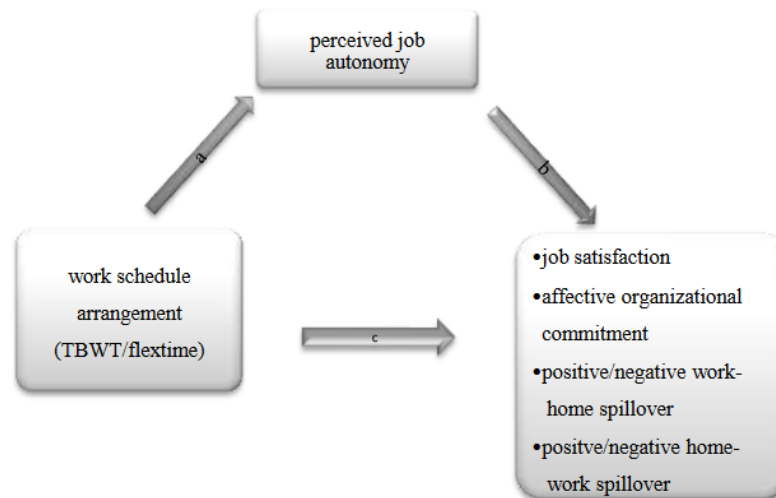


Results autonomy

- Employees under trust-based working time conditions indeed perceived more job autonomy than employees working under flextime conditions

- Model of the relationship between work schedule arrangement (TBWT/flextime) and perceived job autonomy, and the relationship between perceived job autonomy and job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, positive/negative work-home spillover, and positive/negative home-work spillover

Evidence for importance of job autonomy at work



Conclusion

- Employees working under TBWT conditions perceive more job autonomy than employees working under flextime conditions
- Therefore they experience more job satisfaction and are more affectively committed to the organization

→ If an organization wants to improve job satisfaction and affective commitment, the focus has to be directed to the employee's job autonomy (...by implementing trust-based working time)

Benefits for organizations

- Strong correlation between:
Job dissatisfaction and 'burnout'
Job dissatisfaction and absenteeism
→ Absenteeism , turnover = largest costs
- No costs for time recording
- Lower degree of absenteeism
- Higher work quality
- No overtime
- Productivity increases
- having time with their families and getting enough sleep= refreshed, happier to come to work.

Benefits for Employee

- Perceived employee control leads to more job satisfaction
- Increased freedom of action/ decision-making
- More affective organizational commitment
- Increased motivation and personal responsibility
- Experience confidence and trust of employers
- Experience an organizational culture of trust

Possible risks

- Employees working under TBWT reported more negative work-home spillover
- Blurring of employees' professional and private lives
- Discrepancy between hours contractually agreed on and hours actually worked
- May lead to excessive overtime
- Work is integrated much more into private life than vice versa (Janke et al, 2014)

Practical implications

- offer trainings for employees evaluate if the job in question offers enough autonomy and if not, how to redesign the job
- The findings of this study suggest that managers should focus on providing job autonomy and flexibility to their employees
- managers should communicate expectations and goals but let the employees decide how to meet these goals
- management should encourage employees to keep track of their work time administration to prevent overtime hours
- It is recommended to offer a wide variety of work family policies

But...

- Sample used in this study from only one organization → decrease of external validity,
- Rather small sample size (n=55),
- Cross-sectional design →
no conclusion regarding causality

Future research needed, for instance:

- Findings are based on the average ratings of employees
- Future research should focus on a more individual approach and consider the employee type in their study
- employees with more need for structure and guidance do not gain advantages under flexible work time schedules and more job autonomy

Outlook

- Importance of job autonomy
 - Time autonomy as organizational response to the new economy
 - Maximum of flexibility
 - Principles of personal responsibility and personal control applied to working environment
- **A shift from a time- to a result-driven organization**

Flexible work in Estonia?

Does your organization offer flextime to some degree?

Thank you for your attention!

Read on?

http://www.nsvp.nl/sites/nsvp.nl/files/page_files/s_wulfert.pdf