

## THE JOB QUALITY DIMENSIONS AND EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19: A CASE STUDY OF THE SAUDI'S FEMALE EMPLOYEES

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**Abstract:** The aim of the present study is to examine the impact of job quality dimensions on the employees' performance during Covid-19 situation. Our study is an empirical study. It uses a quantitative survey research design. The data collected by a questionnaire developed by CIPD, 2018 to measure job quality through six main dimensions including the compensation and benefits, work conditions, health and safety, well-being and work-life balance, job design, and job performance. The female that participated in this research is 216 who work at King Faisal University. The primary data collected by a self-developed questionnaire that uses the model of CIPD, 2018 for the job quality dimensions. Our study finds positive correlations between the main dimensions of job quality and employee performance.

**Key words:** job quality, employees, performance, dimensions, female employees.

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### Introduction

The objective of any job or work is to create value. The work design or redesign is the key to create and sustain a conducive working environment. Organizations used to build their working units to meet or exceed the stakeholders' expectations. The purpose of an effective work design is to recruit, motivate and retain highly performed employees. An effective job design or work design helps organizations' to establish a foundation for high-quality working environment. Such an environment will lead to improving employees' satisfaction, loyalty, commitment, and engagement. During recent years, the focus on effective work design increased compared with the past years. Many researchers try to build and recommend their models to help organizations' change the traditional working design.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the traditional relationships between employers, employees, and the working systems. There is increasing attention on some elements like health & safety at work, flexibility at work, and other working

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terms. These factors as well as other job design factors responsible to create real value for employers and improve their performance.

Employees' performance is a function of their abilities, motivation, and opportunity to contribute. Many factors affect employees' abilities and their motivation to produce effectively (Agarwal & Farndale, 2017). These might include the compensations, benefits, health, safety, and working conditions.

This paper aims to explore the main factors that affect the quality of Saudi's women performance at work. It tries to find out how these factors are related to employee performance. The study uses the CIPD model, 2018 of job quality that contains seven dimensions including the compensation and benefits, work conditions, health and safety, well-being and work-life balance, job design, and job performance. Firms have intensively competed to improve their market shares and enhance overall performance.

This paper is important because it provides an empirical study among the Saudi women who work at KFU. There is very little empirical research in this area specially the research that focuses on the performance of Saudi female employees in the public sector. The Saudi government plans to improve the employability levels among Saudi women. This research highlights the main factors that need special consideration by the KFU's management when recruiting female employees.

### **Literature review**

Rewarding people is one of the most important functions used by HR to attract, retain and engage employees. The compensations and benefits strategy should support and align with the business strategy. The effective compensations and benefits system must fit with the needs, wants, organization's purpose, culture, values, and performance. In addition, this system should run by HR professionals fairly and consistently. The effective reward system should balance between the cash and non-cash incentives.

The study found that organizations' with high-performance sales usually use more cash incentive compensation in every level in the organization (Beltrán-Martín & Bou-Llusar, 2018). This finding reflects the importance of using effective compensation components for sales teams. Some other studies found a positive correlation between the compensation and benefit and employees' performance (Namasivayam, Miao, & Zhao, 2007; Odunlami & Matthew, 2014; Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola, & Heirsmac, 2014). During COVID-19, many organizations' try to create, redesign their reward system to meet the real needs of employees. For example, all employees who are on sick leave due to Covid-19 should receive as much of their normal pay to compensate them fairly. This practice will be fair enough for people who use to receive variable payments.

H1: Positive correlation exists between compensations, the benefits system, and the employees' performance.

The working conditions include all elements that govern the relationships between employers and employees. A good employment relationship is one of the keys to sustainable competitive advantage. Poor working conditions lead to decrease employee performance (Vermeeren, 2017). The employee-employer relationship is built on a formal and legal contract. A written contract that sets all duties and responsibilities use to formulate by the HR professional taking into consideration the important factors for the success of this relationship. In addition, the concept of psychological contract- the unwritten expectations of both the employer and the employee- helping to reshape the current working conditions (Pak, Kooij, De Lange, & Van Veldhoven, 2019). Today, organizations' try to create and maintain a conducive working environment and adopt a healthy relationship philosophy at work. Such practice might improve the employees' relations as well as the overall performance, satisfaction, and motivational level.

Many researchers have found a positive correlation between the working condition, environment, and employee performance (Anyim, Chidi, & Badejo, 2012; Peters, Den Dulk, & van der Lippe, 2009; Riyanto, Sutrisno, & Ali, 2017). These findings necessitate the creation of a conducive working environment where all parties work without conflicts. A good working condition help organizations' to reduce the level of negative conflicts, reduce stress, improving productivity and job satisfaction (Rayner & Morgan, 2018; Safa, Maple, Watson, & Von Solms, 2018).

During COVID-19 organizations' use to create and sustain a conducive working environment where all people follow and adopt the safety regulations to save their lives. Organizations use to adopt certain practices like using flexible working, provide care leaves, and provide up-to-date information. The working environment's elements- physical or physiological- are changing regularly. The role of HR professionals is to monitor these changes, review, and update the current elements of the work environment.

H2: There is a significant correlation between the working conditions and the employees' performance.

Health and safety at work have a wide range of duties and initiatives designed to maintain a safe and healthy working environment. During the period of COVID-19, pandemic, and organizations'- public or private- use to introduce a precautions system to reduce the numbers of cases among employees due to infection by COVID-19. There is a positive correlation between the effective health and safety at work and employees' productivity, performance, burnout and stress, level of accidents and injuries (Ogbonnaya & Messersmith, 2019; Yu, Chavez, Feng, Wong, & Fynes, 2020). Today, organizations face many challenges related to health and safety at work, especially during COVID-19. The challenge of getting people back to work safely is also considered important to help organizations control the virus spread. International health and safety practices like social distancing, using face masks and screens will be effective practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

H3: Positive correlation exists between health, safety practices, and the employees' performance.

There is an increasing importance of the wellness program in all organizations'. Organizations started to invest in their people by providing employees with fitness tools and equipment to enhance their wellness and improve overall productivity. A study found that each dollar spent on wellness programs saves \$3.27 in the total costs related to health care and \$2.73 in the total costs related to absenteeism (Baicker, Cutler, & Song, 2010). These programs help organizations to reduce risk factors, such as smoking, and increase healthy behaviors'', such as exercise that translated into high productivity and better performance (Jones, Molitor, & Reif, 2019; Mattke, Liu, et al., 2013; Mattke, Schnyer, & Van Busum, 2013). An effective wellness program must be designed to integrate and support organization's mission, values, objectives, and strategy. The role of HR professionals is to formulate the wellness policies to meet the needs of diverse groups within the organization. Wellness programs include a set of activities to support employees in making changes to their health behaviors that may reduce their risk for certain chronic conditions (Abraham, 2019). A study found that employees with greater wellness participation usually have higher performance ratings, higher job satisfaction, higher intention to stay, and lower turnover (Chamberlin, Newton, & LePine, 2018). As stated by CIPD, an effective wellbeing strategy help to deliver mutual benefit to people, organizations', economies, and communities (CIPD, 2020).

H4: Significant correlation exists between the well-being programs and the employees' performance.

During the last years, organizations and employers in different sectors started to offer a range of flexible working practices to all employees at all levels. This practice might help organizations to address the causes of work-related stress as well as brings business benefits, such as stable staff turnover rate and a more engaged workforce. A study found that organizations developed and adopted work-life balance at work for many reasons include reducing work-life conflict among existing employees and enhancing organizational performance (Wassem et al., 2019). During the spread of COVID-19, many organizations around the globe use technologies to enable their people to create work-life balance and more flexibility. They adopted telework, mobile technologies by all workers to perform their jobs from home (ILO, 2015). An effective work-life balance helps organisations to improve performance and productivity (Obiageli, Uzochukwu, & Ngozi, 2015).

H5: Significant correlation between work-life balance arrangements and the employees' performance.

Many factors recommend considering when designing a job. The level of productivity, performance, and efforts have related to these factors. Researchers found that some of the job designs' factors like job involvement were correlated to the level of effort and performance. An effective job design will enhance the

organizations' efficiency and performance (Alefari, Barahona, & Salonitis, 2018). Job design can be described as the actual structure of jobs that employees perform every day (Oldham & Fried, 2016). The definition of job design according to many researchers focuses mainly on three main components which consist of the employee's psychological state, job characteristics, and individual attributes (Baig et al., 2019). This definition reveals the main dimensions of the job design. This will lead to control the output level for any job. During the era of the eighteenth, the work design components improved to reflect the change that faced organizations. Researchers have found that self-regulation, as well as the perceived degree of autonomy for the jobholders, was a critical variable that composed the job characteristics. Other researchers focused on the role of information processing and its relation to job design. Also, they have found that information processing leads to the investigation of external sources of information that may affect an employee's perception of and reaction to a job (Ozioma, Abomeh, & Nkiruka, 2017).

The idea of interdisciplinary job design has encouraged some researchers for more studies. The importance to integrate different compensation factors when designing the job is very interested. A good job design should consider different factors like job evaluation and labor market skills requirements. In addition, some researchers have tried to explore the impact of changes, social factors, and new working system like teamwork (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Today, organizations' use to design their jobs to perform through teams rather than individuals. This change in the current working system has affected the practice of job design as well as the factors that are used to motivate employees while doing their jobs. The level of people interactions increased every day. The relationships with customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders need to be considered by managers when designing or redesigning the working processes (Ali & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2014; Grant, 2007; Kilduff & Brass, 2010).

A well-designed job improves employees' satisfaction, loyalty, and performance. Studies have found direct effects of enriched jobs on the performance measures and employee outcomes (Cullinane, Bosak, Flood, & Demerouti, 2013; Wood, Van Veldhoven, Croon, & de Menezes, 2012; Zareen, Razzaq, & Mujtaba, 2013).

The relationship between job design and job commitment was studied by many researchers (Raharjo, Nurjannah, Solimun, & Fernandes, 2018). The well-designed job help employees to improve their feelings toward the working environment. This in return, helps to improve employee's performance and outcomes.

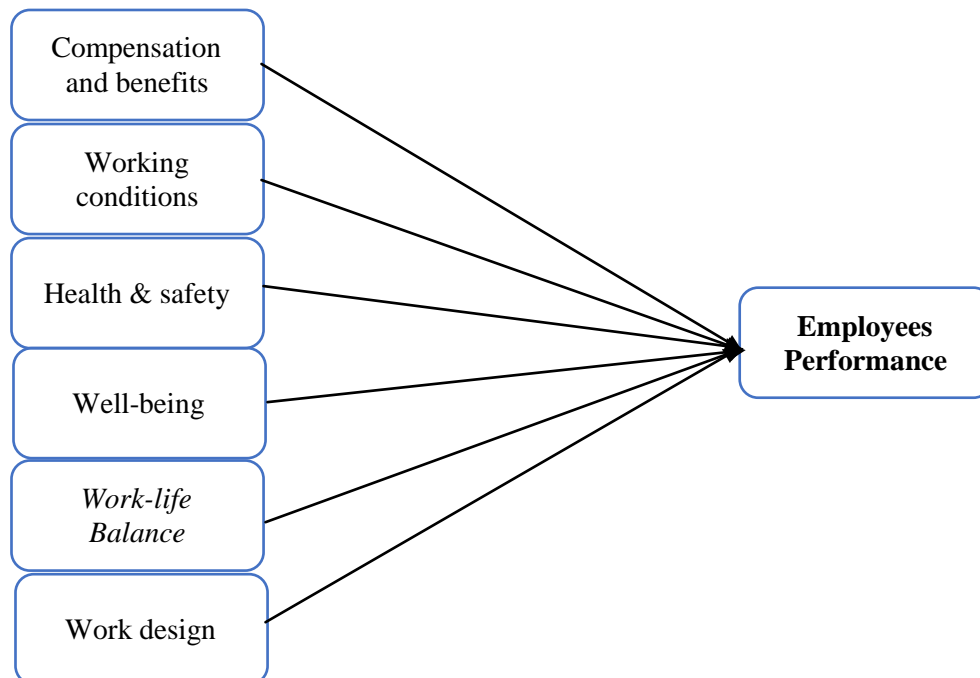
Today, organizations designed and adopted environmental jobs or positions to focus exclusively on environmental management and improve the overall performance (Arulrajah, Opatha, & Nawaratne, 2016).

H6: Significant correlation between work design and the employees' performance..

## Research methods

This study is an empirical study. It uses a quantitative survey research design. The data collected by a questionnaire developed by CIPD,2018 which includes job quality that contains seven dimensions including the compensation and benefits, work conditions, health and safety, well-being and work-life balance, job design, and job performance. Quantitative data collected through a survey among female employees at King Faisal University.

There is 491 female employees are working in KFU thus, total population is 491 and by using Morgan sample size formula, this study has selected 216 sample size. Therefore, a total of 300 questionnaires design by Google forms sent to the respondents at KFU through emails and WhatsApp. The total sample of this study was 216 female employees working at different colleges, departments, and units at KFU. The research framework is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Theoretical framework**

**Table 1. Study hypotheses**

Study hypotheses	
H <sub>1</sub> :	Positive correlation exists between compensations, the benefits system, and the employees' performance.
H <sub>2</sub> :	There is a significant correlation between the working conditions and the employees'

- performance.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Positive correlation exists between health, safety practices, and the employees' performance.
- H<sub>4</sub>: Significant correlation exists between the well-being programs and the employees' performance.
- H<sub>5</sub>: Significant correlation between work-life balance arrangements and the employees' performance.
- H<sub>6</sub>: Significant correlation between work design and the employees' performance

The compensation and benefits measured by five items related to the main HR practices in this function, the working conditions measured by five items, the health & safety measured by five items, well-being measured by five items, the work design measured by five items, and employees' voice measured by five items. These items were developed by CIPD to reflect the many models in the area of HR practices.

The analysis tool used in this study is Pearson Correlation Coefficient through the SPSS, version 22. The data collected and analysed statistically to provide results consistent with the main objectives and hypotheses of this study. This tool is used to measure the strength of association between the two variables to show the direction of the relationship.

### Findings

This research covers about 491 female employees who work at King Faisal University (KFU) at different departments and sections. The data used in this study shows that about 39.5% of the respondents have working experience of more than 15 years, while 6.9% are between 10-15 years of experience, 53.6% are between 5-10 years and 2.7% are less than one year of experience. The characteristics of the sample participated in this research show a long period of working experience that might translate into full understanding of the questionnaire's purpose and its constructs. These findings support the reliability of the data collected from employees who understand the whole working environment.

**Table 2. Work Experience of the Respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Working Experience	Less than year	6	2.7	2.7
	5-10 Years	110	50.9	53.6
	11-15 Years	15	6.9	60.5
	More than 15	85	39.5	100.0
	Total	216	100.0	

The data in table (3) shows a positive correlation exists between the compensation & benefits system in the organisation and employee's performance ( $\beta = .080$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This finding support H1 which states that significant correlation exists between compensations, the benefits system, and the employees' performance.

The reward and benefits system at KFU is considered the key to improving Saudi female employees. Therefore, this system should meet the real needs of all employees and adapt to any changes in the local environment.

**Table 3. Correlation between Compensations& Benefits and Employee's Performance**

			Compensations& Benefits	Employee Performance
Spearman's rho	Compensations& Benefits	Correlation	1.000	.080
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.367
		N	216	216
	Employee Performance	Correlation	.080	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.367	.	
	N	216	216	

The data in table (4) shows a significant correlation exists between the working conditions and the employees' performance ( $\beta = .197$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This finding support H2 which states there is a significant correlation between the working conditions and the employees' performance. This result shows how the working conditions help to improve employees' motivational level as well as their overall performance. Our findings suggest that female employees who work in good working conditions will perform better than those who work in bad conditions. The KFU's HR should consider the best working practices and inclusiveness needs when designing or modifying the current working environment at KFU.

**Table 4. Correlation between Working Conditions and Employee's Performance**

			Working Conditions	Employee Performance
Spearman's rho	Working Conditions	Correlation	1.000	.197*
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.026
		N	216	216
	Employee Performance	Correlation	.197*	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.026	.	
	N	216	216	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



The data in table (5) shows a positive correlation between health & safety at work and employee performance ( $\beta = .168, p < .05$ ). This finding supports H3 which states there is a positive correlation between the health& safety practices and the employees' performance. Our findings suggest that the KFU's management should create a decent working environment with the adoption of high safety standards. This leads to improving the overall performance of all employees, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 5. Correlation between Health & Safety at Work and Employee's Performance**

			Health & Safety at Work	Employee Performance
Spearman's rho	Health & Safety at Work	Correlation	1.000	.168
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.058
		N	216	216
	Employee Performance	Correlation	.168	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.058	.	
	N	216	216	

Table (6) shows a positive correlation between the well-being programs and employee performance ( $\beta = .081, p < .05$ ). The finding also supports the H5, which states the existence of a significant correlation between the well-being programs and the employees' performance. The investment in well-being facilities might help KFU to improve the overall performance and productivity among the female employees.

**Table 6. Correlation between Wellbeing Programs and Employee's Performance**

			Wellbeing Programs	Employee Performance
Spearman's rho	Wellbeing Programs	Correlation	1.000	.081
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.365
		N	216	216
	Employee Performance	Correlation	.081	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.365	.	
	N	216	216	

Table (7) shows a positive correlation between work-life balance and employee performance ( $\beta = .204, p < .05$ ). The finding also supports the H6, which states the existence of a significant correlation between work-life balance and employee performance. The majority of organizations' around the globe have started to adopt flexible work arrangements to enable their people to improve work-life balance.

Our findings also support the idea of designing an effective HR system designed to utilize the flexible-working arrangements during the COVID-19. This also helps employees to produce better and improving organizational performance.

**Table 7. Correlation between Work-life Balance and Employee's Performance**

			<b>Work-life Balance</b>	<b>Employee's Performance</b>
Spearman's rho	Work-life Balance	Correlation	1.000	.204*
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.021
	Employee's Performance	Correlation	.204*	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	.
		N	216	216

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Discussions

The study results have indicated that the compensation and benefits to employees have a positive association with the employees' performance. These results are in line with the past study of Morrell and Abston (2018), which states that when the organizations provide compensation and benefits to their employees, they perform their functions more efficiently to the best of their abilities. The study results have also indicated that the working conditions are linked with employee performance in a positive manner. These results are supported by the past study of Manyisa and van Aswegen (2017), which implies that the conditions under which the employees work within the organization affect their physical and cognitive capabilities and thereby improves their performance. The results have revealed that the health & safety of the employees have positive impacts on employees' performance. These results are supported by the previous study of Howard (2017), which indicates that the organizations where the employees are given full health and economic security, the employees have peacefulness of mind and perform well. The study results have also shown that the well-being of employees has a positive association with employees' performance. These results are in line with the past study of Salas- Vallina, Alegre, and López- Cabrales (2021), which posits that when the organizations take care of the well-being of employees, they can successfully make the employees perform their job functions. The study results have represented that work-life balance has a positive relationship with employees' performance. These results are in line with the previous study of Le, Newman, Menzies, Zheng, and Fermelis (2020). This study indicates that the high work-life balance on the part of employees helps them maintain the quality of their job performance. Moreover, the study results have indicated that the work design has a positive link with employees' performance. These results are approved by the past study of Peiró,

Bayona, Caballer, and Di Fabio (2020), which states that the design of the job functions determines employees' performance.

### **Theoretical and managerial implications**

The current study has great theoretical significance as it contributes to the economic-based literature. This study deals with the influences of five job quality dimensions like compensation and benefits, work conditions, health & safety, well-being, work-life balance, work design on the quality of employees' performance. Moreover, the study has a great empirical significance in an emerging economy as it guides the business management on how to improve employees' performance. This study implies that employees' performance within a business organization can be improved with the provision of compensation and benefits, health & safety, better working conditions, improvement in the employees' well-being, motivation in employees to maintain work-life balance, and formation of effective work design.

### **Conclusion**

Our research finds positive correlations between the main components of job quality and the employees' performance. These findings are supported by many previous studies that found significant correlations between the main variables like compensation, benefits, working conditions, health, safety, wellbeing, work-life balance, and employees' voice. It is highly recommended for all organizations to formulate their HR strategies and policies to reflect the real mission of these organizations and support the overall performance. HR professionals should monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the HR policies and practices by involving all stakeholders. If HR can formulate an effective strategies and policies, this might improve the job quality at their organization and help employees to perform better every day. Our findings have been supported by many studies as well as professional bodies' standards like CIPD that developed the job quality dimensions to reflect the body of the quality of the job, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study highlights the importance of designing a high-quality job for Saudi women. The role of job designers is to understand and apply these findings when it comes to create a conducive working environment. The effective reward system, working conditions, work-life balance arrangements might improve the quality of the performance for all jobholders. In addition, by providing an opportunity to female employees to raise their voices and ideas, the expected results will be a high level of retention and performance.

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## WYMIARY JAKOŚCI PRACY I WYNIKI PRACOWNIKÓW PODCZAS COVID-19: STUDIUM PRZYPADKU PRACOWNIKÓW SAUDYJSKICH

**Streszczenie:** Celem niniejszego badania jest zbadanie wpływu wymiarów jakości pracy na wyniki pracowników w sytuacji Covid-19. Przedstawione badanie jest badaniem empirycznym. Wykorzystuje projekt badania ankietowego ilościowego. Dane zebrane za pomocą kwestionariusza opracowanego przez CIPD, 2018 w celu pomiaru jakości pracy w sześciu głównych wymiarach, w tym wynagrodzenia i świadczeń, warunków pracy, zdrowia i bezpieczeństwa, dobrego samopoczucia i równowagi między życiem zawodowym a prywatnym, projektowania pracy i wydajności pracy. Kobiety, które brały udział w tych badaniach, to 216 osób pracujących na Uniwersytecie Króla Faisala. Dane pierwotne zebrane za pomocą opracowanego przez autorów kwestionariusza wykorzystującego model CIPD, 2018 dla wymiarów jakości pracy. Badanie wskazuje na pozytywne korelacje między głównymi wymiarami jakości pracy a wydajnością pracowników.

**Słowa kluczowe:** jakość pracy, pracownicy, wydajność, wymiary, pracownice.

## 工作质量维度和 COVID-19 期间员工的表现:沙特女性员工的案例研究

**摘要:**本研究的目的是检查工作质量维度对Covid-19情况下员工绩效的影响。我们的研究是一项实证研究。它采用定量调查研究设计。由CIPD2018年开发的问卷收集的数据通过六个主要维度衡量工作质量,包括薪酬和福利、工作条件、健康和安全性、幸福和工作与生活的平衡、工作设计和工作绩效。参与这项研究的女性是在费萨尔国王大学工作的 216 名。工作质量维度采用 CIPD, 2018 模型的自主开发问卷收集的原始数据。我们的研究发现工作质量和员工绩效的主要维度之间存在正相关关系。

**关键词:**工作质量, 员工, 绩效, 维度, 女性员工。