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WORKPLACE AND WORKTIME FLEXIBILITY AND CREATIVE R&D WORK OUTCOME

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Abstract

Favourable working conditions for R&D employees help to improve the use of their creative potential, supporting knowledge intensification in the economy at large. We present fully observed recursive structural equation estimates, based on data from our original repeated survey of Estonian creative R&D employees on a sample of 153 individuals from eleven entities. Selection into flexible working time is strongly driven by gender. Males opt for jobs with flexible schedules more likely than females. Flexibility in the place of working is an important driver of work outcome, as employees who have a higher share of work carried out at the official workplace are significantly less satisfied with their creative work results. Office context appears to decrease creative work outcome. Granting creative employees flexibility in workspace (which is often associated with time flexibility) may thus, have a considerable positive effect on the assessment of their work results. The share of non-creative work tasks reduces R&D employees' contentment with their work outcomes, and lowers – at least in their perception – the productiveness of work in terms of providing new knowledge or creating value. The mean and median of daily working hours are as high as 10 in the creative R&D employees in our sample. The high number of working hours is needed to achieve satisfaction with the work results, as well as to earn external recognition. We find employees of evening, as well as morning type to have a considerably higher satisfaction with their work results, compared to employees with no distinct morning-evening profile. Our findings stress the benefits of flexible workspace and worktime arrangements in creative R&D jobs.

Keywords: Workspace, Working Time, Flexibility, R&D Jobs, Employee Performance, Estonia