The Increment of Employee's Wellbeing by Introducing Virtual Office

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Abstract **- Due to the increment of technological use in daily lives, virtual office becomes more efficient for employees to work at anywhere anytime without waiting for office hours only. This could increase the efficiency of employees to work in their appropriate time, where they can manage their time better as they do not have to fight with traffic to travel to the office. Therefore, this paper reviews how virtual office is used and advantages of having virtual office for different organizations.**

Keywords **- Virtual Office, Organization, Traditional Office, Flexibility**

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, technologies become the significant part of human's daily lives whether in their personal lives or career lives. In the trend of 21st century, communication and social networking become the most important part for industries to collaborate, promote, and communicate between partners, customers, or departments. Due to technologies changes, social and economic shifts, there are many businesses that use various information technologies to manage difficult jobs. With the busy society at the moment, many office workers find difficulties in balancing their work and life balance, so they try to balance them while working instead of holidays, this leads to the needs of flexibility of working hours. Therefore, virtual office was introduced as the solution to increase employees' productivity as they are able to manage their own time of working in order to be on the job more than being at work.

In the year 1980, Toffler had predicted that work can be accomplished with the home as a center of society, technology as the realm of virtual office. Moreover, Toffler had explained the concept of knowledge society where productivity and profits can be increased through using advanced technology efficiently. This is because communication technologies are flexible for people to contact anywhere they would like to. Peter Drucker (1994) noted the definition of knowledge society as a society of mobility as mobility can be use wisely to support business strategies which could be said as virtual office. After that Charles Handy (1995) has restructured the new paradigm of organizations by modifying the company to be "Virtual Office". Romei (1996) stated that New York consulting company had proved that the organization that allowed their employees to work outside traditional offices could lead to increase 20% of the annual income.

Virtual office refers to independent location and flexible work environments where employees are able to work anywhere anytime. However, they need continuous communication through portable office equipment that allows mobility, agility, and functionality from wherever that employee calls as office. Virtual office could be one of the business strategies to increase competitive benefits as organizations are able to reduce their estate costs, more satisfied customers and happier employees by shifting work force to use virtual office. This type of office provides opportunities for employees to organize and manage their own working time in order to achieve their tasks by themselves without any

control like traditional office.

There are three main factors that are affected by the change of traditional office to virtual office, including economic, social, and innovative technology. For economic, as virtual office offers flexible work hours which will vary multiple time zone. The expansion of multiple time zones increase opportunities for the organizations to collaborate with partners and customers globally. A virtual office design helps increasing real estate cost for the organization while the productivity is increasing. For social factor, as it's difficult for traditional office workers to balance their work and life. Therefore, virtual office is the best solution to balance their work and personal lives. So, flexible work hours help the workers to focus more on their job in their selected time. Companies are now recruiting new remote workers to retain quality of employees and this recruitment acknowledges to develop and support policies for flexible work arrangements of which virtual office is one alternative. For innovative technology, the availability of computers and technologies have created virtual office environment. This explains that portable devices make it easy for employees to take their work anywhere and still maintaining the high level of productivity and connectivity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

On the way of company need more productivity and employees need more happiness and work-life balance, the HR should make the working motivation to employees to achieved the convergence of working productivity and happiness.

The intrinsic work motivation was positively relationship to job satisfaction (Lu, 1999). It indicated higher significant than mental health and working stress. Looking under the intrinsic motivation; task significance, felling capable and felling challenge on the job these factors brought happiness at work. Similar to the extrinsic motivation, the tangible rewards also motivate employees, but it's not sustainable (Kjerulf,

2015). The work environment is the intrinsic extrinsic motivation. The comfortable fully furnished with facility workplace would be the gained employees feel good. As Jain & Kaur (2014) mention a satisfied, happy and hardworking employee is biggest asset of any organization and work environment is one of the most important factors which influence the satisfaction & motivation level of employees.

The traditional office trying too much to make the friendly environment, interior decoration and fully furnished offices has a lot of advantages on working attractive and conducive to concentration. The virtual office was quite different, the working place can be anywhere (e.g. home, coffee shop, shared space), this also gives employees more flexibility. The traditional office makes the chance to socialize outside of the home and also better team bonds. In this point, the virtual office makes the chance to work-life balance.

With the nowadays technology, the connecting between people and between business is fast, accurate and easy. Virtual office gained the advantages over tradition office by these technologies. The higher productivity is one of main objective that business need to focus following; flexibility, comfortable environment, no commute, diversity of talent, less expensive, schedules, increase morale, less attendance issue, 24hr. accessibility, freedom, and outsourcing resources for certain project (Ayres, 2014). By the way, over the half of factor can be summarize to the category of working time and make it effective.

Zhang (2016) present a critical view of the changes in employees' work life due to the shift to virtual office from four perspectives: communication, social relation, achievement recognition and work-life balance. The employees' quality of work life was discussed in terms of job satisfaction. However, job satisfaction is only the part of employees' wellbeing that we need to consider. The World Health Organization Well Being Index (WHO-5) is the questionnaires assessing subjective psychological well-being consisting of 5

simple and non-invasive questions (WHO, 1998). Topp et al. (2015) have been review on the research of the stress, WHO-5 has been used to assess a wide variety of aspects such as coping strategies, well-being in occupational health settings, the association between workplace stress and wellbeing, the links between working condition and wellbeing as well as the association between psychosocial conditions and well-being. Gao et al. (2014) has been study on the working social capital found that approximately 35% of the samples had poor mental health after controlling for individual-level socio-demographic and lifestyle variables.

Mehmet (2008) mention that communication is the powerful device of organizational management, we have spent most of working time for the communicative activity. In conventional offices, communication would complex and takes more time with organizational structure. Communication in virtual as well as conventional offices is essential for obtaining the right information in administrative activities and decision-making. Virtual communication technologies increase the efficiency of communication especially in the group and inter-group. It was a waste of time for all-day meeting in some topic which ended up with unclear result. This time waste would be the stress induction, make pending work that needed over time working to finished. Related to the study on the flexible working time and wellbeing of the 9 EU-Countries, the irregular working hours (as over time, shift, night work) caused poor

health and wellbeing. Contrary, low variability of working hours but high autonomy showed positive effects (Costa et al., 2004). So, this study was the valuable information to consider the flexible working time and employees' wellbeing that we need to study in case of virtual office and traditional office.

III. METHODOLOGIES

This research is quantitative analysis. The research aims to consider whether an educational institution in Thailand is ready to modify their traditional offices into virtual offices as well as to see staff's opinions towards productivity increment by changing traditional office to virtual office. The questionnaires will be separated into 3 parts. The first part is demographic factors which is all about staff's demographic information including age, gender, and position. The second part is factors of increasing productivity related to virtual offices which are six factors including flexibility, no commute, less expensive, schedules, 24-hour accessibility, and freedom. The last part will be the decision making whether the productivity will be increased by having virtual offices or not.

IV. RESEARCH DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After the data was collected, the data was analyzed through SPSS program. The result showed that having virtual office would increase employees' wellbeing was generally in high level with the value of 3.93. The value of each factor is shown in the table below.

Factors	Mean	Interpretation
Flexibility	4.01	High
No commute	4.09	High
Less expensive	3.73	High
Schedules	3.95	High
24-hour accessibility	3.64	High
Freedom	4.16	High
Total	**3.93**	**High**

The above table showed that freedom is the most important factor for the employee to motivate themselves in their career, followed by no commute where employees do not have to face with stress and pressure while facing the traffic to work or office. Another high

factor was flexibility. This is easy for the employees to work well with flexibility in work hours so they can organize their work-life balance.

According to the results, virtual office is an excellent procedure to increase employees' wellbeing as well as their productivity in their career. Moreover, virtual office environment could increase productivity and happiness in employees' life which is the main benefit for the organization to reduce employee's turnover as well as to increase productivity and profits to the company.

For further research, the researchers would like to focus more in qualitative analysis in order to see how each employee in different positions have opinions about having virtual office environment as well as all factors for virtual office.

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(Arranged in the order of citation in the same fashion as the case of Footnotes.)

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