University of the People

[PHIL 1404](https://my.uopeople.edu/course/view.php?id=7981#section-1) Ethics and Social Responsibility

Unit 7 Written Assignment 7

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**Introduction**

In today's competitive business landscape, companies often face difficult decisions balancing financial stability with employee welfare. The case study "What Would You Do?: Staffing Trade-offs" presents a scenario where a clothing manufacturing firm considers implementing a job-sharing plan to reduce costs. This essay examines the ethical implications of this decision, exploring its potential benefits, drawbacks, and discriminatory concerns.

**Benefits of the Job-Sharing Plan**

The proposed job-sharing plan offers several potential advantages for both the company and employees. For the company, splitting full-time positions into part-time roles could lead to significant cost savings, particularly in terms of reduced benefit expenses. This approach may improve cash flow and strengthen the bottom line, addressing the manager's primary concerns about financial stability (OpenStax, n.d.).

For employees, job-sharing can provide increased flexibility and work-life balance. In a period of high unemployment, offering part-time positions may create more job opportunities, allowing a greater number of individuals to secure employment. Some workers, such as students, caregivers, or those transitioning to retirement, may actively seek part-time work that allows them to balance other responsibilities or pursuits (Timms et al., 2015).

**Negative Effects on the Company and Employees**

Despite potential benefits, the job-sharing plan could have several negative consequences. For the company, relying heavily on part-time workers may lead to decreased employee loyalty and higher turnover rates. This could result in increased training costs and potential loss of institutional knowledge. Additionally, coordinating schedules and maintaining consistent communication between job-sharing partners may prove challenging and time-consuming for management (Branine, 2004).

Employees, on the other hand, may face significant hardships due to the lack of benefits, particularly health insurance. This could lead to financial strain and reduced job satisfaction. Part-time workers may also have limited opportunities for career advancement and skill development, potentially hindering their long-term professional growth.

**Potential Employment Discrimination Concerns**

The implementation of this job-sharing plan raises several potential employment discrimination concerns. If the plan disproportionately affects certain protected groups, such as older workers who are more likely to be in positions targeted for job-sharing, it could be viewed as age discrimination. Similarly, if the plan primarily impacts positions traditionally held by women or minorities, it could be seen as discriminatory based on gender or race (Vyas, 2019).

Moreover, the selection process for determining which positions are split into part-time roles must be carefully managed to avoid any appearance of bias or unfair treatment. Clear, objective criteria should be established to ensure that decisions are based on business needs rather than personal characteristics of employees.

**Ethical Evaluation**

From an ethical standpoint, creating job-sharing positions presents a complex dilemma. On one hand, it could be argued that providing more employment opportunities during a time of high unemployment serves a greater good. Additionally, offering flexible work arrangements may better accommodate the diverse needs of the workforce.

However, the decision to replace full-time positions with part-time roles that lack benefits raises serious ethical concerns. It potentially exploits workers' vulnerabilities in a tight job market and may contribute to the erosion of job quality and security. This approach could be seen as prioritizing short-term financial gains over the long-term well-being of employees and the community.

**Conclusion**

While the job-sharing plan offers potential benefits in terms of cost savings and flexibility, the ethical implications and potential negative consequences cannot be ignored. A more balanced approach might involve exploring alternative cost-saving measures, offering a mix of full-time and part-time positions, or implementing a gradual transition that allows for careful evaluation of the impact on all stakeholders. Ultimately, the company should strive to find a solution that balances financial considerations with ethical responsibility and the long-term interests of its employees, customers, and the broader community.

**References**

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