



INFLUENCE OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT.

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employees' performance with the moderating role of perceived organizational support. The study population consisted of 2,886 private hospitals in Lagos State, according to the Health Facilities Monitoring and Accreditation Agency (HEFAMAA, 2023), of which only 248 questionnaires were duly completed and returned. The study concluded that there is a positive influence of flexible work arrangement measurements (i.e., shiftwork and flexi-time) on employees' performance in private hospitals. The study recommended that private hospitals should develop various organizational support strategies that will promote flexible work arrangements in their organizations.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Flexitime, Shift work, Organizational Support.

JEL Code: M51, 54, Q15

I. INTRODUCTION

The fulfillment of all organizational goals and objectives requires the support or help of stakeholders in its environment. Employees, creditors, customers, and others are those stakeholders that every organization will always want to support its success. In return for the sought support, firms should also motivate the stakeholders. Among the stakeholders, employee commitment and support are key to the success of the organization. According to Kurtessis et al. (2017), organizational costs associated with ignoring employees' personal commitments include high absenteeism and employee turnover. It is therefore not in the interest of any organization to ignore employees' motivation and commitment. Different organizations adopt various flexible working approaches and other types of changes to motivate their employees to remain competitive and relevant in their industries. Flexi-time work arrangement is part of the many types of flexible working approaches being used by organizations globally.

Flexible work arrangements generally refer to a practice in organizations where employees can choose when they work and where they work from so long as they fulfill their working obligations in doing so (Grzywacz, Carlson, and Shulkin, 2008). According to Giannikis and Mihail, (2011), flexible work arrangements are among the many Work-Life balance initiatives being advanced by many organizations as they seek to enable their employees reconcile their work life equilibrium and family responsibilities. According to Timms et al. (2015), flexible work arrangement come in a lot of formats. Flexi-time, compressed work week, telecommuting, and part time work are the example of flexible work arrangement. They also include flexible working hours, flextime, part-time work, overtime, job sharing, teleworking, shift and weekend work, paid parental leave, annual hours, temporary work, annual hours contracts, and flexible leave arrangements. These arrangements allow workers to adjust their working schedules to suit their family engagements, domestic work, and any other social engagements such as taking children to school, taking care of the aging in society and others.

Employee performance remain a central and burning issue to every organizations, practitioners and researchers in the human resource management field. Consequentially, improving employee performance with the aim of increasing organisational overall performance remain the focus of every manager in an organization. In a bid to achieving this, human resources managers are not relenting in their quest to come up with methods or strategies that will allow employees to choose when they work and where they work from. Koech and Cheboi (2018) opined that employee performance is an indicator which measures how well an employee accomplishes the set targets in line with organizational objectives. In view of this, corporate organisations either small and medium enterprises, large firms or corporations worldwide are under tremendous pressure to improve their performance (Singh, 2013). However, employee performance would only be considered as backbone of the organization when it leads to enhancement of its performance. It is therefore, the responsibility of the management to introduce various strategies including flexible work arrangement that will assist the employees to add more value to the organization. As a result, present day firms have come to the realization of the fact that they need to continually develop unique human resource method that will continually guarantee their sustainability and offer them competitive advantage in the dynamic business environment. Hence, they focused on those strategies that promote work life balance of the employees with a view to achieving effective utilization of human resource.

Organizational support refers to fulfilling the social, emotional, and economic needs of individuals (Eisenberger, and Baik, 2016). According to Chiang and Hsieh (2012), who reiterated that employees will further perceive organizational support when the employers' cares about their well-being. Salau (2022b) also opined that one of the major factors which contributed to organizational support are work life equilibrium, working condition, managers support, fairness, and organizational rewards. While organizations struggle to meet the stakeholders needs and expand its market shares and organisational growth, employees are also planning on how best they can utilize their time to attend to other pressing programs, such as family affairs, social and political events as well as other personal activities which sometimes conflict with organizational goals. The inability to give attention to other activities will result to

work- life conflicts, which is associated with mental health issues such as stress and depression (Beck and Davis, 2004), this affects both the employees and organisational performance in the long run.

There is an observed dissenting views on previous studies on the effects of flexible work arrangements on employee's performance. For example, while Irawa and Sari (2020) submitted in their study that flexible work arrangement has no significant effect towards employee productivity. The duo of Blessing, Amanawa, and Uelee (2021) and Mungania, Waiganjo & Kihoro (2016) and others concludes that flexible work schedules significantly improve the performance of textile businesses in Rivers State. In addition, none of the previous studies examined the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements on employee's performance. The study empirically examines how flexible rescheduling has varied impact on employee's performance and the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on flexible rescheduling and employee's performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was hinged on the following objectives.

- i) To investigate the relationship of shift working arrangements on employee performance in private hospitals.
- ii) To establish the relationship of flexi time on employee performance in private hospitals.
- iii) To determine the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between flexible rescheduling and employee performance in private hospitals.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview of Flexible work arrangements in Private Hospitals

Flexible work arrangements include those organisational policy which allow employees to dictate on when and where they work, provided they can meet up with their task and job schedule. These arrangements have gained prominence due to economic, technological, social, and family changes. They also include flexible working hours, flexi-time, part-time work, overtime, job sharing, teleworking, shift and weekend work, paid parental leave, annual hours, temporary work, annual hours contracts, and flexible leave arrangements. The practice allows workers to adjust their works schedules to their family engagements, domestic work, and any other social assignment such as taking children to school, taking care of the aging in society and others. It provides employees with the needed flexibility to manage their work schedules effectively and efficiently.

However, Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, (2010) consider Flexible work arrangements as an important Work-Life Balance initiatives that which allows employees to manage their work and family responsibilities effectively. They provide employees with the freedom to choose when, where, and for how long they engage in work-related tasks, leading to enhanced engagement and performance (Dalcos & Daley, 2009). Hildebrandt, (2006) in his study observes that most common flexitime practice normally outlines the time when a workday starts and ends to enable all the flexitime employees choose the times, they will be working within those work limits.

Shift work

According to Cole (2002), shift work utilizes more hours during a 24-hour cycle, providing 24-hour coverage and enabling more work hours than the typical day work system. Shift work is one of the options of flexible work arrangements that enables organizations to provide continuous service provision which includes night shifts, evening shifts, early morning shifts, and rotating schedules. According to Cole, (2002), this continuous coverage enhances productivity in the long run. It also gives the workers the opportunity to work in teams, these are groups of workers who make up a separate shift team (Bentley, Teo, McLeod, Tana, Bosua & Gloet, 2016). However, shift work also

poses some challenges such as sleep disorders, fatigue, and mental health problems to both employees and organizations despite its benefits. These challenges could be caused by irregular work schedules as earlier observed by (Cole, 2002). A well-managed shift work has the tendency to enhance work-life balance for employees and allow them to attend to personal responsibilities without stress (Jane, Simon & Amos, 2015). Organizations must be mindful of the health hazard and benefits associated with shift work to maximize the employee's performance. Therefore, the definition aforesaid led us to the development of the third hypothesis:

H₀₁: Shift working arrangements does not affect employee performance in private hospitals.

Flexi-time

Flex time allows for negotiation by employee on the time to commence their daily work and when to terminate such provided that appreciable period of work is achieved. Pierce & Gardner, (2009) asserted that the introduction of work that is flexible in nature will lead to reduction in absenteeism of staff and can bring about increase in the level of job satisfaction. It allows employees, to decide the beginning and closing times of their workday, in as much as certain number of hours has been used.

According to Cole (2002), flexitime enables employees to have more control over their work schedules, provided they attend during a designated "core" time. This provides employee the opportunity to meet up with household or personal obligations or even emergencies, during the day and to reduce time spent on commuting by starting and ending work before or after the rush hour (Cooker, 2012). This is the most popular flexible work option with both employers and employees. By providing employees with greater control over their work schedules, it enhances job satisfaction, commitment, and engagement. Embracing flexi-time can create a positive work environment, resulting in higher employee satisfaction and improved overall performance for the organization. We therefore suggested that:

H₀₂: Flexi time does not have a significant effect on employee performance in private hospitals.

Perceived Organizational Support.

Rhoades, *et al*, (2002) once described perceived organizational support as the extent to which employees feel that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Perceived organizational support can produce a feeling of obligation that the organization cares about the employee welfare. Employees will have to assist their organization when they noticed the organisational support, so also thus employees would psychologically be willing to be devoted to the organization, when they perceived their organisational support, which will in return contributed positively to their job commitment. Employers support attitude and behaviours towards employees will inform the employee attitude to work and job performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H₀₃: Perceived organisational support has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements variables and employee's performance.

Employee Performance

Employee performance generally refers to how a worker behaves towards his/her job. Several indices can be used to measure how an individual behaves towards their work which vary from task to task, also. There are some set standards or guidelines for every objective attained. Employee performance is an indicator which measures how well an employee accomplishes the set targets in line with organizational objectives (Koech & Cheboi, 2018). As a result, corporate entities both public and private worldwide are under tremendous pressure to ameliorate their performance (Singh, 2013). Employee performance signifies individual's work achievement after exerting required effort on the job which is associated through getting a meaningful work, engaged profile, and compassionate colleagues/employers around (Karakas, 2010). Improving employee performance and overall organization performance should be the focus of every manager in an organization.

The behaviour of an employee in relation to a given task is established through performance evaluation. Employee's performance evaluation is a comprehensive analysis of a worker's performance, by observing their work during a certain period and examining all the objective manuscripts or documents relevant to how they have performed, to establish the extent at which these workers achieve the stipulated goals (USAID, 2009).

Theoretical Review

Spill Over Theory

Spill over theory was postulated in 1979 by Piotrkowski. The theory talks about work and family life. The author advocated that job related factors and family related factors should be in equilibrium for employees to be productive, brings about customer satisfaction, have job satisfaction and control their employee turnover. The theorem was to control work related stress or family life relate stress so that it does not spill over to work or family life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 2010). Greenhaus *et al.*, (2010) supported the theory and in fact added some other factors which determine employee performance he talked about attitude, stress and emotions and said that work life balance is vital, but the later issues should be controlled. This means that social imbalance affects the work efficiency and effectiveness of an individual employee. This theory is important to the study because it addresses issue of work life balance which is indicated by flexible working patterns. The relevance the theory was based on job satisfaction. Though the theory does not tackle employee performance.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Developed and Developing nations: Flexible Work Arrangement in focus.

From the developed nation, Bhadke, M & Rehman, M, (2022) investigated the consequences of shift work on various industries in Indian with the aim of determining the aspects of shift work that have a negative impact on employees' health, well-being, and productivity in the workplace. The study identified some complexities in shift work arrangement because of wide range variation in the research, it thus concluded that the effect of shift work on health, well-being, and performance is of vital importance.

Shifting focus to the developing nation, Irawa and Sari (2020) delves on the effect of flexible work arrangement, indoor air quality, location, and amenities towards employee productivity. The total population includes the 200 head office employees of PT XYZ in Jakarta, Indonesia while simple random sampling techniques was used to in the selection of 67 sample members which was arrives based on the Slovin formula calculation. Data were collected using questionnaires. Multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS software was used to analyze the data. The study concludes that flexible work arrangement has no significant effect towards employee productivity.

In addition, Mwebi & Kadaga (2015) explore the intricate relationship between flextime work arrangement and employee performance in Nairobi commercial banks. This research adapted a descriptive design. The target population was 1074 Nairobi commercial banks employees the sample of 291 respondents from different strata (management, supervisory, clerical, and secretarial as well as the support staff). The findings revealed that Flextime work arrangement is positively related to employee performance.

In a related Nigerian context, Blessing, Amanawa and Uelee (2023) contributed to the relationship between flexible work schedules and the organizational performance of Textile Production Companies in Rivers State. The study population and sample size were 95 comprising of (5) top managers (General Manager, Operations Manager, Human Resource Manager, Customer Relations Manager, and Information Technology Manager) from each of the nineteen (19) registered Textile Production Companies operating in Rivers State, Nigeria, of which 87 copies were retrieved.

The study revealed that flexible work schedules and all the variables of organisational performance are strongly positively correlated in River state.

Shifting focus to banking industry, Anekwe, (2019) studied flexible work arrangement and employee performance of selected commercial banks in Anambra State with a target population of 348 and adoption of Pearson product moment correlation coefficient as analysis tool for the hypotheses. The study concluded that Flexible work arrangement improve mental and physical stability and work efficiency and reduces work Stress.

While in manufacturing company, Onyeizugbe, Nduka, & Enaihi, (2019) explore the relationship that exist between flexible time and employee's performance in manufacturing firms. The study submitted that flexible timing has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. The study further recommends that the management of the manufacturing firm studied should imbibe self-roistering among others as part of the flexible timing procedure.

Moderating Effect of Perceived Organisational Support on Flexible Work arrangements and Employees Performance.

Cooper-Thomas, Xu and Saks (2018) earlier proposed that employee engagement is linked to emotions of warmth and caring. Chen and Fulmer (2017) also stated that working from flexible locations may not necessarily improve job satisfaction, but the element of trust motivates employees to work harder in appreciation of the trust instilled in them.

In a related Nigerian context, Salau, Genty and Olanipekun, (2022) delves into the effect of job insecurity on employees' performance with mediating role of perceived organisational support among selected stockbroking firms in Lagos State, Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that perceived organisational support significantly mediate the effect of job insecurity and employee performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study is an exploratory one based on both primary and secondary sources of information. To obtain relevant data for the study, the quantitative method and descriptive survey design was applied and used in this study to establish the correct relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee performance in private hospitals and further describe how perceived organisational support moderate the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee performance. The study population consisted of two thousand, eight hundred and eighty-six (2886) private hospitals in Lagos State according to Health Facilities Monitoring and Accreditation Agency, (HEFAMAA, 2023), only 248 questionnaires were returned out of 351 questionnaires administered by the researcher. However, the study adopted simple random sampling techniques to draw the sample from the population while PPMCS and Multiple regression were used to analyse the hypotheses formulated.

Reliability and Analysis

To determine the reliability of the study research instrument, a pilot study was conducted in private hospitals in Lagos State. Crobatch's alpha was employed to estimate the internal consistency reliability. According to Sekeran and Bougie (2009), a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 is sufficient in confirming if variables are reliable. While shift work had a reliability of (.825), flextime had a reliability of (.749), employee performance had a reliability of (.775). this is a good indication of reliability regarding the research instrument.

Table 1: showing Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	No of Items	Verdict
Shift work	.825	12	Reliable
Flexitime	.749	12	Reliable
Employees Performance	.775	12	Reliable

Text of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

The result in table 2 showed that shift work arrangement in private hospitals is positively correlated. The result which is presented in table 2 indicates that there is a positive, and significant relationship between shift work and employee's performance in private hospitals in Lagos State at (shift work; $n= 248$, $.653$, $p < 0.05$). The implication of this is that when employees are allowed to adopt shift work arrangement. it will significantly add to the performance of the private hospitals. In line with the above, flexibility of shift work allows employees to balance personal and professional commitments effectively which will in turn positively influence their job performance. This is in consonant with Lim and Teo's (2010) study which opined that flexible work arrangements like telework, flexible work schedules, and flexible workplaces are frequently employed by employees to assist them in balancing their personal and professional lives. In the same vein, the adoption of shift works also enable the employees to handle high-pressure situations, reduced work-family conflict and give employee's job satisfaction. This is in tandem with the submission of Thomas and Ganster (2015) that policies including flexible work schedules and supportive supervisors were positively associated with reduced levels of work-family conflict.

The results of this hypothesis is in agreement with the empirical studies of Okemwa (2016) who submitted that flexible work arrangement (flexitime, compressed work schedule, shift schedule and job sharing) has a positive significant with commitment and Otfiyantoa, Abid Muhtarom, Haris & Henny, (2018) who submitted that Shift work have positive and significant to the performance of employees. Hanna, Chang, Sullivan, Lackney (2008) further concluded that shift work have the potential to be both beneficial and detrimental to the productivity of manufacturing labour. Although. Griffiths & Dall'Ora, (2017) are of the view that there may also be a reduced efficiency as staff performance declines on longer shifts.

Hypotheses Two

Table 2 above revealed that flexitime arrangements schedules and employee's performance in Lagos state private hospitals are positively correlated at ($n= 248$, $.711$, $p < 0.05$). By implication, this means that flexi time arrangement has the tendency to enhances the staff contributions to productivity. This supported by the position of Clarke (2017) who submitted that staffs that are provided time for personal, professional, and social obligations outperform those who do not. It was further observed that flexi time policy helps employees to better manage their workload, which has a positive impact on job performance and significantly reduce job-related stress and burnout. The concomitant effect of these is that it maximizes employee's productivity. This was buttressed by the position of Perez, et al (2012) who noted that the fact that employees have control on when to clock in and out of work makes them attend to work at the time most convenient for them hence, reduces absenteeism and tardiness.

These results is in agreement with the empirical studies of Okemwa (2016) who submitted that flexible work arrangement (flexitime, compressed work schedule, shift schedule and job sharing) has a positive significant linear

relationship with commitment, Also, Mwebi & Kadaga (2015) and Onyeizugbe, Nduka, & Enaihi, (2019) revealed that Flexitime work arrangement is positively related to employee performance.

The result of the current study further substantiates the Spill Over Theory postulated in 1979 by Piotrkowski which advocated that job related factors and family related factors should be in equilibrium for employees to be productive, brings about customer satisfaction, have job satisfaction.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Table Showing the Relationship among Shift work and Flexi-time and SME Performance.

		Employees Performance	Shift work	Flex-itime
Employees Performance	Pearson Correlation. Sig. (2 tailed) N	1 194		
Shift work	Pearson Correlation. Sig. (2 tailed) N	.653** .000 248	1 .000 248	
Flexi-time	Pearson Correlation. Sig. (2 tailed) N	.711** .000 248	.695** .000 248	1 .000 248

● Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis 4: Perceived organisational support has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements variables and employee's performance.

To test whether perceived organisational support has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements variables and employee's performance, the analysis below was considered. The result showed that R² (regression value) of the entrepreneurial competency is 0.689 (I.e flexible work arrangements variation on employees' performance by 64.2%). The R value is 72.3% with the significant value of perceived organisational support at .000. It is therefore concluded that Perceived organisational support significantly moderates the relationship between flexible work arrangements variables and employee's performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho₂) which states that "Perceived organisational support has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements variables and employee's performance." is hereby rejected. The

study observed that the perceived organisational support will give the employees the needed confidence to fully support the new policy of their organisation without any fear of job loss or remuneration slash. Otherwise, the employees will use the time gain from flexible work arrangement to continue to search for new job.

The present study result is in tandem with the empirical studies of Salau, *et all* (2022b) who concluded that perceived organisational support significantly mediates the effect of job insecurity and employee performance.

Table 3: Multiple regression table Showing the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on flexible work arrangement and SMEs performance.

R ² = .723 ^a		R ² = .689		Adj. R ² = .636		Std. Error of the Estimate = .27234		F = 5.335	
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Partial					
Constant)	.390	.291			.862	.000			
Shift Work	.656	.121	.321		.930	.000			
Flex-itime	.621	.117	.316		.653	.000			
perceived Organisational support (POS)	.598	.141	.355		.773	.000			

a. Dependent Variable: EMPPERFOR

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study presents a multidimensional view of the relationship that exist between flexible work arrangements and employee performance with the moderating effect of perceived organisational support in private hospitals in Lagos state. The positive and statistically significant effect of flexible work arrangement on employees’ performance account for how flexible work arrangement has gained prominence in the workplace due to economic, technological, social, and family changes. The study therefore concluded that: there is a positive influence of flexible work arrangement measurements (I.e., shift work and flexitime) on employees’ performance in private hospitals. So also, the study concluded that perceived organisational support significantly moderates the relationship between flexible work

arrangements predictors (I.e., shift work and flexi-time) and employees' performance. Despite this significant effect of flexi-time work arrangement on organisational performance, there is still need for private hospitals to reappraise the scheme for proper implementation and policy framework.

In view of the above conclusions, the study recommended that.

- i. There is need for Private hospitals in Lagos State to continue to reevaluate the Shift work arrangement by inculcating the views/opinions of the employees with a view to enhancing employees' performances and reducing conflicts that arise because of non-implication of flexible work arrangements.
- ii) Private hospitals should not hesitate to explore the opportunities that are bound to arise from the flexi-time arrangements by making it operational in all departments and ensure that it is well communicated to all stake holders.
- iii) Private hospitals should also develop various organisational support mechanism/strategies that will enable flexible work arrangements to flourish in their organisation.
- iv) Above all, private hospitals should design the flexible work arrangement policy and guideline in such a way that it will improve mental and physical stability, increase work efficiency, reduce work Stress, reduce absenteeism, and increase employee satisfaction and enhance employee's performance. Consequently, long work shift should be avoided.

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