

Flexible Work Arrangement and Employee Performance in Idah Local Government Council

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Abstract: *This study examined the relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance in Idah Local Government Council. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of this study was eight hundred and eighty-nine employees (889) of Idah Local Government council in Kogi State. The sample size of 275 was determined using calculated using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The findings from analysis of data analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance in Idah Local Government Council. Flexible work arrangement has a positive significant influence on performance of staffs in Idah Local Government Council, Kogi State, Nigeria. The study recommends that the Leadership of Local Government Councils should encourage their employees at all level to fix their leave at their convenient period, after performing all their work-related duties, it's lawful and it secures the health, safety, confidence, and loyalty of the staff and they should also promote flexible career paths, job sharing as it's important in increasing employee's performance in the council.*

Keywords: *Flexible Work Arrangement, Employee Performance, Effectiveness, Efficiency.*

I. Introduction

In the current global work environment, there is intense competition for talented employees and market share based on higher product quality and lower prices in order to realize strategic advantage. Competition requires organizations to take into account diversity of employee needs, work life values, cultural influences in the areas where the companies operate as well as the diversity of working relationships in order to attract, retain and fully engage the employee. As many organizations come to terms with the challenges of attracting and retaining the best talent and retaining the best talent coupled with the emerging issues of work life conflicts, it is important that managers employ a variety of human resource practices to attain organizational goals (McLean & Collins, 2011).

Studies across the world have shown that both public and private organizations are implementing work-life balance initiatives, among them flexible work arrangement, to minimize on the negative effects of work-life imbalance and hence tap on the associated benefits which include but not limited to increased productivity, increased employee morale, increased customer service, increased employee commitment, and reduced absenteeism (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007; Todd, 2004).

In this modern and dynamic world, organizations or firms as well as government at all levels are adapting to recent techniques or technology in the business environment to meet up to what other competitors are doing. Most firms in Nigeria today are known for their long hour culture at work place and high work load on employees. There is lack of flexibility, high work pressure on workers and longer working hours, yet little remunerations. It can lead to occupational stress which may have some health implications. It reduces their job performance and affects productivity as well as preventing social life with either friends or family. Therefore, the purpose of this paper therefore was to examine the relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance in Idah Local Government Council. The research question of the study included:

- i. What is the relationship between flexible work arrangement and effectiveness in Idah Local Government Council?
- ii. What is the relationship between flexible work arrangement and efficiency in Idah Local Government Council?



Figure 1: *Conceptual model for the relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance*
Source: Desk Research (2022)

II. Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Work/Family Boarder Theory

The work-family border is a theory postulated by Clark (2000). This theory gives and insight into how individuals handle and maintain work and family domains and the boundaries between them to achieve work life balance. The idea of work and family comprising of different parts and how they relate with each other is imperative to this theory. Work/family border theory asserts that an individual role is defined along a particular sphere of life. These spheres are restricted by boundaries that may be physical, temporal, or psychological. This theory focuses on managing borders or boundaries between spheres of life, most notably between the work and non-work life. Thus, it emphasizes that there should be a suitable balance between work and family life involvement. Therefore, this study seeks to adopt the organizational support theory as it supports work-life balance of the employee and their performance.

Flexible Work Arrangement

Flexible work arrangement is defined as an alternative to the standard working day where employees are able to choose when they work and where they work from so long as they fulfill their working obligations in doing so (Rau and Hyland, 2002; Grzywacz, Carlson, and Shulkin, 2008). It usually comprehends to organizational initiatives which enhances employees' flexibility on the time and place where work has to be accomplished, and also various policies which enhances employees' flexibility on the time and place where work has to be accomplished, and also various policies exerting influence on the number of hour worked (Hill et al., 2008). The common flexibility arrangements include: flexi-time, permanent, part-time work, absence autonomy, job sharing, compressed work weeks, reduced schedule, telework, extra vacation days, limited schedule of meetings (meetings cannot be scheduled too late at the end of the day), flexible holidays and keeping with the schedule (employees work mandatory 8 hours/day and do not extend their schedules longer (Hartel et al., 2007). Flexible work arrangements are connected to a number of positive outcomes for employees who access them including better mental health and reductions in stress, burnout, turnover and absenteeism and increases in retention, loyalty, job satisfaction, innovation, creativity and productivity (Galinsky, et al., 2008).

Concept of Employee Performance

Employee performance describes the behavior and actions that are displayed by the employees which contributes to an organizations goal. Consequently, Campbell, Gasser and Oswald (1996) postulates that job performance exists as a result of the perception of workers who consider their job as fundamental to the attainment of organizational goals. Afaq and Raja (2016) corroborates that employees' performance is extremely influenced by training and development and hence it is imperative that employees and management focus more on personnel training in order to increase the level of skilled workers, and in return these workers can give their best to the organization. Inuwa (2016) believes that staff performance is instrumental to organizational growth and profitability and management's ability to comprehend staffs' satisfaction and its connection to schedules its daily responsibility will impact greatly on staff performance. According to Rasiq and Maulabakhsh (2010) workers should strive to achieve the performance standard put in place by the organization to ensure quality of work on their part. However, employees need a conducive environment that enables them to work, an environment void of problems that may deter them from performing or achieving the level of the full potential if they are to meet the standards of organization.

III. Measures of Employees Performance

Efficiency

Efficiency is the positive evidence that results from the relationship between inputs and outputs and how successfully the inputs have been transformed into outputs (Low, 2000). Excellent organizational efficiency can set a platform for growth in institution's performance in terms of management, productivity, quality and profitability. Afaq and Raja (2018) in their study posit that the gap between knowledge and skills possessed by the employees and the skills required to perform efficiently, should be narrowed down by creating awareness among employees as well as among managers regarding benefits of training and development. Efficiency is a vital part of management. It is the relationship between input and outputs. However, being efficient is usually not enough, management is also concerned with completing activities so that organizational goals are attained; that is why management is concerned with effectiveness (Gabriel, 2012).

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is measured by the degree to which inputs and output are capable of achieving the intended results for specific and delimited constituencies (direct output) for entire sectors (Intermediate outcomes is more difficult than in case of output because the influence of intervening variables is much stronger (Mandl, Dierx, &Hzkovitis, 2008). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) analyzed organizational effectiveness through organizational commitment. Commitment in the workplace may take various forms, such as relationship between leaders and staff personal affiliation with the organization, involvement in the decision making process, psychological attachment felt by an individual.

Increased Productivity

McDaniel (2001) defined productivity as the measure of how efficiently and effectively resources are brought together and utilized for the production of goods and services of the quality needed by society in the long term. This entails that productivity is a mixture of performance and financial use of capital. Increased productivity shows capitals are competently and successfully used and misuse is reduced. Increased productivity encourages the growth of the firm, other times called organizational performance. Stevenson, (1998) has noted that the productivity of an organization is the capacity that must manufacture tangible and intangible products. More specially, a company's output is the gauge of how the specific resources are managed to achieve the affirmed objectives in terms of quantity and quality. A healthy worker is a productive worker which means that when employees are healthy, the perform their Job effectively and efficiently without having to take time off work (Lee et al., 2010)

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and effectiveness?

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and efficiency.

IV. Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of this study was eight hundred and eighty-nine employees (889) of Idah Local Government council in Kogi State. The sample size of 275 was determined using calculated using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for

Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

V. Data Analysis And Results

Table 1: Correlations for flexible work arrangement and measures of employee performance

		Flexible work arrangement	Effectiveness	Efficiency	
Spearman's rho	Flexible work arrangement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.704**	.838**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	255	255	255
	Effectiveness	Correlation Coefficient	.704**	1.000	.756**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	255	255	255
	Efficiency	Correlation Coefficient	.838**	.756**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	255	255	255

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data output (SPSS output version 23.0)

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and effectiveness

The result of correlation matrix obtained between flexible work arrangement and effectiveness

was shown in Table 1. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.704 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a positive strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance shows that that this relationship is significant at p 0.000<0.01. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and effectiveness.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and efficiency.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between flexible work arrangement and efficiency was shown in Table 1. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.838 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a positive very strong correlation between the variables. The tests of significance shows that that this relationship is significant at p 0.000<0.01. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and efficiency.

VI. Discussion Of Findings

This study using descriptive and inferential statistical methods investigated the relationship between Work life balance and employee performance. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between Work life balance and employee performance using the Spearman’s rank order correlation tool and at a 95% confidence interval. The findings of this study confirmed that Work life balance have a positive effect on Employee performance. This reinforces previous studies by Maertz and Boyar (2009) who defines work-life balance as a specific set of organizational practices, policies, programmes, plus a philosophy, which actively supports efforts to help employees achieved success both at work and at home. Work-life programmes cover reward, gains and other human resource programmes all of which tackle the significant connections of employees, their families, communities, and the workplace.

Clark (2000) describes work family balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict. Greenhaus ,Collins and Shaw (2003) define work-life balance as the extent to which

an individual is equally engaged in-and equally satisfied with his or her work role and family role. Work-life can be viewed from the lenses of creating and supporting healthy environment which will enable employees have balance between work and personal responsibilities that tends to strengthen employees' loyalty and productivity. Aslam et al., (2011) defines work-life conflicts as inter-role conflict arising due to conflicting roles required by organization and from one's family. Roehing (2003) defines work-life balance as a direct result of compatible pressure from an individual family roles and work domain.

The finding also is in line with the theoretical arguments of Bird (2003) who contends that one's best individual work-life balance would vary overtime, often on daily basis. The right balance for one person today will probably be different for the same person tomorrow. The right balance for a single person will be different when he/she marries or if one has children; when a new career is started versus when one is nearing retirement. Work-life balance in its broadest sense is a satisfactory level of involvement or "fit" between the multiple roles in a person's life. Although definitions and explanations vary, work-life balance is generally associated with equilibrium, or maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life (Clarke et al., 2004). The study of work-life balance involves the examination of people's ability to manage simultaneously the multifaceted demand of life.

VII. Conclusion And Recommendations

Based on the finding obtained the conclude that flexible work arrangement has a positive significant influence on performance of staffs in Idah Local Government Council, Kogi State, Nigeria

The study recommends that the leadership of Local Government Councils should encourage their employees at all level to fix their leave at their convenient period, after performing all their work-related duties, it's lawful and it secures the health, safety, confidence, and loyalty of the staff and they should also promote flexible career paths, job sharing as it's important in increasing employee's performance in the council.

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