

Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Employee Effectiveness of Listed Microfinance Banks in Nnewi Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of work-life balance practices on employee effectiveness in listed microfinance banks in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey and correlation research design. The stratified sampling technique was employed to determine the sample frame. Structured questionnaire was used as primary instrument for data collection. Pilot study was carried out to obtain the reliability of the instrument through Cronbach Alpha Statistics value at 0.74%. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test the hypotheses. It was discovered that work-life balance has positive and significant relationship with employees' productivity in the listed Microfinance banks in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study concluded that adoption of telecommuting, flexible working hour and job sharing practices improve workers' productivity. The study recommended among others, that banking institutions as a matter of urgency encourage workers' work-life forces so as to enhance firms' effectiveness in the long-run.

KEYWORDS: work-life balance (WLB), flexible working option, job sharing, employee productivity and organizational effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The need to empower employees with work-life balance has become imperative in today's fast changing economy. Work-life balance is critical for improving workers productivity. Absence of work-life balance in many organizations as pointed out by Yasir (2014) has become a great challenge affecting organizations and employees output. Hence, the issue of balancing work and family responsibility has become a matter of urgency so as to retain valuable staff. The issue is conflicting demands from professional life, social roles, family responsibilities and increase needs

for high productivity may result to the need for work-life balance. Work-life balance according to Joan, Cordruta and Ratiu (2010) is deliberate organizational changes in programmes, practices or organizational culture designed to reduce life and professional conflicts and enable employees to be more effective at work and in other roles. It entails proper prioritizing between “work” on one hand and “life” on the other hand (Bhadrapa, 2021). In this context, we refers to WLB as deliberate and supportive organizational programmes, policies or activities that permit employees’ ample opportunities and enhanced capabilities to achieve their remarkable needs and wants within the organization and at the same time optimize business goals.

Work-life balance has historical undertone. It emerged during 19th-century revolution calling employers of labour to allow a 40-hour working week recognized as human rights for good living. The agitation included incorporation of recreation, family recuperation, effectively preempted and sculpted the shape of the modern concept of work-life balance. Several decades ago, the workforce was predominately male. Then, the concept had remained difficult to define and operationalize (Kalliath & Brought, 2008). With inclusion of women in the working arena, there comes a paradigms suggesting that there should be balance between portions of time allotted between domains of work, home and social life as separate entities. But researches challenged this notion of separation, tendering that the different domains of workers’ life were permeable and interconnected in affecting employees and organizational productivity

Employees can experience work-life balance when they receive organizational support which appears as strong motivation. Work-life balance encompasses organizational strategies such as childcare, parental leave, housing allowances, flexible work hours, offering employees’ compressed work week to enable them work a full week worth of hours less than five days or reduction in hours of work that enable individuals achieve satisfactory level between family roles and professional life. Organizations can provide other benefits such as programmes which encourage employees to work from home. This can create a mutual type of relationship that help employees to perform effectively at the workplace.

The issues with regard to increase in individual responsibilities both at workplace and home have been on the front burner of both employer and employees. The prevalent increase of dual income, change in workforce demographics and value changes are issues at stake. Also, studies have documented evidence which pointed to the view that in many modern enterprises, people still work under stringent working conditions ranging from low pay, excessive and inflexible working

hours, conflicting relationships, poor leave allowance which usually result in work-life imbalance (Ivestopeelia Team, 2021; Shwe, 2021); Bhadrappa, 2021; Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia & Syed, 2015). Those poor working conditions take tolls on employees' health as they induce work pressures, stress and burnout that can limit productivity of workers. Diksha and Shilpa (2014) reiterated that challenges of work-life balance are increasing on the daily basis owing to personal values, advance technology and complexities in workplace. In the face of these challenges, organizations are compelled to design innovative strategies to improve employees' morale, abilities and willingness to perform so as increase productivity.

The frustrating search for work-life balance has become frequently translated into not having enough time or support to do, to handle, to manage work, commitments, and personal responsibilities (Diksha and Shilpa 2014). The issue of not having enough time for oneself owing to increased responsibility and commitment in the workplace can lead to sickness, stress and absenteeism thereby causing low employee productivity. Thus, work-life balance has become a matter of concern for all employees and all organizations in today's global village.

Employee's productivity can be a function of work-life balance. Jääskeläinen (2010) described employee productivity as a process which measures staff on the levels of effectiveness and efficiency in the task given. In other words, employees' productivity has been associated with tasks, efficiency, quality, time, quantity of work as well as performance in the workplace. However, employees facing numerous tasks and limited time may not judiciously perform quality job. Therefore, employees demand excellent working environment and equity rewards within the organization which is desirable to encourage quality performance (Rugut & Kipkorir, 2022). Hetanshi (2014) posit that employee productivity can be sustained when special care is taken to reduce job-induced stress at every level of output. Managharan, Thivaharan & Rahman (2018) evidenced that employee productivity can translate to value creation, business growth, survival and competitive advantage.

This study sought to cover gap in literature. Although a number of researches have been conducted in relations to work-life balance with varying arguments Bushra & Yasir 2014, none of those studies were conducted within the context of microfinance banks, particularly within Nnewi metropolis. Akanwa and Ugwoke (2023) investigated the work-life balance on organisational performance of brewery firms, while this present study focused on Micro-finance bank at Nnewi Metroplois, thus there are gaps in location, content and in empirical research which this present

study tends to fulfill. Therefore the investigated the relationship between work-life balance conceptualized by telecommuting, flexible work hours and job sharing on employees productivity in listed microfinance banks within Nnewi metropolis, Anambra state Nigeria. This eras of study was informed because microfinance serves as crystals to finance accessible avenues to small and medium enterprises to undertake their productive and expansion so as to alleviate poverty at grass root level of the Nigerian citizens.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between telecommunication and employee productivity.

Ho₂: Flexible work hours do not significantly has relationship with employee productivity;

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between job sharing and employee productivity.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study covered the relationship between work-life balances on employees' productivity in listed Microfinance Banks in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. Chukwunenye microfinance, Hallowed Microfinance Bank Ltd; Ideal Trust Microfinance Bank Limited. The content scope include: telecom, flexible work hour, job sharing which formed the independent variable and employee' productivity which formed the dependent variable. The respondents were the senior and managers in the functional areas which include the human resource, accounting, marketing and administration departments.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Work-life balance

The issue of work and personal life has occupied the mind of many researchers, organizations and management scholars in the past few decades. Shwe (2021) asserts that work-life balance is a concept that supports the employees to split their time and energy and other important aspect of life and it is the daily effort to create time for family, friends, communities, and other relevant stakeholders. It entails work-life initiatives within many organizational policies designed to reduce conflicts at the workplace, enhance employee satisfaction and job commitment. Work-life balance provides the win-win benefits for both employers and employees. Organizations that neglect issues related to employees' work-life may end up with lower employee productivity. Most times,

employees who work from home feel more relaxed, more comfortable in carrying out their duties. Work-life conflict would be much reduced than the others who work under tension and compacted responsibilities at workplace. In other words, such employee would have the privilege of spending more time with his family and easily fulfills his/her family commitments. The employees would become vibrant, happy and committed individuals driving the organization towards sustainable growth (Thevanes and Arurajah, 2017).

Ensuring work-life balance to the employees' has become an important instrument to enhance positive job attitude and family satisfaction because an employee who has achieved work-life balance is most probably committed at work and at home having minimum inter-role conflict (Allen, 2001). However, work-life balance has been associated with improved organizational performance, competitive edge, increased job satisfaction and thereby, enhances social exchange processes

As a matter of facts, conflicts between work and personal life can be reduced either with team work (job sharing) or organizational support such as fair remuneration (Delecta, 2011). This implies that an employee who receives better pay and benefits from the workplace stands a good change to solving personal and numerous family needs. In other words, the repercussions of low rewards and benefits on employee maybe enormous such as low career prospects, trade off family and career value and other vices. Such could affect recreational activities, social needs which may be forgone in the face of work-life imbalance.

Bhadrapa (2021) claims that, work-life balance remains employee's ability to properly prioritize between work and lifestyle, social life, health, family and so on. It refers to the application of autonomy at workplace; employees' conflicting demands are reduced as they simultaneously carry on their responsibilities. Hornby (2010) posits that work-life balance can offer employees some hours per week, compared with the number of hours spent with your family, relaxation, and so on. Again, many employees opt for part-time jobs as being the best way to improve their work-life balance more especially when they perceive that the employer would solve most of their personal needs of comfort. Nowadays, work life balance is becoming an ever imperative issue and a matter of concern. Many individuals are reluctant in accepting long hours of work as they prefer part-time jobs that give them time for outside responsibilities.

Organizations at this age are striving to strike a balance between work-life as an ongoing process. This is because, if there is deficit in work-life balance, the chances of surviving after

effects become difficult (Hetanshi, 2014). Therefore, interface between work and peoples non-work activities has been described as incompatibility. The work-life boundary has typically focused on how participation in multiple life roles depletes resources and produces stress and strain on people. Alternatively, many researchers have adopted a role expansion perspective, suggesting that participation in multiple life roles can derive rewards, gratification, energy creation and growth. In this view, the boundary between work and other life roles has been termed enrichment (Brough & Biggs 2015), enhancement (Voydanoff, 2002). Consequently, the social changes precipitated by large women entrant into workforce, drastic advancement in technology, change in social values have also exacerbated the importance of the work-life balance initiatives. Work-life balance has been conceptualizations as equal distribution of resources across work, family or other life roles thereby enabling effective participation in each domain.

Telecommuting

Ahmed, Ishaque, Nawaz, Ali, & Hayat(2014) define telecommuting as working from anywhere that employees feel comfortable working using tools and devices such as smart phones, tablets, desktop computers, and notebooks while being online remotely with their workplaces, organizations, clients, and others. The organization can improve the work and life of employees when they provide information technology that enables workers work from anywhere. With information technology compliance, customers can get satisfactory response and their needs solved as required. In this regards, employees can feel better and are able to balance their life and work responsibilities and if they have autonomy over their work schedule and can choose their work locations. Accordingly, telecommuting provides flexible work environment that permits work to be done remotely, from an employee's home or other location, thereby benefiting both parties; employees and organizations (Nieminen, Nicklin, McClure & Chakrabarti, 2011). For some employees, they are satisfied working from home arrangements and it is more beneficial for some organizations with regards to increase productivity. On the other hand, such arrangement has been associated with serious problems with employee role if he/she has greater family responsibility (Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia, & Syed, 2015).

Brunelle and Fortin (2021) espoused that there are myriad benefits of allowing employees to carry their works to their homes or other convenient areas. This type of work arrangements can lead to reduction of stress and juxtaposition of role. Work-life balance may result in time management which signifies the ability of an individual to balance time demands between work

and personal life. Most employees preferred home arrangements where they could feel relaxed, work more comfortably efficiently with their electronic gadgets such as Internet and Intranet. On the other hand, such arrangement has been associated with serious interference with employee role more especially when they have greater family responsibilities (Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia, & Syed, 2015).

Research shows that telework generally increases job performance and productivity. A recent study found that companies that apply telecommuting have higher productivity because employees choose to work in a better work atmosphere, more accessible access to knowledge. Workers may lead to low absenteeism, attrition, and at reduced costs. Teleworking improves well-being, work-life balance, performance, motivation, satisfaction, and autonomy and reduces stress and work-family conflict Brunelle, Fortin, (2021). It can improve job performance; make employees feel valuable with reduced absenteeism. However, too many telework hours might impair employee productivity and stress levels. In addition, the pandemic that devastated global health systems and the potential for future illnesses may motivate teleworkers (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020). This new phenomenon opens new possibilities for further experimentation and, eventually, the sustainability of telecommuting. The organization's concerns in health and safety, supply chain, labor force, cash flow, business demand, marketing, and public health are reshaping their organizations for sustainability and growth. . Sustainability, according to (Hakovirta, & Denuwara, 2020) achieves economic balance and responsibility. In the past, telecommuting provides success for organization to operate for its sustainability and development despite lockdowns and movement control orders.

An organization that provides facilities that enable employees opportunity to work from suitable locations are said to guarantee greater job satisfaction, reduce turnover to increase performance which result in increase in profit and competitive advantage. A satisfied worker will be self-driven to perform high when compared with an unhappy employee who is striving to get the right balance between work, family and personal life.

Job Sharing

Job sharing is a practice of distributing work between two or more individual workers who work together in a one full time job. Job sharing technique can enable organization maximize available workforce with less stressful work as well as turnover intention (Bhadrapa, 2021). In job, the

employees not only share the job but they also share their responsibilities, their working time and knowledge. Job sharing can aid these employees in magnificent ways. It can help in managing their time more flexibly; increase commitment and can learn from others while working with them. Research has shown that job sharing results in increasing productivity in many ways. Such as, job sharing allows more balanced life in terms of giving time to family. Secondly, it gives leverage in taking days off when any type of emergency occurs (Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia, & Syed 2015). Moreover, job sharing helps to enhance team skills as well as leadership skills. That gives the employee an opportunity to work and learn from others' experiences. The research study signifies the importance of job sharing in workplace.

Isaac (2020) highlighted major factors that contribute to the interest in and importance of serious consideration of flexible work arrangement to include: global competition, renewed interest in personal lives, family values and an aging workforce. Concerns have always been raised regarding policy and debates on flexible work arrangement from perspectives of the quality of working life when weighed against the broader family matters. However, the challenge has been how employees would adopt good flexible work arrangement practices and the organizations to adopt policies to tackle conflicts that ensue from the interface of family or social pressures and work stress. Job sharing has been introduced in the recent past by organizations for greater employees work life balance. It has also become an important part of the benefit and compensation programmes which are commonly referred to as 'family friendly'. Therefore, employee productivity may have been the most important issue for every organization be it public or private that emanate from job sharing mechanisms. It has been very important for organizations to know which factors influence employee productivity so as to take appropriate steps to initiate enhanced strategy.

Flexible Work hours

According to Ronen, Simcha; Primps & Sophia (2001) compacted workweeks organizational strategy substituted for long work schedule has been a recent transaction between number of hours worked in a day and the number of hours worked in a week so that the designated numbers of weekly hours are achieved in less than five days. Compressed work week has been employed in various public and private sectors which includes offices, banks, data-processing centers, hospitals, police forces, utilities and manufacturing facilities. It has been found that

compressed workweeks have positive impact on several organizational factors such as job satisfaction, absenteeism, turnover, employees' morale and productivity (Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia & Syed (2015). Organizations with flexible work hour arrangement leverage employee skills and knowledge. This is because the arrangement whether shifting arranging or reduction of working hour, enables to gain more knowledge from different tasks and as well, increase on performance. Flexible work-week can aid employees with sound health and reduce stress and burnouts. Couples with multiple-roles that individuals play these days make it imperative to have conscious reduced number of working days so to increase well-being and reduction in role conflict. Work is becoming more intensive and dense these days and this has a direct impact on a woman's free time and her family responsibilities.

Employee productivity

According to Bhadrappa (2021), work-life balance practices is key to employees' productivity; as such, it can improve employee's self-efficacy, enable employee manager tasks better as well as increase employee's wellbeing in the workplace. Kamau (2013) prescribed employee productivity to entail the measuring, determining the length of time that an average worker needs to generate a given level of production. Such include the amount of time an individual used in accomplishing particular task and how efficient he/she was in the accomplishment of the work. Freed (2020) productivity has been defined as result of measuring someone's efficiency to do work against time. Measures employees' productivity is very crucial to ascertain the level of performance in the workplace. To this end, measuring employee productivity has never been an easy task to assess because all employees are not having the same task, knowledge and skill. Measure of employee productivity entails knowledge of how well they contribute towards the company's goals and objectives. This includes measurement of how many products each employee can process per hour, in a month or in a day. Most organizations especially calculate their profit level based on employees' productivity at work. In this case, it is easier to measure productivity than tracking the revenue of a company. It helps organizations identify employees' strengths and weaknesses, set benchmarks, detect the areas for improvement and identify top performers (Fred 2020). Productivity may be said to mean getting important things done consistently.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

Work-life balance according to previous researchers fundamentally focused on job related outcomes which consists of job satisfaction, motivation, work engagement, turnover intentions, job involvement, organizational citizenship and their likes (Brough, et al, 2020). Previous studies evidenced that work-life balance has link work engagement, employees level of self-efficacy, spillover from the non-work to work domain, reciprocity of favorable treatment, affective commitment which in turn enhance employee productivity (Kim 2014; Chan, Kalliath, Brough, O’Driscoll, Siu & Timms, 2017).

In contrast, work-life imbalance can generate stress and mental disorder, ill- health (e.g. depression and anxiety) for workers. Work-life balance if not obtained becomes detrimental to organizational success and reduced productivity in the work place. Designing appropriate programme outside working environments such career advancement can have restorative benefits for individuals, enhancing subsequent levels of values, satisfaction as well as enhanced subsequent levels of work performance (Bhadrappa, 2021). He further reiterated the benefit of WLB to include increase employee’s wellbeing, self-esteem, health, concentration marital satisfaction, task management and reduction in the level of related illness. Therefore an employee who demonstrates appropriate recovery (or resilience) from his/her work is more productive, engaged and has higher job performance. They tend to display more organizational citizenship behaviours (Binnewies et al, 2010). The effects of introducing work-life balance practices on employee attitudes and perceptions include: job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job stress. All these factors in turn affect job performance, direct and indirect costs associated with the loss and replacement of valued employees, customer satisfaction and organizational productivity (Diksha & Shipa, 2014).

In line with other researchers, Thevanes & Harikarn (2020) posit that work-life promoting practices aims to shape the positive work-related attitudes of employees. It tends to eliminate the work-life conflict and also improve the productivity of organization. It also encourages organizational citizenship behaviour.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Segmentation and Spill-over theory

Zedek & Mosier (1990) and O'Driscoll (1996) postulated the theory of work-family boundary management model as a personality-related antecedent of work-life balance. This refers to how an individual demarcates his/her work and family boundaries and roles. The theory maintains that work and non-work domain are two distinct entities of life which have no influence on one another and are lived separately. The boundary management styles include segmentation, integration, and alternating. In general, segmentation (delineate work and personal life as separate domains) facilitates work-life balance. The theory does not see any connection whatsoever between the two domains and opine that they cannot affect one another. Integration (delineating work and personal life as freely interacting domains) reduces levels of work-life balance. In contrast, spill over model postulate that work and on-work are two distinct domains of life which can influence one another either positively or negatively. There is cause and effect relationship between work and non-work life of employee in an organization. The alternating (clear periods of segmentation and integration) facilitate work-life balance in the long term (Kossek & Lautsch 2012; Matthews et al, 2010).

Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory of motivation was postulated by Victor Vroom 1964. The theory places emphasis on the process and on the content of motivation. Vroom focuses on outcomes, and not on needs unlike Maslow and Herzberg. The theory aims at explaining how and why people choose one behavioural option against another. The basic idea of this theory is that people are motivated to choose an action when they believe that their decisions to select that particular action will result in their desired outcome. Expectancy theory proposes that motivation relies upon the anticipation between performance and outcomes that individuals modify their behaviour based on their assumption of expected outcomes (Allen & Myers, 1990). He assumed that most of the observed behaviour would be motivated by the outcomes and expectations concerning the consequences of actions. His principal methodology of this theory was "objective observation". Expectancy theory of work motivation is dependent upon the perceived rewards between performances, their payoffs and so, individuals modify their behaviour toward the assumption of anticipated rewards. The essential elements of Vroom's ideals have come to be called "Expectancy Theory". The crux of this theory is that motivated behaviour is a product of two key variables, such as the valence of an

outcome for the individual and the expectancy that a particular act will be followed by appreciable outcomes.

Valence is the anticipated satisfaction from the value of the outcome, which is the actual satisfaction obtained. Expectancy refers to a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be followed by a specific outcome. The product of valence X expectancy is force. Force is used in the sense of pressure to perform an act. Thus, the basic formula designed by Vroom can be stated as follows: $Motivation = valence \times expectancy = performance$

EMPIRICAL STUDY

An empirical evaluation on work-life balance and quality of life of working women in public and private sector was investigated by Hetanshi (2014). The main focus of the study was to explore the work-life balance and quality of life among women employees of public and private sectors. The study applied survey research. A sample of 94 was taken and two scales were used to assess the two parameters. The method of data collection was through primary and secondary data collection. Questionnaire formed the major source of data collection from staff of public and private sectors. It consists of thirty items focused on exploring the daily Work-Home experiences of the participants. All women of middle cadre formed the respondent. Findings show that most of the work-related factors have a negative impact on quality of life. The results also highlight that employed women are not favorably placed and this has severe implications on the families, organizations and society in general. It is highly recommended for organizations to have women-friendly policies; on the other hand, families should also be more supportive and encouraging so that women have harmony, good quality of life and a work-life balance.

Diksha & Shipa (2014) investigated the work-life balance: a key driver to improve organizational performance. The study took secondary data approach. The purpose was to establish whether work-life balance initiatives and practices can be considered as a strategic human resource management decisions that can translate into improved individual and organizational performances. This study shows the outcomes and the benefits of implementing work-life balance practices. That work-life balance practices benefit both employees themselves, their families, the organization and society at large. The study suggests that progressive organization seeking innovative ways should augment their organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace with work-life balance to offer win-win (symbiotic) benefits to employees and employers. The

study suggests that organizations should implement various work-life balance initiatives that may assist employees to better balance their work and family responsibility, gain improvements in their well-being and provide organizational benefits.

Sehrish, Kiran, Rabia & Syed (2015) carried out a study on ‘Impact of Work Life Balance on Employee Productivity: An Empirical Investigation from the Banking Sector of Pakistan published in Information and Knowledge Management.’ The purpose of the study was to explore the impact of work-life balance practices on employee productivity. It covers classes of work-life balance practices which includes flexible working hours, telecommuting, job-sharing, compressed work week, childcare facilities and family leave programs. This study is explanatory in nature, based on the philosophy of post-positivism. It is a quantitative study for which inductive approach was used. To verify if people, at large, feel the importance of work-life balance practices, a critical factor in driving employee performance, a survey in the form of a structured questionnaire was distributed among the bankers who typically work 9-10 hours a day. The data was then tested through SPSS statistical tools to assess if work life balance practices have any relationship with the way employees perform at work or not. The finding was that, work-life balance practices, when connected appropriately, would impact employee performance positively. The study concludes that a happy employee will be self-driven to work compared to an unhappy employee who is striving to get the right balance between work, family and self. This study aims to help this employee, his family and his employer.

Agha, Azmi & Rfan (2017) conducted a study on the topic “Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction: An Empirical study focusing on Higher Education Teachers in Oman”. The purpose of the study was to explore work-life balance and its relationship to job satisfaction of teachers in the higher education sector in the Sultanate of Oman. The study adopted survey research method. Out of the total of 2,717 employees in the government institutions, 1500 could be approached owing to a refusal of certain institutions to participate in the survey. Data were collected from the sample organizations primarily through postal mails, e-mails and personal visits. Findings of the study revealed that while work interference with personal life and personal life interference with work had a negative relationship with job satisfaction, work and personal life enhancement had a positive relationship with job satisfaction. The study concluded that work and personal life need to be integrated and balanced by organizations through work-life balance initiatives.

Tamunomiebi, (2018) appraised the quality of Work-Life and employee job satisfaction in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Basically, the premise of the study was to find the relationship between quality of work-life and employee job satisfaction in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design, using a sample of one hundred and eighty-eight (188) respondents who were drawn from a population of three hundred and fifty five (355) respondents across the seven selected Money Deposit Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria and administered with the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and Spearman's rank correlation were used for data analysis and hypothesis testing respectively. Results of the study revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between quality of work-life and employee job satisfaction. The study thus concluded that quality of work-life bears a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. The study recommended that management of deposit money banks should endeavour to improve the quality of work-life of employees by adapting methods that will make work meaningful, ensuring good organizational climate and healthy work environment that is conflict free.

Rehan, Saqib, Irfan & Sheikh (2019) worked on "Analyzing the Role of Quality of Work-Life and Happiness at Work on Employees Job Satisfaction with the Moderation of Job Stress, Empirical Research of Jiangsu University. The purpose of the study was to analyse employee's job satisfaction through the influences of motivational factors such as quality of work-life and happiness at work. Also, it aimed to explain the interaction of Job stress and quality of work-life on employees' job satisfaction. A quantitative method was employed in the sample size of 211 respondents, which was selected on the basis of convenient random sampling technique. Data was collected through a field survey by using a closed-ended questionnaire. The analysis was done on the partial least square with the latest methodology structure equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Furthermore, techniques of bootstrapping and PLS Algorithm were used. Findings of the study consistent with the previous scholars and proved the direct relationship of quality of work-life, happiness at work and employee job satisfaction. The study concludes that organizations need to recognize the importance of happiness at work and quality of work-life so as to maximize employee job satisfaction. Therefore, the study suggests that companies should motivate employees to work hard in order to achieve the company's goals and objectives.

The study of Thevanes & Harikaran (2020) examined the mediating role between organizational citizenship behaviour, work-life balance and organizational performance. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between work-life balance, organizational citizenship behaviour and organizational performance. In order to achieve their goal, primary data were collected from 166 employees in selected private banks which were operating in Batticaloa district of Srilanka. The simple mediation analysis was used to test the research variables. Findings were that there were positive and significant relationships among study variables. Conclusion drawn from the study was that organizational citizenship mediates the relationship between work-life balance and organizational performance.

Similarly, Paula, Carpyn, Xiwen, Amy & Laura (2020) apprised the issue of work-life balance: definitions, causes and consequences. The purpose of the study was to review the multiple definition of work-life balance. The study discussed the common antecedents and consequences of WLB arising from both work and non-work domains. The paper took literature approach in finding out the implications of WLB culture. It was concluded that the field of WLB has moved beyond a single focus on work and family, to a focus which includes a variety of work and other life demands salient to employees. The works conclude that organization should formally mandate the use of advanced technology within the organizations to enhance work life balance polices.

Brough et al (2020) reviewed the multiple definitions of work-life balance, causes and consequences of work-life balance practices. The study took secondary data option in assessing the meaning, causes and consequences of work-life balance initiatives. The purpose was to reveal the definitions, focused on the equity of time spent in the work and non-work domains, satisfaction with performance and time spent in each domain of work and life. The salience of each role for an individual employee and the study disclosed the general antecedents and consequences of work-life balance emanating from both work and non-work domains. The researchers conclude by noting the increasing evidence linking employee appointments and retention with an organization's positive work-life balance culture.

Rahman, Emeka, Uzoechi, Tonbara & Itari (2021) investigated the impacts of work-life balance (WLB) challenges on social sustainability: "The experience of Nigerian Female Medical Doctors". The purpose is to examine the implications of work-life balance challenges for Nigeria female medical doctors. The study relied on qualitative, interpretivist approach and informed by

institutional theory (IT). The study revealed that factors such as work pressure, cultural expectations, unsupportive relationships, challenging work environment, gender role challenges, lack of voice and high stress level moderate the ability of female medical doctors to manager WLB and SS. The study suggests that relationship between WLB and SS which has to been examined from developing countries should be carried out.

Accordingly, Gnei (2021) study analyses the impact of work-life balance on employee performance: Empirical evidence on a shipping company in Sri Lanka. They adopted descriptive study. A quantitative study was conducted, collecting primary data through a self-administered questionnaire. The secondary data for the study were collected through books, journals, and articles. Moreover, this study comprised a sample size of 84 employees of a leading shipping company. The sampling technique was convenient sampling. Data analysis comprised of both inferential and descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics included frequencies, means, and standard deviations. Impact of work-life balance on employee performance was analysed using simple linear regression analysis by using the SPSS tool. Based on the correlation analysis, it was revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. Then, the regression analysis confirmed that there is a significant impact of work-life balance on employee performance.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the correlational survey research design in investigating relationship between Work-life balance (WLB) and employee productivity in selected microfinance bank in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State. The choice of this research design was based on the need to determine the relationship between or among variables, as well as to allow the prediction of future events from the knowledge of present variables. This design is therefore suitable for this study because it is fundamentally meant to explain the extent to which work-life balance (WLB) variables predict employees' productivity in listed microfinance banks in Nnewi metropolis Anambra State. However, this study explains the correlation between work-life balance practices vis-à-vis: telecommuting, flexible work hours and job sharing technique to ascertain how those concepts will predict employee productivity in the selected microfinance bank in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State. Census population of 82 staff was obtained from the human resources

units of each bank under study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select six banks used in this study. The structured questionnaire was used as primary instrument for data collection.

The questionnaire was designed at 4 – point Likert scale with options ranging from 4point= strongly agree, 3point = Agree, 2point = Disagree, and 1point = strongly disagree. Validity of instrument was equally obtained through face and content validity. The instrument was shown to the supervisors and other three lecturers in the Faculty of Business Administration corrected the contents of the questionnaire items. The twenty questionnaire items were developed that reflected the research topic. Therefore the instrument was validated by management experts. Reliability of the instrument was obtained using Cronbach alpha method which gave Cronbach Alpha of work-life balance 0.70, telecom = 0.67, flexible work hours = 0.68, job sharing = 0.78, and employee productivity 0.69 respectively with a total Cronbach alpha values of 0.80. These figures were considered appropriate for the purpose of this study. The new Likert scales was used ranging from strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree= 2 and strongly disagree = 1.82 copies of questionnaire were produced and were personally administered and retrieved by the researcher, After data collection and collation, only seventy three (73) copies of questionnaire were properly filled and returned, while nine copies were not returned.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of the present study are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The mean, standard deviations and correlations of demographic variables with the predictors and criterion variables are shown in Table 1, while the result of Multiple Regression analysis showing the result of predictor variables on the criterion variable is shown in Table 2. In the correlations analysis, the relationships between the relevant demographic variables (gender, age, marital status and job tenure) and criterion variables were examined.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and correlation of demographics with predictors and criterion variables

S/No Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gender	1.94	.24	1.00							
Age	38.48	8.48	.10	1.00						
Maristatus	1.88	.33	.23*	.32*	1.00					
Jobtenure	14.05	7.52	.14	.79**	.35*	1.00				
Telcom	32.55	11.63	.22	.19	.08	.11	1.00			

Flexworkhrs	50.41	18.12	.18	.30*	.15	.15	.93**	1.00	
Jobsharing	36.15	10.88	.29*	-.04	-.05	-.08	-.50*	-.56*	1.00
Productivity	70.05	26.56	-.18	-.02	-.06	.17	.90*	.94**	.59* 1.00

Note: **p< .01; *p< .05

Table 1 shows that gender, age, marital status and job tenure were not significantly correlated with employees’ productivity [r = .18, -.02, -.06 and .17] respectively. However, all the predictor variables, telcom [r = .90, p < .01], flexible work hour [r = .94, p < .01], and job sharing [r = .59, p < .05] were significantly and positively correlated to employee productivity.

Table 2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis showing the prediction of productivity by telcom, flexible work hour and job sharing

Criterion	Predictor	β	t	P	R	R ²	Adj R ²	df	F	P
Productivity				.95	.91	.90	74	108.17	<.01	
	Telcom	.36	4.23	<.05						
	Flexworkhrs	.75	7.46	<.01						
	Job-sharing	.353	.76	<.05						

Result of Multiple Regression analysis in Table 2 showed that telcom significantly predicted productivity among the workers [$\beta = .36, P < .05$]. With this result, the alternative hypothesis which stated that telcom will significantly predict employees’ productivity is accepted. Also, flexible work hours significantly predicted the employees’ productivity [$\beta = .75, p < .01$]. This result also is in support of the second alternative hypothesis of the study which stated that allowing employees’ to choose their preferred working hours will significantly predict employees’ productivity. More over the result of the Regression analysis showed that job sharing significantly predicted employees’ productivity [$\beta = .35, p < .05$]. The result is also in support of the third alternative hypothesis which stated that job sharing will significantly predict employees’ productivity. Finally, the joint contributions of the predictor variables were also significant [Adj R² .90, F = 108.17, P < .01]. The Adj. R² indicates that the predictor variables collectively accounted for 90% of the employees’ productivity while the remaining 10% is from other sources outside the variables of the study.

From the first hypothesis the study affirmed that telecommuting has significant relationship on employee’s employees’ productivity. Hence, with appreciable usage of technologies ultimately lead to their workers improvement in attainment of task and quality of work required of the employees. The result is in line with Shwe’s (2021) studies which espoused that telecom has

significant and positive relationship and supports employees to split their time, energy. Such enhances productivity. The implication is that with sophisticated information technologies such as the Internet, intranet and smart phones employees become more innovative and creative especially in the service delivery such as banks because they can serve customers from home or other conducive locations outside the workplace. The provision of such opportunities can reduce employees' depression at work as customers can be attended to from different locations outside the workplace.

The second research hypothesis affirmed that flexible work hour has significance effect on employee productivity in listed microfinance banks in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. From the analysis, it was gathered that flexible working hours have positive and significance relationship with employee productivity in the study area. This is because allowing employees the opportunities to choose appropriate working period may induce high performance serve as reciprocally advantageous to employees and employers that enhance employees' productivity and higher performance of an organization. Therefore, according employees preferred hours of work has been demonstrated as appropriate for increasing individual commitment, and employee retention. The result of this study is in line with Sabiha and Daro (2017) which affirmed that granting employees flexibility working hours increases productivity, job satisfaction, efficiency in the work, and improved the quality of life. This implies that flexible work hours have positive effect on increasing employees' productivity in the workplace. This study revealed that many organizations are today focusing more importance to the various aspect of work-life balance so as to retain valuable employees, reduces the absenteeism to increase productivity at individual and organizational level. This study exposed that flexible working hours not only contributed to improve the general atmosphere and human relations but it also enhanced the pleasure of work.

The third research hypotheses was tested which examined the relationship between job sharing and employee productivity in listed microfinance banks in Nnewi metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. This study indicates that job sharing received positive affirmation from the employees which shows that sharing full time job with two or more employees has positive and significant relationship to improve employee's productivity in general. Job sharing or rather team work has been observed to have significantly associated with increase of employee productivity in the selected banks as evidenced in this study. The multiple regressions above shows that job sharing enhance employee productivity as stated in hypothesis two of this study. Organization that

design flexible work hour can gain significantly in its performance as predicted by the employees' productivity [$\beta = .75, p < .01$].

The result of the Regression analysis showed that job sharing significantly predicted employees' productivity [$\beta = .35, p < .01$]. The result is in line with Bhadrappa (2021) who claimed that job sharing technique enable organization maximize available workforce, reduced stressful work, turnover intention and enhanced productivity. Similarly, Robert (2016) study is line with this study. He espoused that job sharing has significant increases balancing work and family responsibilities, bringing about employee enthusiasm, creating opportunity to learn from superiors and which ultimately enhances organizational goals.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that, work-life balance practices are important programmes, practices and strategies offered to improve employee effectiveness in the listed banks, in Nnewi Metropolis, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study reveals that improving workforce productivity in organisation is possible where telecommuting, job sharing and flexible working hours exist. Hence, work-life balance results in organizational suitability in the long run where productivity is enhanced. The study was in congruence with the previous studies on telecommuting, job sharing and flexible working hours. Conclusively, workers effectiveness was possible where more than a single employee handle full time job. Thus, collaboration among staff offers vital influences towards improved individual productivity which ultimately enhance organizational performance in the long-rune. The study recommends that management of microfinance banks should consistently develop friendly relationships practices that enhance workforce capabilities towards improved productivity. Specifically, banking institutions should systematically encourage workers' productivity with the use of technologies and convenient working hours so as to improve employee effectiveness.

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