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WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AMONG PRIVATE HOSPITALS IN MINNA, NIGER STATE

ABSTRACT

Employees especially those in private sectors are mostly tied down and occupied entirely by work making them unable to make adequate balance between their work and outside work affairs which leads them to be disengaged at the work place there by affecting their productivity and organizational performance at large. Various studies revealed reciprocal relations as well as bidirectional rather than a clear results regarding the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement and as such this study expand on the current literatures by examining the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement using spillover theory as the foundation. The study employed a quantitative survey by administering a structured questionnaire to 194 employees of 9 private hospitals in Minna using census based sampling technique. Formulated hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression and the results revealed R^2 of 0.685 and R value of 0.741 indicating that work-life balance accounted for a high variations in employee engagement and that the variables are strongly correlated as well. Findings revealed that flexible work arrangement and leave policy have a positive significant effect on employee engagement while career development opportunity have a positive but insignificant effect on employee engagement. The study concluded that work-life balance is a predictor of employee engagement within the context. Recommendation was made that the management of the hospitals should introduce and strengthen flexible work arrangements by implementing shift flexibility policies and also design a comprehensive and fair leave policies that will suits the needs and circumstances of employees.

Keywords: work-life balance, employee engagement, employee performance, work-life harmony

1.1 Background

Organisations need to continuously improve and enhance productivity in order to stay strong in the competitive market and one effective strategy to this is to ensure that employees are fully engaged in the workplace. Employees are the most complex and difficult resources to manage as they possess feelings and emotions which can significantly affect how they view and handle their work. Organizations have faced growing challenges arising from employee disengagement, burnout, and elevated turnover rates all of which significantly lower productivity and organizational development (Mohmud, 2025).

Employee engagement is a significant criteria for organisations to handle competition because employee engagement affect company revenue, employee involvement, innovative behavior, productivity, employee loyalty and employee retention (Susanto *et al.*, 2023). Employees performance is highly influenced by how engaged the employees are to the organisation usually called employee engagement (Katili *et al.*, 2021). Engagement refers to a state of mind where employee is emotionally invested, motivated and willing to put extra effort into his/her job. Albar *et al.* (2025) lamented that higher degree of employee engagement positively impact organisational results including productively, innovation and customer satisfaction as engaged employees are less likely to leave the organisation thereby overcoming turnover related challenges in the saturated business environment.

Employees might observe that the formal interactions they engage at the workplace cannot effectively satisfy their social needs which can lead to harmful work practices such as absenteeism and lateness to work drawing from the fact that they will spend more time with their family to satisfy those unmet needs (Anekwe *et al.*, 2023). These practices are detrimental to employee's engagement which can affect the overall organisational performance. Employees are likely to be engaged and improve their performance if harmony exist between their personal and work-life as this usually reduces stress levels (Maghfiratika and Pujiati, 2025). Work-life harmony will enable employees to develop a positive emotional state with energy and self-efficacy which will leads them to be motivated, engaged in their role and have a positive attitude that will keep encouraging them to be more involved with their work (Satanto *et al.*, 2023).

The goal of work-life balance is to strike a healthy balance between one's personal and professional obligations such that neither of the two is overlooked or neglected (Maghfiratika and Pujiati, 2025). Abdullah *et al.* (2024) stressed that achieving a work-life balance benefits both the employees and the organization as it fosters and enhance productivity, job satisfaction and morale. Organizations can leverage the strong connection between quality of work life and employee engagement by formulating initiatives such as flexible work policies, mental health resources, and comprehensive career development programs as these strategies strengthen engagement, reduce turnover and foster organizational loyalty (Albar *et al.*, 2025). When individuals feel supported in handling their outside work responsibilities, they are more able to concentrate and discharge duties optimally during work hours thereby fostering motivation which in addition impacts the overall organizational productivity (Bello *et al.*, 2024).

A lot of studies have been conducted on the subject area mostly outside Nigeria and the results seems contradicting rather than corresponding. Alnagbi *et al.* (2025) concluded that while some studies found work-

life balance to be an antecedent of employee engagement, others show employee engagement to be a precondition for work-life balance which they believed is a bidirectional relationship rather than clear causality. Wood *et al.* (2020) also suggested that work-life balance and employee engagement have a reciprocal relations. Our research attempt to expand the existing literatures with the aim of having deeper understanding into the study's variables relationship by further examining the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement within the context of private hospitals in Minna, Nigeria. The research begins by a clear and broad introduction of the subject matter, followed by literature review, methodology, results and discussions and then finally conclusion and recommendations.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Hospital employees globally sacrifices their family time and their own mental peace during the job hours while facing many work related problems like long working durations, standing duty, a fast pace and stress from job that can have life or death consequences (Shelar and Khatke, 2021). While many private hospitals provide handsome reward and benefits, there seems to be lack of formal policies that fosters flexible work schedules, reduced working duration, leave schedules, career advancement initiatives and structured time-off. These lack of organisational support and initiatives makes it challenging for employees to handle their personal, family, social and professional responsibilities smoothly which leads employees to be less engaged with their work.

1.3 Research Questions

- I. What is the effect of flexible work arrangement on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state?
- II. To what extent does leave policy have an effect on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state?
- III. Does career development opportunity have an effect on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state?

1.4 Research Objectives

- I. To examine the effect of flexible work arrangement on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.
- II. To determine the extent to which leave policy has an effect on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.

- III. Ascertain the effect of career development opportunity on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

- I. There is no significant effect of flexible work arrangement on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.
- II. Leave policy does not have a significant effect on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.
- III. Career development opportunity has no significant effect on the employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger state.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discuss the literature review covering the conceptual review, theoretical foundation and review of related empirical studies.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Work-Life Balance

The concept of work-life balance have been used interchangeably with various terms that include work-life integration, work-life dynamics and work-life harmony and it relates to various fields such as psychology, sociology, management and organizational behaviour. Solihu *et al.* (2023) defined work-life balance as the manner at which employers allow employees to respond to personal obligations without compromising their work. Work-life balance practices are a thoughtful adjustment in organizational strategies or administrative philosophy which are meant to minimise work-life conflict and support employees to be more active both at work and in other sphere of life (Anekwe *et al.*, 2023). Katilli *et al.* (2021) interpreted work-life balance as a concept that enables a match and suitability between work and other affairs such as career, lifestyle, health, family, hobby and others. It refers to the capability of an individual to efficiently devote time and energy to discharge work responsibilities, personal needs, social activities and family obligations (Susanto *et al.*, 2023). Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to share time and energy between professional and personal life in an equitable manner and this means that employees have sufficient time for things outside of work such as family, recreation and self-development without feeling stressed by work schedules (Sawitri, 2024).

2.1.2 Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement is an employee's attitude and behavior at work by expressing himself completely both physically, cognitively, affectively and emotionally (Sulistyawati and Sufriadi, 2020). Employee engagement refers to an employee's degree of commitment, passion, and involvement in their work and the organization (Sawitri, 2024). Engaged employees possess ‘vigor’ which is the tendency to expend energy in working towards attaining personal work goals and also ‘absorption’ in the goal of making work a part of one’s life. Alnagbi *et al.*, 2025). Employee engagement is the degree of the mental and emotional attachment of employees about how they feels towards the work they do in the organization and how it relates to confidential feedback of the employee towards the organisation based on their perception of their workplace (Shelar and Khatke, 2021). Schaufeli *et al.* (2006) suggested that employee engagement is divided into three dimensions namely: vigor or spirit is a high level of energy and mental resilience of a person when working, dedication is the sacrifice of energy, thought and time for the success of a business or goal, while absorption is defined as absorption ability.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

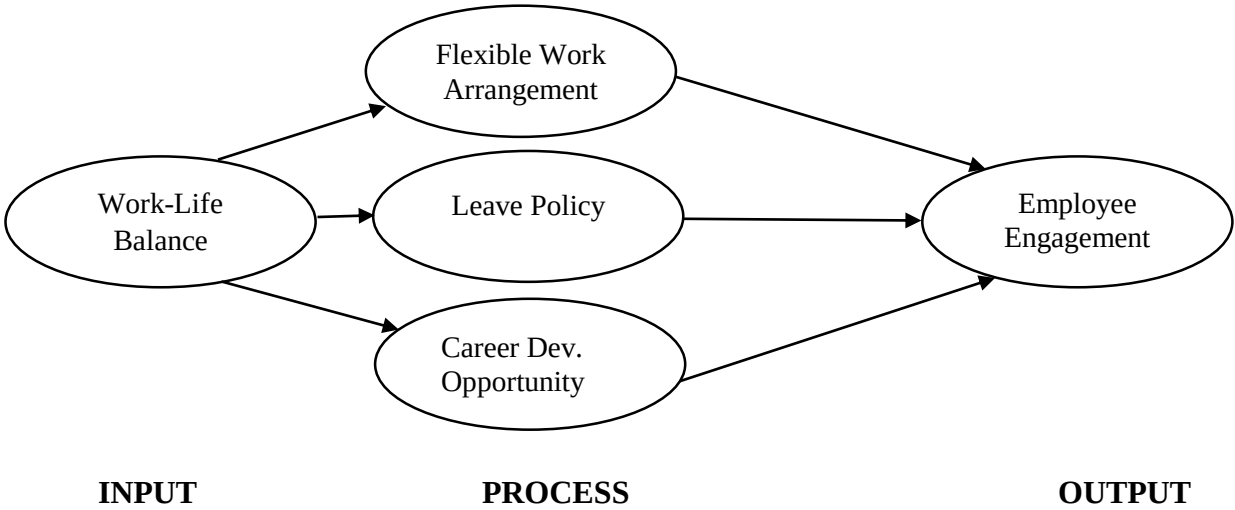


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author, 2025

The conceptual framework reveals the interrelationship between and among the study’s variables and the expected outcome from such relationship. The study assumes that as the components of work-life balance increases, employees will be more effective at handling their personal affairs without comprising their duties which will lead them to be more engaged in their duties

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Spillover theory by Guest (2002) served as the foundation for this investigation as it makes assumptions about the circumstances that lead to a spillover between the family microsystem and the work microsystem. It explains that spill over between work and non-work affairs which is basically the expansion of experiences from work sphere to non-work sphere at the intra individual level occur regularly and these experiences can be negative or positive (Tamunomiebi and Oyibo, 2020). A spillover exist when an aspect of an employee's life affects another and this situation explain the circumstances that lead to a collision between personal and work obligations (Susanto *et al.*, 2023). This theory suits this study as it explains how experiences of workers such as work stress or conflict between personal and work interest carry over and spill into family affairs which subsequently dictates how workers handle and discharge their duties. Guest (2022) further noted that balance may be achieved when equivalent priority is given to both work and home or when one of them the dominates the other by choice as such spill over arises when there is interference of one sphere of life with other.

2.3 Empirical Review

Alnagbi *et al* (2025) examined the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between employee work engagement and work performance so as to assess how work-life balance influences the impact of engagement on individual work performance. They conducted a quantitative survey by collecting data using questionnaire from 98 employees of government, private and non-profit organizations in United Arab Emirates using convenience sampling. Correlation was used for the statistical analysis and findings revealed that work engagement is positively related to work-life balance which in turn positively impacts individual work performance. Additionally, the study demonstrated that work-life balance mediates the relationship between work engagement and individual work performance. These findings confirms that balancing work and non-work affairs lead to employee engagement and this engagement boost employee's performance and these corresponds with the findings of Katilli *et al* (2021).

From a broader perspective, Albar *et al* (2025) examined the relationship between quality of work life and employee engagement conceptualizing the independent variable as work-life balance, job security and career development. The adopted a survey design using quantitative approach to collect data collected from 134 employees at PT Asco Prima, Mobilindo. Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modelling (partial least square). Findings showed that work-life balance was the strongest predictor of employee engagement

contributing to higher job satisfaction and reduced burnout, Job Security Positively correlates with emotional attachment to the organization and Career development opportunities also predict engagement and encourages cognitive engagement and motivates employees to align their goals with organizational objectives.

Desiatco *et al.* (2024) investigated the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between work-life balance and job burnout among 186 remote-working millennials using quantitative survey approach. They employed generalized linear model to carry out the mediation analysis. The results confirms a direct correlation between work-life balance and job burnout as well as between work-life balance and employee engagement. However, employee engagement was found to have no mediation in the relationship between work-life balance and job burnout. The results suggested that despite that work-life balance directly impacts both employee engagement and job burnout, the mediating role of employee engagement in this relationship does not demonstrate statistical significance. Observation was that the population were solely teleworkers workers selected using purposive sampling and online questionnaire was used.

Sutanto *et al.* (2024) examined the effect of work-life balance on employee performance through employee engagement and job satisfaction as intermediate variables. The study was conducted on employees of companies in manufacturing, banking, hospitality and services sectors who worked during the COVID-19 pandemic in Surabaya, Indonesia. The study was a quantitative research that used a non-probability sampling method to collect data through a questionnaire from 210 employees while the data were processed through smart partial least square. findings revealed that work-life balance does not indicate a significant positive effect on the performance of employees. In contrast however, it indicated a significant positive influence on employee's engagement and job satisfaction. Moreover, the findings revealed the significant role of employee engagement and job satisfaction in the relationship. These findings agreed with that of Alnagbi *et al* (2025) whom also confirm that work-life balance leads to employee's engagement which in turn, improve their performance.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the methodology employed in conducting the research that include the research design, population, method of data analysis and specification of the study's model.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design for the purpose of eliciting response from the population through issuing a close-ended structured questionnaire as this was considered more suitable because it allows collection of quantitative data that can be objectively measured and as well analysed through statistical technique to determine the effect of variables on another variable.

3.2 Population and Sample Size

The population consisted the employees of private hospitals in Minna, Niger State. Moreover, only the employees of nine (9) private hospitals registered with National Health Insurance Scheme as at 2022 were used as these hospitals have always demonstrated much engagements of patients as they have regular patients whom are federal civil servants enrolled with them under health insurance scheme. The unit of response were individual employees comprising doctors, nurses, pharmacists, cashiers, laboratory technicians and administrative staffs. The total number of the employees from the hospitals were 194 and considering the number, census based sampling technique was employed since it is feasible to collect data from the entire population. It also gives accuracy and equity in representation.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis and Model Specification

The study employed multiple linear regression to measure the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The inferential statistics results were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Below is the model specification of the linear regression.

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) \quad (1)$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \quad (2)$$

Where Y = Dependent Variable of the study

$X_1, \dots, X_n$ = Independent variables of the study

Substituting the variable of this current study into equation 1 above, we have:

$$EE = f(FWA, LP, CDO) \quad (3)$$

Econometrically, the model is expressed as follows:

$$ES = \beta_0 + \beta_1 FWA + \beta_2 LP + \beta_3 CDO + e$$

Where, ES = Economic Sustainability

β_0 = constant term

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \text{ and } \beta_3$ = Coefficients of the independent variables.

FWA = Flexible Work Arrangement =

LP = Leave Policy

CDO = Career Development Opportunity

e = error term accounting for unexplained variability

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion comprising the reliability results determined using Cronbach Alpha, diagnostic tests results to ensure absence autocorrelation and multi-collinearity between the study's variables and then test of hypotheses using the inferential statistics.

4.1 Reliability and Diagnostic Tests Result

Table 4.1: internal consistency and Diagnostic Tests Result

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Variance factor	Tolerance
FWA	0.745	2.706	0.308
LP	0.701	2.122	0.422
CDO	0.71	1.93	0.584
EE	0.781		
Durbin-Watson: 1.98			

Source: Author's Field Survey (2025)

Table 4.1 above indicated all the constructs had Cronbach Alpha above 0.7 suggesting the statements under the construct contribute towards the same measurement and therefore there reliability was considered enough to be used. Table 4.1 also reveals variance factor below 0.3 for the independent variables indicating absence of strong multicollinearity among them. Durbin-Watson from table 4.1 was at 1.98 suggesting absence of auto-correlation in the residuals of the regression model.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses and Discussion of Results

This section presents and discuss the inferential statistical results from the regression so as to test the hypotheses earlier formulated in order to answer the research questions raised. Table 4.2 below present the results of the regression.

Table 4.1: Result of Regression Analysis

Variables	Unstandardised Beta	P-Value	T-Value
Constant	0.891	0.004	5.185
FWA	0.436	0.001	4.934
LP	0.385	0.032	2.142
CDO	0.093	0.569	0.180

Source: Author's Field Survey (2025)

Table 4.2 above revealed that flexible work arrangement as a predictor of employee engagement has a positive regression coefficient of 0.436 indicating that its effect on the dependent variable is 43.6 % increase for every unit increase in the predictor and this is statistically significant having a p-value of 0.001 at $P \leq 0.05$ significant level. This result confirms the rejection of the first hypothesis and as such, the result established that there is a significant effect of flexible work arrangement on the employee engagement within the study's context. This dimension of work-life balance has the strongest positive effect on employee engagement implying that employees who enjoyed flexibility in work scheduling and task execution seems to be more emotionally and cognitively engaged with their work. This is because flexible work schedules reduce job stress and fosters motivational states leading to higher engagement. This is so especially in hospital context where nurses, doctors, and administrative staff often experience irregular shifts and long working duration hours. Flexibility enables them to balance work obligations with personal social and family needs which results to deeper engagement in terms of dedication, vigor and absorption. This finding corroborates with that of Priya and Jospa (2025) whom found that flexible work arrangements positively enhance employee engagement and retention of manufacturing sector employees in India. The finding also support spill over theory which reveals how experiences between work and other life affairs can have positive or negative effect on one another.

Table 4.2 portrays that leave policy as a predictor of employee engagement also had a positive regression coefficient of 0.385 indicating that its effect on employee engagement is 38.5 % increase for every unit increase in the predictor and this was also statistically significant having a p-value of 0.0321 at $P \leq 0.05$ significant level. This result confirms the rejection of the second hypothesis and established that leave policy have a significant effect on employee engagement within the study's context. This result justify that the ability to take rest, annual leave and family-related leave contributes significantly to enhancing engagement levels of employees. The result also confirms among private hospitals employees in Minna, rest and recovery

are relatively important due to the physical and emotional demands of patient care. Employees who enjoyed sufficient leave as per requested are more likely to resume to work fully energized and motivated resulting in greater engagement levels. The results corresponds with that of Anekwe *et al.* (2023) whom also found a significant positive relationship between leave policy and social engagement of deposit money banks in Anambra State of Nigeria. The result is also in line with that of Gatimu and Kagiri (2017) whom also established that leave policy has significant effect on employee satisfaction which leads to productivity improvement. The finding also affirms the spill over theory which reveals how experiences between work and other life affairs can have positive or negative effect on one another.

Table 4.2 narrated that career development opportunity has a positive effect on employee engagement with a regression coefficient of 0.093 signifying that it will lead to 9.3 % increase on the dependent variable for every unit increase of the predictor but it is statistically insignificant having a p-value of 0.569 at $P > 0.05$ significant level and thus the effect is not reliable. This results confirms the acceptance of the third hypotheses indicating that opportunities for training and career progression did not significantly drive engagement of the employees in the sampled private hospitals. This results is in contrary with some prior studies that emphasized training and development as key drivers of engagement like Chaturvedi (2025) who found that professional development had a significant impact on engagement of healthcare employees in United Arab Emirate. Priya and Jospa (2025) also found country to this finding by establishing that professional development opportunities significantly enhance employee engagement and retention. However, this contradicting result might be linked to many issues within the private hospitals in Minna. Firstly, employees may consider short-term work-life balance needs such as rest, family time and flexible schedules to be more pressing than long-term career advancement. Secondly, career development opportunities in private hospitals might be limited, not properly structured or perceived as inaccessible or not highly relevant there by decreasing their motivational value. Lastly, junior and mid-level staff may prioritize immediate well-being and work flexibility over career progression due to the demanding and high-stress nature of healthcare work.

4.3 Model Summary

Table 4.3: Summary of Regression Model

Indicator	Value
R	0.741
R ²	0.685
F-change	44.192
Significance of F-change	0.003

Source: Author's Field Survey (2025)

$P \leq 0.05$

- a. Predictors: (Constant), flexible work arrangement, leave policy and career development opportunity
- b. Dependent Variable: economic sustainability

The result from Table 4.3 shows R value of 0.741 indicating a powerful positive correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable. The table further reveals R-square of 0.685 which implies that 68.5 % of changes that occur in employee engagement were explained and predicted by the components of work-life balance included in the model of the study. The F- change value of 44.192 was significant at $0.003 p \leq 0.05$ signifying that the model for the study has a good fit and is statistically significant implying that work-life balance has a positive significant effect on employee engagement in the context

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study conducted multiple linear regression to determine the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement among private hospitals in Minna, Niger State. Results revealed that flexible work arrangement and leave policy had significant positive effect while career development opportunity had a positive but insignificant effect. The study concluded that work-life balance practices significantly dictates employee engagement in private hospitals in Minna.

5.2 Recommendations

Hospital management should introduce and strengthen shift flexible work arrangements by implementing shift flexibility policies such as allowing employees to choose preferred schedules options or swap shifts between them when the need arises. This should be done by adopting digital technology to design equitable, transparent, and flexible schedules that accommodate staff preferences while ensuring patient care is not compromised. They should also enforce comprehensive and fair leave policies by developing a clear guidelines for sick leave, maternity/paternity leave and annual leave to ensure fairness and transparency. The management should also consider introducing mental health leave days in recognition of the psychological demands of healthcare work. This should be done in a culture where taking leave is not stigmatized or seen as a sign of weakness. Finally, the management should re-evaluate career development programs by redesigning policies to make them practical, accessible and relevant. This should be done by linking training

and career development to clear, reliable and relevant rewards/opportunities which should be communicated transparently so that employees can see tangible outcomes arising from participating in development programs.

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