Work Life Balance and Employee Productivity in Oil Companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State

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Abstract: **As an effort to enhance knowledge, this seminar presentation provides a literature analysis on work-life balance and employee productivity in Nigeria. As a result of this secondary study, effective methods for addressing the problem of work-life imbalance in Nigeria are proposed in order to boost employee productivity for optimal organisational output, which is the primary goal of this study. We believe that workers who have a healthy work-life balance are more productive. As a result, organisations must encourage policies and procedures that help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance. Because of Nigeria's history of political, economic, and social upheaval, it was concluded that efforts to promote work-life balance have run up against structural obstacles. Corrupt practises, shaky government structures that cannot keep an eye on and enforce labour laws, high unemployment, poverty, inflation, and a long list of other problems plague the business world today. It was thus recommendation that organisations provide flexible work arrangements enforced by government legislation that empowers employees to request a typical work pattern; that the awareness of organisations to the advantages of protecting workers' rights to various leave initiatives that will improve employee well-being, be enhanced; and managerial training to ensure management support for the demands of these policies.**

Keywords: **Employee Productivity, Flexi-Time, Work Leave Initiatives, Work Life Balance.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Every worker is an essential component of an organisation and the community that surrounds it, and the ability of an organization's employees to meet its objectives is very crucial for today's organizations. Organizations must be able to boost staff productivity and monitor it in order to stay on top. In the event that this is not the case, they are likely to confront a number of difficulties that might have a negative impact on the company in the industry to which they belong (Mendis & Weerakkody, 2017). This has resulted in an increase in the number of organisations attempting to find new ways of inspiring their personnel (Thevanes & Mangaleswaran, 2018). A company's productivity depends heavily on its employees. The company becomes productive when it can grow and make better use of the people it already has. This translates into better customer service and interaction, which has an impact on all aspects of the business. The productivity of an employee in their place of employment is determined by or is the result of a certain mix of that employee's abilities, efforts,

and opportunities. As a result, organisations must devise a set of policies to accomplish this goal.

Scholars and practitioners are increasingly concerned about the border between work and personal life. There have been several variables that have prompted this interest, including changes in the demographic structure of the labour market, as well as a rise in the volume and tempo of work (Kadnan, 2019). Keeping a healthy work-life balance is a major issue that affects a wide range of businesses and organisations, commercial and public. It extends beyond prioritising one's job responsibilities and personal life. Additionally, it has an impact on an individual's social life, psychological state, economic situation, and state of mind, all of which are reflected in the individual's output and, in the long run, have an effect on the individual's productivity at the workplace (Obiageli et al., 2015).

Work-life balance has become more important for oil and gas industry personnel in recent years. This is due to a variety of factors, including shifting family patterns, a shift away from a workaholic culture, an increase in the proportion of women in the workforce, and advances in technology. This is leading to people having a hard time prioritising between their professional and personal life. When oil and gas companies have poor organisational cultures, such as purchasing work-leave for employees, inconvenient leave periods for employees, and the inability of employers to keep to the leave policy in their employment agreement, it can lead to stretched workloads, which can have a negative impact on the employee's personal life. These issues affect both the mental and emotional well-being of employees, and they can lead to things like poor service delivery and health problems that make employees less productive (Thevanes & Mangaleswaran, 2018).

In addition, the lack of work-life balance incentives, such as leave entitlement, flexi time, and family and welfare policies, can have a negative impact on employee productivity. For example, oil employees may be compelled to work nonstop with no regard for their families, which might lead to family breakups, as well as a lack of closeness with their children or other wards. A conflict of interest may arise for employees who are trying to fulfil both the needs of their employer and their own personal needs at the same time. Because of this, the

study of work-life balance and employee productivity is essential (Mulanya & Kagiri, 2018).

The purpose of this study is to examine how work-life balance influences employee productivity in oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers state. Thus, it is believed that the findings from this study would contribute significantly to the growing body of knowledge on work-life balance and employee productivity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Spill Over Theory

The spillover theory serves as this study's foundational premise, propounded by Guest in 2002. It posits the circumstances under which spillover occurs between the microsystems of the workplace and the household. It can be either beneficial or harmful. The negative spillover of time, energy, and behaviour occurs if work-family relationships are rigorously organised in terms of time and place. As a result of this positive overflow, it is possible to achieve a good work/life balance. The settings of work and home are where the factors that affect work-life balance are found, according to Guest (2002). Work needs, work culture, home expectations, and home culture are all examples of contextual factors. A person's personality, energy level, sense of self-determination, and ability to cope with stress are all important predictors of job orientation. Contextual factors, such as leave policy and service delivery, influence the study's variables. The culture of work is defined by the leave policy, whereas the demand for labour is defined by service delivery (Mulanya & Kagiri, 2018).

In both objective and subjective terms, the concept of a work-life balance is defined. The objective indicators are the number of hours spent working and the number of hours spent not working or spare time. When we talk about subjective indications, we're referring about things like equilibrium and disequilibrium. According to him, the term "balance" refers to a situation in which both job and home are given equal importance. When one area of life gets in the way of another, this phenomenon known as spillover happens. Work-life harmony has a wide range of benefits, including increased happiness and well-being at work, home, and in general, as well as increased productivity and a positive influence on others, as well as time spent with loved ones and friends.

Relevance to the study is that organisations should develop work-life balance policies which will provide their workers the opportunity for a favourable work-life balance, which will help them successfully commit to accomplishing the organization's goals (Kadnan, 2019).

Work-life Balance

The phrase "work-life balance" is widely used to describe policies that were formerly referred to as "family-friendly," but are now expanded beyond the scope of a family to include all employees. Work-life balance is a term that refers to

flexible working arrangements that allow employees, whether or not they are parents, to take advantage of working arrangements that offer a balance between the demands of their jobs and the responsibilities of their personal lives (Redmond et al., 2006). Employees' personal struggles with work-life conflict are at the root of many of today's work-life balance initiatives. If one's duties as an employee and other roles, such as being a husband, parent or religious or leisure activity are incompatible with one's work, the outcome is a conflict known as Work Life Conflict. Work-life conflict is a notion that takes into account the fact that most people play dual responsibilities. In addition to reducing the quantity of Work Life Conflict, work-life balance approaches also tackle the antecedents (Lero & Bardoel, 2007). Heavy job expectations and job overloads are two of the antecedents that might lead to conflicts between work and personal life.

When it comes to work-life balance efforts, a study of the literature shows that they may be split into four main categories: flexible working arrangements (home working, compressed working hours), leave plans (annual leave, maternity leave), and dependent care support (child care arrangements and creches) (De Cieri et al., 2005; De Cieri & Bardoel, 2009). Work-family policies, family-friendly policies, and family-responsive policies are all terms used to describe policies aimed at assisting employees in balancing their time spent at work with their time spent with their families. Because of the importance of balancing other aspects of one's life, such as schooling, travel, sports, volunteerism, self-improvement, and caring for the elderly, the term "work-life balance" has begun to displace the term "work-family balance" (Hudson Resourcing, 2005). In the widest sense, work-life balance is described as a degree of engagement or fit between a person's many tasks in life.

It is commonly accepted that work-life balance is defined as the ability to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life by balancing the amount of time and effort one commits to work and personal interests. Keeping a healthy work-life balance requires that an organization recognise the many demands on their time and energy, as well as the resources they have to meet those needs. Workers who have some degree of control over their work environment are less likely to suffer from stress-related illness, which has important implications for the idea of work-life balance. Various work-life balance programmes may be implemented by organisations to help workers better balance work and family obligations, increase well-being, and bring advantages to the organisation. A wide range of options are available to families, including but not limited to: Employer-sponsored childcare, telecommuting, part-time and part-time work schedules and parental leave are just some of the perks available to parents today (Hartel, 2007).

Employee Productivity

Productivity is defined as the record of outcomes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified time period (Bernadrdin & Russel, 1998). According to this

definition productivity is set of outcomes produced during a certain time period. Hence employee productivity could be described as achievement of targets of the tasks assigned to employees within particular period of time. Productivity is not only related to the action but also involves judgment and evaluation process (Ilgen & Schneider, 1991). Thus, according to Campbell (1993), that which the person recruited does in carrying out his or her responsibilities and actions that can be studied and measured are represented in productivity.

To reach its objectives and gain a competitive edge, a company relies on the high productivity of its staff (Frese, 2002). According to the business dictionary, employee productivity refers to a worker's job-related tasks and how successfully those activities are carried out. The success of the company is dependent on the output of its employees. As a result, a manager's approach to managing and coaching the company's employees should be multifaceted.

Service Delivery

Service delivery specifies where, when, and how the service product is provided to the consumer (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2004). It is feasible to divide the service delivery process into service encounters, which make up the majority of the entire process (Danaher & Mattsson, 1994). Furthermore, as Chowdhary and Prakash (2007) point out, some degree of generalisation is conceivable within service types for a variety of services and service providers; hence, managers may need to take this into consideration while designing the process. As a result, the ability to provide top-notch customer service gives service companies an edge over their competitors (Turel et al., 2007). Having a good work-life balance improves the quality of services provided by workers, says Lashing (1999).

Service delivery is a part of business that describes how providers and clients interact when a provider gives a service to a client. This service could be information or a task. There are a variety of services available in the oil and gas business. Each company's CEO is at one location. Their branches, on the other hand, are distributed across the country. Employees are tasked with providing the services, and their performance on the job is quite important. As a result, it has a direct impact on the company's ability to attract and keep consumers, as well as on sales turnover, earnings, market share, and goodwill. Workers' productivity is critical, not just in the oil and gas business but in other service industries. Customers are more likely to be pleased with a company that has increased productivity. A willingness to serve as many clients as possible as the need arises is a requirement for providing services quickly and efficiently (Mulanya & Kagiri, 2018).

Work Life Balance in Nigeria

Work-life balance has become increasingly important for Nigerian employees as a result of demographic and workplace changes such as shifting family structures, a declining tolerance for long hours, an increase in the proportion of female employees, and technological advancements, according to Mmakwe and Ojiabo (2018). As a result of these

and other factors, employees are finding it more difficult to balance their professional and home life. So, scholars have looked into the idea of work-life balance in Nigeria, even though it is still in its early stages there (Adisa et al., 2017). In this article, we will look at some of the most recent studies on the topic.

Akanji (2012) investigated how people in Nigeria see the concept of work-life balance (WLB) and the role conflicts and coping beliefs that accompany it. The author used a qualitative technique, conducting 61 in-depth interviews with Nigerian employees from service-based organisations (banking, telecommunications, and auto insurance) in Lagos State. Using the grounded theory technique for data analysis, this study sought to discover a theory from the data carefully collected. It appears that the political, economic, and social challenges Nigeria faces have a significant impact on the fundamental realities that result from an individual's ability to balance work and family responsibilities with minimal conflict, according to the participants in this study who blamed their work-life conflict situations on these factors. Corruption, poverty, inflation, and patriarchy are all factors that contribute to employees' work-life conflicts in Nigeria, according to the author. As a result of Nigeria's status as a patriarchal society, Nigerian women are put into a situation where home responsibilities clash with other tasks, which results in role overload. As coping mechanisms, Nigerian employees use personal toughness, assistance-seeking solutions, and avoidance/resignation. WLB practises and rules are readily circumvented by employers because of the lack of institutionalised social support networks, contempt for a WLB-friendly culture, and effective enforcement of employment standards by the government, he argues.

When Ojo *et al*., (2013) conducted a research on WLB policies and practises in Nigeria's banking, educational, and power sectors, they found that there was a significant difference across the three sectors. WLB policies and practises in these areas were examined and the numerous obstacles to their implementation were found. In order to identify extant WLB practises in these areas, they employed a quantitative technique and a case study analysis. Items of the questionnaire were derived from Hooker et al. questionnaires (2007). 1,624 questionnaires were collected, including 586 from the banking industry, 531 from the educational sector, and 507 from the electricity sector. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences, which includes Anova, was used to analyse the data. When it came to understanding how WLB rules are actually being put into action, there was a significant disconnect between what organisations do and what their workers actually know and understand. According to the authors, many employees assume that WLB policies and practises are geared toward women because of the prevalence of efforts geared toward women, such as maternity leave and flexible childcare options. Not true; these agreements are offered to both male and female employees.

They were able to find most of the western initiatives in these sectors, except for job sharing, annualised hours, and

compressed hours. They said that this was because workers preferred traditional full-time permanent contracts. They also found that long hours of work, more work, and a lack of support from line managers made it hard to put WLB programmes into place in these organisations. The results showed that only a small number of the WLB initiatives were being used. The authors said that this was because the culture of the organisation didn't support WLB initiatives, so managers and employees didn't want to use them.

Akanji et al. (2015) did a study called "Reviewing Gaps in Work-Life Research and Prospecting Conceptual Advancement." In this study, they looked at the idea of work-life balance by looking at the literature that was already out there. As part of this study, the authors went out into the field from January to May 2015 and talked to 50 Nigerian middle-level managers who worked in service management organisations. They did this to get a better idea of how real work-life conflicts are in Nigeria. This qualitative study found that managers didn't have many policies in place to help them balance their work and personal lives. This was a major cause of work-life conflict in Nigeria. The study also found that there are not enough WLB policies because there are a lot of unemployed people, people are afraid of losing their jobs, people don't know about WLB, the government isn't caring enough, and companies care more about productivity and profits than their employees' well-being (2015:25). The authors suggested the following things that could make it easier for WLB practises to be used in Nigeria: flexible work arrangements should be mandated by law so that employees can legally ask for different work schedules; organisations should be made more aware of the benefits of protecting workers' rights to leave programmes that will improve employee health; organisations should provide facilities for dependent care, especially for children.

Women medical professionals in Nigeria have unique work-life balance (WLB) issues. A recent study explored the impact of these issues on the wellbeing of these women doctors in a paper published in 2018 by Mushfiqur, Oruh, Nwagbara, and Mordiand Turner. Nigeria's institutional context and workplace reality were examined as a source of WLB problems in this qualitative interpretivist study. 43 semi-structured interviews and 8 focus group discussions involving 8 participants were conducted by the authors. Taking a non-Western perspective, this study found that the capacity of female medical practitioners to attain WLB is moderated by factors such as high work demands, cultural expectations, unsupportive relationships, a demanding workplace, issues with gender roles and low engagement.

Work-Life Balance and Employee Productivity

Increasingly, people are concerned about how to have a fulfilling personal life while also providing exceptional outcomes at work in this era of technical innovation and globalisation. A group of researchers has been attempting to figure out whether or not the two aims are incompatible or if they work in tandem (Koubova & Buchko, 2013). There is a strong correlation between the inability to exert control over one's workload and the inability to put out the energy necessary to meet one's personal demands and duties and the difficulties encountered in finding the right balance. According to Johari et al. (2018), weariness, low productivity, and a decrease in quality of life occur when there is a disparity between the amount of effort used and the amount of reward received. Work-life balance in the workplace has been disrupted by technology innovation in recent years, and there are three main worries about this. Work-life balance concerns include the dangers of advancements in the workplace; the fluctuating nature of work activities, particularly those related to technology, which necessitates constant improvement in knowledge; and lastly, anxieties about shifting work demands and their impact on productivity (Helmleet al., 2014).

Some managers are afraid to adopt flexible arrangements because of their impulsiveness and the possibility that these processes may be abused. Employees' attitudes, behaviours, and well-being are influenced by work-life balance, as well as the organization's performance. Companies, according to Au and Ahmed (2014), are more likely to adopt innovative management methods that give both collective and managerial support for employees. Another important factor in an employee's career advancement is their supervisors' attitudes regarding work-life conflict (Au & Ahmed, 2014). It has been a hot topic in recent years, particularly in terms of expanding paid job flexibility and improving working conditions. Workers with high workloads had lower work-life balance, were less likely to have a sense of belonging at work, and were also less productive. Stress, like emotional tiredness, affects the quality of life of hotel personnel, who have indicated that stress has a negative impact on their work performance (Lawson et al., 2013). In addition, for hotel workers, the stress of work-life balance has been considered as exacerbated by the spillover of stress (Hon & Chan 2013).

Over the past few decades, work-life balance has become more important to both organisations and individuals. Achieving a healthy work-life balance has been shown to have a significant impact on employee productivity and, as a result, on the overall productivity of organisations (Semlali & Hassi, 2016; Mmakwe & Ojiabo, 2018). Ogechi and Nwaeke (2019) discovered that part-time employment and delegating responsibilities improved employee productivity in their investigation of WLB and employee job productivity in Nigeria. This means that companies must put in place policies that allow employees to stay connected to society while keeping costs and turnover under control and increasing productivity (Helmle et al., 2014).

III. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings of this study indicate that a work-life balance philosophy has a correlation with employee productivity. In order to be a true value to the company, not merely a worker who does the same thing every day, employees' social and psychological life must be monitored. According to van Cotter (2000), a company with highly productive employees has

more options for its employees than one with underproductive ones. As a result, it is critical that businesses explore for new ways to boost worker output. The best way to do this is to help people prioritise their work and personal interests. In the event that this is accomplished, the person will be encouraged to do their job well.

According to the findings of this study, employees who are able to maintain a healthy work-life balance tend to be more productive. Because of this, it is critical for businesses to implement policies and frameworks that help their employees achieve a better work-life balance. Work-life balance policies can be implemented in the Nigerian setting, but there are structural impediments, such as leadership failure, which has led to political, economic and social issues that are the principal causes of work-life conflict in the country. High levels of unemployment and underemployment, as well as high rates of inflation all contribute to a host of additional problems in developing countries.

With the right work-life balance, employees are more satisfied with their job and personal lives. Relationships between management and staff have also improved. It is important for management to promote workers' work-life balance in order to build a strong working relationship between the workforce and management.

On the basis of the findings and conclusion drawn from the study, the following suggestions were made:

i. We suggest that organisations offer flexible work arrangements that are enforced by government laws that give employees the legal right to ask for different work schedules; that organisations be made more aware of the benefits of protecting workers' rights to various leave programmes that will improve employee wellbeing; that organisations offer child care facilities, especially for working mothers; and that managers get training to make sure that these things happen.

ii. Employees should be educated on WLB policies, methods, and implementation in order for them to take full benefit of such policies in their workplaces.

iii. The management of oil and gas companies should ensure that they provide its staff with a variety of work-life incentives. These organisations' leaders should urge their workers to schedule their vacation time once they have completed all of their work-related responsibilities at a time that is convenient for them.

iv. Managers of these companies should devise activities that enhance the quality of their employees' free time. Athletes' activities

v. Employees and their families should be able to come together and participate in award ceremonies that include their immediate relatives.

vi. It is time for oil and gas companies to provide child care services. This will be beneficial to the workers.

Creche services, day nurseries, and after-school care are all examples of these services.

vii. Provision of family welfare measures to promote the care of dependents.

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