**Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employees Performance in Nigeria Polytechnics**

**Abstract**

Necessity to balance work and lifestyle has made the concept of Work-Life Balance (WLB) to become a critical factor that influences employees’ performance, satisfaction, and overall well-being. This research examined the effect of work-life balance on employees’ performance in Nigeria polytechnics, focusing on how WLB initiatives impact productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The study employed a survey methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. A sample of 200 academic and non-academic staff from five selected polytechnics across Nigeria participated in the study. The findings from the regression analysis conducted revealed that work hours and mental health had positive and significant effect on employee’s performance while work stress and personal/family lifestyle had negative effect on employee’s performance. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers, management, and stakeholders to prioritize WLB initiatives and create supportive environments that promote employee well-being and productivity.

**Keywords**; Work-Life balance, employees performance, work stress, personal lifestyle.

* 1. **INTRODUCTION**

In today's fast-paced world, the concept of work-life balance (WLB) has gained significant attention as organizations strive to improve employee performance while ensuring their well-being. WLB refers to the equilibrium between an individual's professional responsibilities and personal life, enabling them to achieve fulfillment in both domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For educational institutions like polytechnics, where employees are tasked with teaching, research, administration, and community service, maintaining a healthy WLB is crucial for sustaining high performance and preventing burnout.

Nigerian polytechnics face unique challenges in promoting WLB due to factors such as limited resources, heavy workloads, and cultural norms that often prioritize work over personal life. Despite these challenges, there is growing recognition of the importance of WLB in enhancing employee productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. This study aims to investigate the effect of WLB on employees' performance in Nigerian polytechnics, emphasizing the need for effective policies and practices that support employees' holistic development.

According to Oderonke, et al (2020), Individuals have multiple role to play in life. The conflict between these roles can lead to work- life conflict, which can negatively impact employee performance. With the increasing demand of work and blurring of boundaries between work and personal life, achieving a balance between the two has become a significant challenge for many employees (Sahin & Yozgat, 2021)

Despite the acknowledged importance of WLB in enhancing employee performance, many Nigerian polytechnics lack comprehensive policies and programs to support this initiative. Existing studies indicate that employees in these institutions often struggle to manage competing demands from work and personal life, resulting in negative outcomes such as stress, dissatisfaction, and reduced productivity (Oladokun et al., 2020). Furthermore, cultural attitudes in Nigeria tend to glorify long working hours and self-sacrifice, making it difficult for employees to advocate for better WLB practices.

This study provides empirical evidence on the importance of work-life balance in improving employee performance in the context of Nigeria polytechnics.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of work-life balance on employees' performance in Nigerian polytechnics.

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Conceptual Review**

2.1.1 **Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance according to Sahin & Yozgat (2022) refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage their professional responsibilities while maintaining a fulfilling personal life. It is not necessarily about achieving equal time allocation between work and personal life but rather about finding harmony and satisfaction in both domains. The study mentioned time management, role segmentation, flexibility and well-being as some of the key elements of work-life balance. Osita, et al (2021) stated that employees who experience better work-life balance tend to have higher job satisfaction and productivity.

**2.1.2 Employee Performance**

Employee performance according to Hobfoll, (1989) refers to the extent to which employees meet or exceed expectations in their job roles. It can be measured in terms of task performance (core job responsibilities), contextual performance (extra-role behaviors such as teamwork and citizenship), and adaptive performance (ability to adjust to changing circumstances). Employee performance according to Oderonke et al (2020) refers to the extent to which an employee achieves their job goals and contributes to the organizations objectives. A study by Gultom and Nata (2023) stated that high employee performance is often linked to factors such as motivation, skill development, and psychological well-being.

**2.1.3 Link between WLB and Employee Performance**

The relationship between WLB and employee performance is complex and bi-directional. On one hand, achieving a healthy WLB can enhance employee performance by reducing stress, improving mental health, and increasing job satisfaction. On the other hand, poor WLB can lead to burnout, decreased productivity, and higher turnover intentions. Mwangi et al (2016) study revealed that employees who achieve better work-life balance tend to have higher job satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. In Nigeria’s polytechnics, employees who achieve better work-life balance may be more effective in their roles, leading to improved student outcomes and institutional performance.

**2.2 Theoretical Review**

Several theories have been proposed to explain the relationship between WLB and employee performance. Below are some prominent ones mentioned by Govindapa and Janakiram (2017).

The JD-R theory posits that job demands (e.g., long working hours, high workload) can deplete employees' energy and resources, leading to exhaustion and reduced performance. Conversely, job resources (e.g., flexible work arrangements, social support) can help employees maintain a better WLB, thereby enhancing their performance. In this framework, WLB acts as a resource that buffers against the negative effects of job demands.

According to Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, individuals strive to acquire, retain, and protect resources such as time, energy, and relationships. When work demands excessively drain these resources, it can lead to resource loss spirals, negatively impacting performance. However, when employees achieve a good WLB, they accumulate resources, fostering positive outcomes such as increased engagement and productivity.

Spillover theory suggests that experiences in one domain (work or personal life) can influence the other. Positive spillover occurs when benefits from one domain (e.g., skills learned at work) enhance the other (e.g., improved family relationships). Negative spillover happens when stress or dissatisfaction in one domain spills over into the other, potentially harming performance.

**2.3 Empirical Studies**

Numerous empirical studies have examined the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. A study by Pradhan and Jena (2017) found that employees who experienced better work-life balance tended to have higher job satisfaction and productivity. Similarly, a study by Gultom and Nata (2023) found that work-life balance was positively related to organizational commitment and negatively related to turnover intentions. A study by Sahin and Yozgat (2021) on work- family conflict and job performance found that work-life balance had a positive impact on employee performance, including job satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. A study by Kossek et al. (2011) used surveys and interviews to explore how WLB initiatives influenced employee engagement and performance. The results showed that employees who perceived their organizations as supportive of WLB were more engaged and performed better. A study by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) found that employees with better WLB reported higher job satisfaction and lower absenteeism, both of which contribute to improved performance.

However, challenges persist in implementing WLB initiatives, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. Cultural norms, economic constraints, and institutional limitations often hinder the adoption of effective WLB practices. For instance, Asamani, et al (2015), argued that relationship between work-life balance and employee performance may not be generalizable across different context like culture, gender and organization settings.

While previous studies have explored WLB in various sectors, few focus specifically on the Nigerian polytechnic context. This study aims to bridge these gaps by providing context-specific insights into the effect of work-life balance on employee performance in Nigerian polytechnics. Hence, it is pertinent to verify the null hypothesis stated below.

Hypothesis

H0 : Work-life balance has no significant effect on employee performance in Nigeria polytechnics.

**3 METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Research Design**

This study used a survey design technique. This study examined the perception of respondents in five selected polytechnics in Osun State, Nigeria. Copies of self-administered questionnaire were distributed across the five Polytechnics. The three point likert scale (high 3,2,1 low) were adopted on the questionnaire items. To collect the information, section 1 focused on the profile of the respondents while section 2 sampled the opinion of the variable of interest of the researcher. Analysis of the data were done with Descriptive statistics and Regression Analysis with the aid of SPSS software.

**3.2 Modelling**

To investigate the effect of work life balance on employees performance in Nigeria polytechnics through the primary data explained above, this study measured work life balance with four variables namely; Work hours, work stress, mental health, Personal/family Lifestyle. Employees performances are rated based on their office rank. From the above, the following model can be adopted.

Performance = ƒ(Work Life Balance) ………………………….(1)

Performance = ƒ(Work Hours, Work Stress, Mental Health, Personal/Family Lifestyle)…..(2)

Performance = β0 +β1 Work Hours + β2Work Stress,+ β3Mental Health + β4Personal/Family Lifestyle + Ut….(3)

Where: β0 = Constant

β1 – β4 = Coefficients of the variables

Ut = Error term

**4 RESULTS**

**4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

Table 1: Respondents Profile

|  |
| --- |
| **Description Frequency Percentage** |
| Age(Years) |
| <30 60 30 |
| 31-40 88 44 |
| 41-50 40 20 |
| >50 12 6 |
| Total 200 100 |
| Education Qualification |
| OND/NCE 40 20 |
| HND/BSC 125 62.5 |
| MBA/MSC/PhD 35 17.5 |
| Total 200 100 |
| Experience |
| <5 years 40 20 |
| 6-10 years 92 46 |
| 11-15 years 44 22 |
| Over 15 years 24 12 |
| Total 200 100 |

Source: Researchers’ computation (2025)

Out 250 copies of questionnaire that were distributed, only 200 respondents provided a useful information. Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents. The age distribution of the respondents shows that 60 (30%) falls within the range of 30 years, 88 (44%) falls within 31 – 40 years, 40 (20%) are within 41 – 50 years and only 12 (6%) of the respondents are above 50 years old.

The educational qualification shows that only 35 respondents (17.5%) has MBA,MSC/PhD which gives room for desire to pursue further studies among 165 respondents (82.5%) which could further affect work life balance.

The experience of the respondents shows that 40 (20%) spent 5 years or below while 24 (12%) have spent above 15 years in the polytechnics job.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Work\_hours | 200 | 1 | 3 | 2.65 | .490 |
| Work\_stress | 200 | 1 | 3 | 2.78 | .577 |
| Mental\_health | 200 | 1 | 3 | 1.35 | .558 |
| Personal/Family\_Lifestyle | 200 | 1 | 3 | 1.42 | .635 |
| Performance | 200 | 1 | 3 | 1.92 | .585 |

Source: Researchers’ computation (2025)

In table 2, the first 2 variables (work hours and work stress) focused on work aspect while the last 2 variables (mental health and personal/family lifestyles) centred on life aspect. The dependent variable which is performance is the fifth variable.

The first 2 variables had their mean values close to 3 (2.65 and 2.78 respectively). This implies the strength of work aspect is high. However, the last 2 variables had their mean values close to 1. This connotes the strength of life aspect is low. The fifth variable which is performance had a mean value of 2.12. This implies a fair performance. Also, a better performance could be achieved if the practice of work life balance is practiced.

**4.2 Regression Analysis**

The results of ANOVA in table3 and regression in table 4 were jointly interpreted. The regression result intable 4 revealed that work hours has 50.8% positive and significant effect on employees’ performance. Work stress has 13.7% negative effect but insignificant effect on employees’ performance. Mental health has 51.4% positive and significant effect on employees’ performance. Personal/Family lifestyle has 22.5% negative but insignificant effect on employee’s performance. This means attention should be paid towards reduction in work stress in order to boost employees’ performance. Moreover, personal/family issue should also be given adequate attention in order to improve the employees’ performance.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 3: ANOVAa** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Model | | | | Sum of Squares | | Df | Mean Square | | F | Sig. | | |
| 1 | | Regression | | 2.782 | | 4 | 2.782 | | 8.136 | .007b | | |
| Residual | | 12.993 | | 195 | .342 | |  |  | | |
| Total | | 15.775 | | 199 |  | |  |  | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Employee”s Performance | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Table 4: Regression** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Model | | | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | | | Standardized Coefficients | | T | Sig. |
| B | | | Std. Error | Beta | |
|  | | (Constant) | | .062 | | | .859 |  | | .072 | .943 |
| Work\_hours | | .508 | | | .178 | .420 | | 2.852 | .007 |
| Work\_stress | | -.137 | | | .176 | -.124 | | -.778 | .443 |
| Mental\_health | | .514 | | | .183 | .425 | | 2.807 | .008 |
| Personal/Family\_Lifestyles | | -.225 | | | .155 | -.234 | | -1.451 | .157 |
| 1. Dependent Variable: Employee”s Performance   Source: Researchers’ computation (2025) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .  Table 3 which is the analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed the overall performance of the study. From the ANOVA table the F-statistic has 8.136 and the significant value of 0.007 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies null hypothesis cannot be accepted. Hence, one can conclude that work life balance has significant effect on employee’s performance in selected polytechnics in Nigeria. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study revealed that work life balance has a significant effect on employee’s performance in Nigeria polytechnics. This demonstrates the critical role of work-life balance in enhancing employees' performance in Nigerian polytechnics. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Develop and implement comprehensive WLB policies tailored to the specific needs of polytechnic employees.

Provide training programs for managers and supervisors to enhance their understanding of WLB issues.

Encourage flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible schedules, to accommodate diverse employee needs.

Foster a supportive organizational culture that values work-life integration and promotes gender equality.

Allocate sufficient resources for WLB initiatives, including childcare facilities and wellness programs.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Much appreciations goes to Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Nigeria who sponsored this research work. We are also grateful to the Management of Osun state college of technology who provide the enabling environment and encouragement towards the success of this study.

**COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors hereby declare that no competing interest exist.

**Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)**

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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