

EFFECT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE EMPLOYEES OF MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

¹NWAOJEI, Felicitas Amaka

¹Department of Business Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

email:Citasnwojei@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study examined the effect of work life balance on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria. The study adopted the survey research design of which questionnaires were administered to a sample of (194) active manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria. The responses were analyzed using the smart PLS-SEM. It was found that holiday have a positive and significant effect on employee performance while Work hours revealed a negative and insignificant effect on employee performance. Therefore, the study recommended that organization should enhance holiday policies with flexible, generous time-off benefits, focusing on the implementation of employee-centric vacation programs and refine the well-being of employee to increase productivity for maximum performance. Organization should optimize work hour schedules, emphasizing on flexible arrangements to prevent fatigue. Conduct time management audits and align schedules with employee and organizational needs to enhance performance.

Key Words: *Work life balance, Work hours, Holiday and Employee Performance.*

INTRODUCTION.

Globally, high-performing employees are essential for innovation, customer satisfaction, and profitability. Employee performance is a critical factor in achieving organizational success and competitiveness across the globe. It encompasses employees' ability to effectively and efficiently execute their assigned tasks while contributing to organizational goals. Armstrong (2021) emphasizes that employee performance is influenced by factors such as job satisfaction, motivation, organizational culture, and the ability to balance personal and professional responsibilities. However, in sectors such as manufacturing, where job roles are physically demanding and time-sensitive, maintaining optimal performance often becomes challenging (Greenhaus 2019).

The manufacturing sector is seen as pivotal if a nation is to achieve meaningful industrialization. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria is seen by the policy makers as significant in the Nation's quest for economic growth. However, the unfavorable business environment in Nigeria has made the contribution of the sector to the country's GDP insignificant (Ehie & Muogboh 2021). The work environment has become more stressful because of diverse role expectations, cutthroat competition, globalization and technological innovations. Such changes have created several complications on both the domestic and professional fronts of the employees (Oludayo, et al 2018). The pressure of work has been intensifying and there is growing feeling among employees that the demands of work begin to dominate life and sense of work-life balance is felt. The challenge of integrating work and family life is a part of everyday reality for many employees nowadays.

Achieving work-life balance has become a pressing concern in today's corporate landscape, especially in high-demand industries such as manufacturing. In North Central Nigeria, workers in manufacturing companies face long hours, stressful tasks, and little time to rest or relax. They are often under pressure to meet deadlines, which leaves them with little time for family, health, or social life. This situation leads to stress, burnout, and low job satisfaction, which reduces how well they perform at work. As a result, companies experience lower productivity, more absenteeism, and higher staff turnover. When employees struggle to balance work and personal life, it affects their morale and can harm the long-term success of the organization.

The general objective of this research work is to examine the effect of work life balance on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the effect of work hours on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria
- ii. Investigate the effect of holiday on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria.

The following formed the research hypothesis of the study.

H₀₁: Work hour has no significant effect on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria.

H₀₂: Holiday has no significant effect on employee's performance of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees Performance

Daft (2021) described employee's performance in an organization as the capacity to reach its goals by efficiently and effectively using their resources. Organizational performance describes how efficient a firm has been in its mission to attain specified goals, which includes how well its resources are deployed, how well goals fixed are achieved, how effective is the Board.

Knight (2021) refers to employee's performance is an achievement shown by employees, he is the result achieved in carrying out tasks assigned to him based on the skill of experience and sincerity and the time available. Mangkunegara (2019) argues that performance is the result of work in quality and quantity achieved by an employee in performing their duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. According to Murphy (2021) viewed employee performance as a record of outcomes achieved for each job function over a specific time period. Employee performance is typically measured in terms of outcomes; however, it can also be measured in terms of conduct. Performance is a universal concept regarding the operational effectiveness of an administration, part of the organization, and its employees based on predetermined standards and criteria, because the organization is basically run by humans, then performance is actually human behavior in playing a role they do in an organization to meet the standards of behavior that have been set in order to produce the desired action and results (Mohammad, et al.,2021).Stavros, et al. (2021)employees' performance is interpreted as standards for employee behavior at work. Employees are assed and rated on the level of commitment or productivity on a particular job as compared to the needs and goals of the employer or the organization.

Work Life Balance

Orogbu et al. (2023) refers to work-life balance as the equilibrium between personal life and professional responsibilities, ensuring that neither aspect overshadows the other. It involves effectively managing time and energy to fulfill job-related obligations while also dedicating sufficient attention to personal well-being, family, and leisure activities. Achieving work-life balance helps reduce stress, enhance productivity, and improve overall quality of life by promoting a harmonious relationship between work and personal pursuits. In essence, it is about creating a sustainable lifestyle that allows for success in both career and personal domains without compromising either. The goal is to ensure that neither aspect dominates the other, leading to a more fulfilling and less stressful lifestyle. By achieving work-life balance, individuals can improve their overall well-being, boost job satisfaction, and enhance productivity without sacrificing their personal happiness and health.

Irawanto, et al. (2023) stated that work-life balance is the ability to maintain a healthy and sustainable relationship between work responsibilities and personal life. It involves allocating time and energy in a way that allows individuals to fulfill their professional duties while also engaging in personal activities, family commitments, and self-care. Achieving work-life balance means avoiding excessive stress from either area and creating a harmonious blend where both work and life outside of work are equally prioritized. This balance is crucial for overall well-being, as it fosters mental, emotional, and physical health while enhancing job satisfaction and personal fulfillment.

Work Hours

Amanawa and Uelee (2023) opined that work hour is a unit of time that defines the duration an individual spends on work-related activities during a given period, typically measured within a standard workday. This duration can vary significantly across different industries, organizations, and countries, often dictated by local labor laws and company policies. Generally, work hours can include both full-time and part-time schedules, with full-time positions typically requiring around 35 to 40 hours per week, while part-time roles may demand fewer hours. Work hours can be structured in various ways, including standard weekday shifts, flexible schedules, or shift work that includes evenings and weekends. The concept of work hours is crucial not only for determining an employee's pay but also for establishing a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life, contributing to overall job satisfaction and productivity. Furthermore, regulations concerning work hours often encompass provisions for overtime, breaks, and rest periods, ensuring that employees are treated fairly and their well-being is prioritized.

Osisioma et al. (2022) refer to work hours as specific period during which an employee is expected to perform their job duties. This time frame typically encompasses the hours spent actively working, whether in an office, on-site, or remotely, and is often governed by employment agreements or organizational policies. Work hours can vary significantly between different industries and roles, with some positions requiring fixed schedules while others may offer more flexible arrangements. The concept of work hours also includes considerations of overtime, breaks, and the overall structure of the working day, all of which can influence employee productivity, job satisfaction, and work-life balance.

Holiday

Shen et al. (2022) defined holiday as a designated period of time, typically characterized by a suspension of regular work, education, or other routine activities, during which individuals or communities engage in leisure, relaxation, and celebration. Holidays are often associated with specific cultural, religious, or national significance, and they provide an opportunity for people to take a break from their daily responsibilities and come together with friends and family. Holidays can be either public, where businesses, schools, and government offices may close, or private, where individuals or families choose to observe the occasion in a more personal manner.

Kamal (2021) opined that holiday involve a suspension of regular work, school, or other routine obligations, allowing individuals to enjoy a break and engage in recreational or celebratory activities. Holidays can be public, recognized at a societal or national level, leading to the closure of businesses and institutions. Alternatively, individuals may also take personal or private holidays for personal reasons or celebrations.

Przystanski (2021) viewed holidays as a time for people to come together with family, friends, and community members, fostering social connections and strengthening relationships. Holidays play a crucial role in promoting well-being, cultural identity, and social cohesion by offering people a chance to reflect, connect with others, and enjoy moments of respite from their regular routines. Holidays frequently involve spending time with family and friends. Social gatherings, meals, and celebrations are common during holidays, fostering a sense of community and connection. The nature and significance of holidays can vary widely across cultures, regions, and religions.

Empirical Review

Work Hours and Employee Performance

Okeazu et al. (2023) examined the relationship between work hours and employee performance. The study used Descriptive survey design. A sample size of 200 employees in the manufacturing sector was used. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were used. The study finds that work hours (40–50 hours per week) were positively correlated with employee performance, while hours exceeding this threshold led to reduced efficiency and increased absenteeism. The study recommends that employers in the manufacturing sector should

regulate work hours to balance productivity with employee well-being. The study lacks an in-depth exploration of the effect of shift work or night shifts on performance, which could offer more insights for industries that require 24-hour operations.

Taylor and White (2023) examined the effect of work hours on employee performance in London, UK. The study adopted survey design. A sample of 300 employees in the financial services sector was used. The study used primary data. The data was analyzed using ANOVA. The findings show that longer working hours have a negative effect on employee performance. The study recommends that employers should implement caps on maximum weekly work hours and offer stress-management programs. The study focuses primarily on the financial services sector, limiting generalizability to other industries with different work demands.

Holiday and Employee Performance

Jane and Assumptah (2022) examined the influence of holiday on employee performance in telecommunication industry in Kenya. The study adopted a survey research design. The target population was all employees from telecommunication industry in Kenya. A sample size of 90 respondents was derived using stratified random sampling from the three major telecommunication industries in Kenya namely, Safaricom, Airtel and Orange Telkom. The data collection instrument used in this study was questionnaire. Policies and factors relating to work-life balance were investigated as well as their impact on employee satisfaction among the respondents under study. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The findings were presented and analyzed based on the research-specific objectives. Tables and figures were used to present quantitative data where appropriate. The study found that holidays positively influenced employee satisfaction. The study findings revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that there is provision for annual leave to a great extent. The study recommends that organizations should ensure that they adopt and implement leave policies to ensure employees are given time to break from their job responsibilities. The study does not specify how strata were defined or the rationale behind the sample distribution among the companies.

Joshua (2021) assessed the effect of holiday on strategic organizational performance of Rift Valley Bottlers, Kenya. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The target population of this study entailed 69 respondents from various Rift Valley Bottlers departments. Since the population was small, a census was adopted. The study used primary data. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS variant 23. The study found out that annual leave significantly influenced firm performance. The study concludes that Rift Valley Bottlers Limited offered annual leave to its staff. Leaves not taken were recovered at Rift Valley Bottlers Limited. Rift Valley Bottlers Limited had an annual leave policy. Rift Valley Bottlers Limited heads of departments were the ones to approve annual leave. The study recommends that Rift Valley Bottlers Limited ought to offer annual leave to its staff. Leaves not taken ought to be recovered at Rift Valley Bottlers Limited. Rift Valley Bottlers Limited ought to have an annual leave policy. Rift Valley Bottlers Limited ought to support an employee who has been bereaved. Bereavement leaves ought to be open at Rift Valley Bottlers Limited. The study does not clarify how the respondents were selected from various departments, which could lead to potential biases in the findings.

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (2001)

The JD-R model, introduced by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli in 2001, focuses on the balance between job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure) and resources (e.g., autonomy, support). High job demands without adequate resources can lead to burnout and poor performance. In manufacturing firms, job demands are often significant, but implementing work-life balance initiatives like job control and support systems can act as resources that buffer these demands, improving employee engagement and performance.

Relevance to the Study:

In manufacturing settings, where job demands are inherently high, providing job resources such as control over work hours, supportive supervisors, and family-friendly policies can mitigate stress and

enhance performance. The study benefits from this theory by focusing on how balancing demands and resources affects productivity.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study consist of all 194 active manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria for a minimum of five (5) years that are registered with the corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). However, focus was on employees of manufacturing firms in North Central Nigeria. The population of the study is small, the study employed the use of census survey which permits that the entire population be used as sample size. As a result, the sample size is 194 manufacturing firms. The study used primary data. Data were collected using 5-point Likert scale structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using smart-PLS SEM.

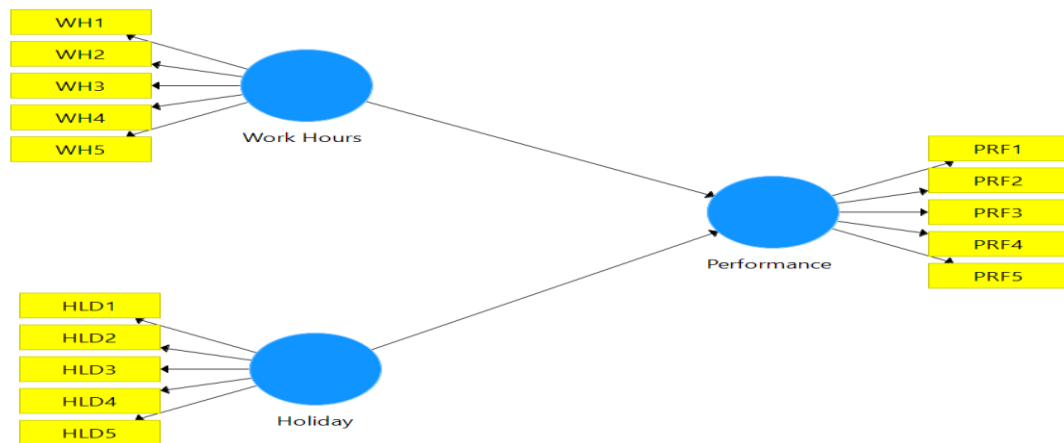


Figure 1: Study Model

Results and Discussion

Table 1.1: Reliability of study scale

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Holiday	0.838	0.866	0.893	0.680
Performance	0.845	0.846	0.896	0.685
Work Hours	0.827	0.866	0.894	0.737

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2025

Composite reliability of Jöreskog's (1971) was applied to test for internal consistency of the items. All the values fall within the Hair, et al., (2019) rating of good consistency. The Cronbach alpha value was above 0.60 which is the minimum threshold as recommended by Sekaran (2010). To test for the convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) was used. All the latent variables showed values greater than 0.50 which indicates that the constructs explain at least 50 percent of the variance of its items. According to Henseler et al., (2015) the Fornell-Larcker criterion does not perform well when explaining discriminant validity, particularly when the indicator loadings on a construct differ only slightly. As a replacement, they proposed the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of the correlations which is the mean value of the item correlations across constructs relative to the (geometric) mean of the average correlations for the items measuring the same construct (Voorhees et al., 2016). Discriminant validity problems are present when HTMT values are higher than 0.90 for structural models (Henseler, et al., 2015).

Table 1.2: Outer Loadings

	Holiday	Performance	Work Hours
HLD1	0.640		
HLD3	0.793		
HLD4	0.929		
HLD5	0.906		
PRF1		0.755	
PRF3		0.851	
PRF4		0.857	
PRF5		0.842	
WH3			0.839
WH4			0.860
WH5			0.877

The table presents the outer loadings for three constructs in a structural equation modeling (SEM) framework: Holiday (HLD), Performance (PRF), and Work Hours (WH). Outer loadings reflect the strength of the relationship between each observed variable (indicator) and its corresponding latent construct, with values above 0.7 generally considered acceptable for construct validity, and higher values indicating stronger relationships. Below is an explanation of the outer loadings for each construct in prose form.

For the Holiday construct, measured by four indicators (HLD1, HLD3, HLD4, HLD5), the outer loadings range from 0.640 to 0.929. HLD4 has the highest loading at 0.929, making it the strongest indicator, closely followed by HLD5 at 0.906, both well above the 0.7 threshold, indicating robust measurement of aspects such as holiday policies or time-off benefits. HLD3, with a loading of 0.793, also exceeds the threshold, contributing reliably to the construct. However, HLD1's loading of 0.640 falls below the acceptable threshold, suggesting it is a weaker or less consistent measure of the Holiday construct, potentially warranting scrutiny or refinement to improve measurement reliability.

For the Work Hours construct, represented by three indicators (WH3, WH4, WH5), the outer loadings range from 0.839 to 0.877. WH5 has the highest loading at 0.877, followed by WH4 (0.860) and WH3 (0.839), all well above the 0.7 threshold. These high loadings indicate that the indicators strongly capture the Work Hours construct, reflecting aspects such as working time allocation or scheduling. The consistency and strength of these loadings suggest that Work Hours is robustly measured, with WH5 being particularly representative of the construct.

For the Performance construct, assessed by four indicators (PRF1, PRF3, PRF4, PRF5), the outer loadings range from 0.755 to 0.857. PRF4 is the strongest indicator with a loading of 0.857, followed closely by PRF3 (0.851) and PRF5 (0.842), all exceeding the 0.7 threshold, indicating reliable measurement of organizational or individual performance outcomes. PRF1, with a loading of 0.755, is the weakest but still acceptable, suggesting it adequately captures the construct. These loadings confirm that the Performance construct is well-measured, with all indicators effectively reflecting aspects such as productivity or financial success.

Table 2 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Holiday	Performance	Work Hours
Holiday			
Performance	0.879		
Work Hours	0.685	0.479	

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Model Goodness of Fit (GoF)

Sequel to the need to validate the PLS model, there is a need to assess the goodness of fit of the model as Hair, et al. (2017) suggested. This study used the standardised root mean square residual's (SRMR). The choice of this index was based on the fact that the SRMR provides the absolute fit measure where a value of zero indicates a perfect fit. The study adopted Hu & Bentler (1998) suggestion that a value of less than 0.08 represents a good fit while applying SRMR for model goodness of fit. The study result indicates an SRMR value of 0.01. This indicates the model is fit.

Assessing the Structural Model

Having satisfied the measurement model assessment, the next step in evaluating PLS-SEM results is to assess the structural model. Standard assessment criteria, which was considered include the path coefficient, t-values, p-values and coefficient of determination (R^2). The bootstrapping procedure was conducted using a resample of 5000.

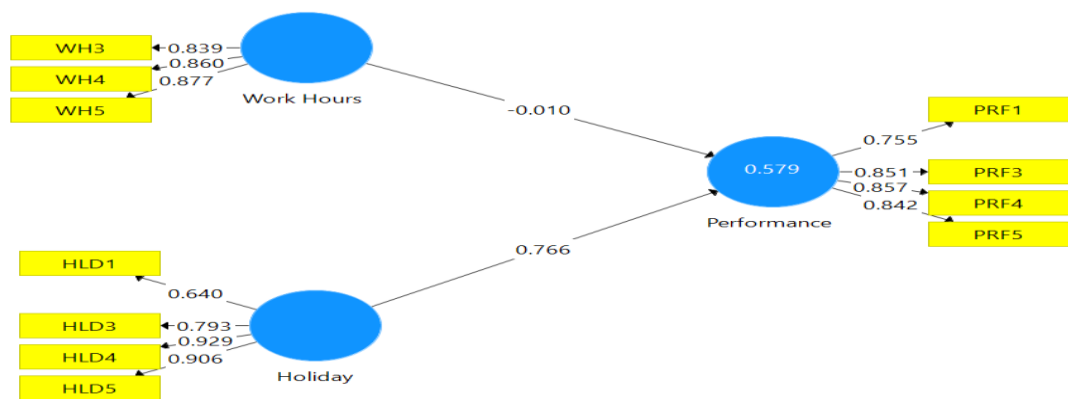


Fig. 3: Path Coefficients of the Regression Model

The R-square value stood at 579% indicating that work life balance represented by work hours and holiday are responsible for 57% variation in the performance. The remaining 43% variation could be explained by other factors not included in the study. Based on Hair, et al., (2019), the r-square is considered suitable and lends credence to the findings of the study. The result of the path analysis is presented in the table below.

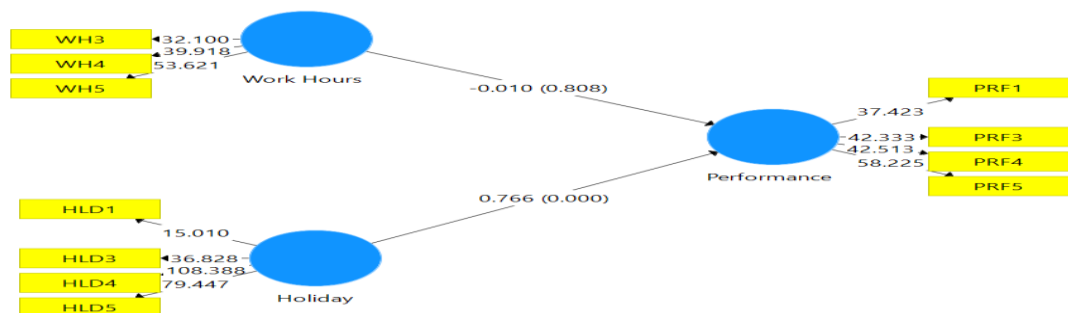


Table 3.1: Path Coefficients

Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Holiday -> Performance	0.766	0.769	0.019	40.041	0.000
Work Hours -> Performance	-0.010	-0.012	0.041	0.243	0.808

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2025

Results from table 3.1 above shows that the path coefficient for Holiday to Performance is 0.766, with a sample mean of 0.769, a standard deviation of 0.019, a T-statistic of 40.041, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a highly significant positive relationship. This implies that supportive holiday policies enhance employee well-being, productivity, and organizational performance, likely by fostering employee satisfaction and reducing burnout, making it a key driver in this model.

Lastly, Work Hours exhibits a path coefficient of -0.010, with a sample mean of -0.012, a standard deviation of 0.041, a T-statistic of 0.243, and a p-value of 0.808, indicating a statistically insignificant negative relationship. This is an indication that Work Hours, such as inefficient scheduling, excessive work hours leading to fatigue, reflecting time allocation or a lack of alignment between work hours and performance goals, does not reliably influence Performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings above, the study concludes that holiday and work hours are key motivators for employee performance in manufacturing firms in North Central, Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommended that organization should enhance holiday policies with flexible, generous time-off benefits, focusing on the implementation of employee-centric vacation programs and refine the well-being of employee to increase productivity for maximum performance. Lastly, organization should optimize work hour schedules, emphasizing on flexible arrangements to prevent fatigue. Conduct time management audits and align schedules with employee and organizational needs to enhance performance.

References

- Amanawa, D E & Uelee, M. N, (2023). The Impact of Flexible Work Schedules on Organizational Performance in Textile Production Companies Operating in Rivers State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research (IJAMR)*, 7 (1), .269-279.
- Armstrong, M. (2021). *Armstrong's handbook of performance management: An evidence-based guide to improving performance*. London: Kogan Page.
- Ehie, I., & Muogboh, O. (2021). Analysis of manufacturing strategy in developing countries: a sample survey of Nigerian manufacturers. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management* 27(2):234-260.
- Greenhaus, E. (2019). Organizational Identification versus Organizational Commitment: Self-definition, Social Exchange, and Job Attitudes. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* 27(5), 571.
- Irawanto, D. W., Khusnul R. N., & Kenny R. (2023). Work from Home: Measuring Satisfaction between Work–Life Balance and Work Stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia. *journal of humanities and social science*, 25(5), 62-66.
- Jane, W.G & Assumptah W. K (2022) examine influence of leave management on employee satisfaction in telecommunication industry in Kenya. *American Journal of Business and Management*, 2(8): 30-45.
- Joshua, C. (2021). Assess the influence of employee leave and strategic organizational performance of Rift Valley Bottlers, Kenya. *International Business and Management*, 2(8): 30-45.
- Kamal, H. (2021) This is what 365 days without a vacation does to your health. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77(1):65-78.
- Okeazu, E. Nwaeze C, & Nwadike C. E, (2023). The relationship between work hours and employee performance. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2(9), 114-123.
- Oludayo, F., Obianuju, A., & Demilade, F. (2018). Work-Life Balance Initiative as A Predictor of Employees Behavioural Outcomes. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 1(7)1-17.
- Orogbu L.O., Onyeizugbe, C.U & Chukwumeka, D.N. (2023). Work-life Balance and Employee Performance in Selected Commercial Banks in Lagos State, *European Journal of Research & Redection in Management Sciences*. 3(4) 2056-5992
- Osisioma H.E., Nzewi H.N & Ilo, L.I., (2022). Flexible Working Hours and Employee Performance in Selected Hospitals in Awka Metropolis, Anambra State Nigeria. *International Journal of Human Resource Management and Research* 2(5) 1-19

- Shen, H; Wang, Q; Ye, C & Liu, J (2022). The evolution of holiday system in China and its influence on domestic tourism demand, *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 4(2), 139-151
- Taylor, Q.L., & White, O.X. (2023). Effect of work hours on employee performance in London, UK. *Journal of International Business Studies* 28(1): 51–76.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

Below is statement on the scale of 1-5, where 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Strongly Disagree, 4= Disagree, 5= Undecided. Please indicate by ticking () the extent of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

S/N	Holiday	SA	A	SD	D	U
1	My work responsibilities often prevent me from taking the holidays or vacation days that I have accrued.					
2	I am satisfied with the number of vacation days I receive from my employer.					
3	I am able to fully disconnect from work during my vacation time					
4	I am able to easily schedule and take the holiday time I need					
	Work Hours					
6	The duration of my workday allows me to balance my professional and personal life effectively.					
7	My performance would improve if my work hours were reduced or adjusted.					
8	I have enough flexibility in my work schedule to address personal commitments.					
9	Long work hours interfere with my ability to spend time with my family or loved ones.					
10	I believe my personal well-being would improve with a more flexible work schedule.					
	Employee Performance					
11	I maintain a high level of efficiency in performing my job duties.					
12	I am able to prioritize my tasks to maximize productivity.					
13	I pay close attention to detail to minimize errors in my tasks.					
14	My work consistently reflects a high level of professionalism and accuracy.					
15	I ensure my work meets the organization's quality standards.					