

Schedule Flexibility and Performance of Ebonyi State Civil Service in Nigeria

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Abstract

Civil service has been identified as the fulcrum capable of contributing to the industrialization of Ebonyi State. The study aimed to examine the relationship between schedule flexibility and performance of Ebonyi State Civil Service. The study employed a descriptive survey design. A sample size of 371 respondents was drawn from a population of 5027 civil servants in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Primary source of data was employed mainly through a structured questionnaire. 360 copies of questionnaire were correctly filled, returned and used for analysis. Descriptive statistic was used to present data generated and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Software Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The results revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between flexi-time flexibility and commitment among civil servants in the Ebonyi State Civil Service. Also, a positive significant relationship exists between job sharing and loyalty among civil servants in the Ebonyi State Civil Service. Within the period of creation of the state, the idea of schedule flexibility has been incorporated in the administrative documents of the state. Notably among these alternative work practices are flexi-time flexibility and job sharing flexibility which is believed to have influenced employee performance in terms of employee commitment and employee loyalty to flexible hours. The study recommends that government should redirect itself toward the implementation of flexi-time in order to influence and sustain employee commitment to higher performance in the state civil service. In the same-vein, government and other employers of labour should endeavour to make provision for job sharing in order to enjoy continued loyalty of employees in the organization.

Keywords: *flex-time, job sharing, commitment, loyalty, civil service*

INTRODUCTION

The demand for the creation of Ebonyi State dates back to the pre-independence era when Sir Willink's Commission was set up by the British Government to look into the issue of the fear of

minority groups and question of new states in the Nigerian federation and articulate ways of solving them. Notwithstanding, the dream was not successful until October 1, 1996, when the former Head of State, late General Sani Abacha, announced the creation of Ebonyi State and other five new states in the country. Ebonyi State was carved out from the present Enugu and Abia States. As the government was instituted, the administrative machinery of the state (civil service) was established with staff inherited from Enugu and Abia states. With a humble commencement in 1996, the Ebonyi State Civil Service has been adequately constituted as the administrative arm of government with fifteen functional ministries under a Head of Service. Civil servants have been subjected to various reforms but the contemporary work environment demands that personnel perform their statutory obligations within the designated schedule flexibility (Blitz, 2005). Civil servants known for result oriented for minuting in a file or writing a memo to solve technical, economic, cultural and socio-political problems (Oko, 2003), cannot be effective if the civil servants do not perform under the flexible schedule.

Schedule flexibility has become essential part of human resource management task as Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) seek for higher employees' performance and sustainability in the civil service in order to achieve vision 2020 global target. However, originated in Germany with the aerospace company Messerschmitt-Bolkow-Blolm, in 1967 for 3000 white collar employees in administration and Research and Development Headquarter at Munich purposely to decrease the level of clocking on and off and the outcome of traffic jamming of employee needed to commence and complete task at the same time (Abid and Barech, 2017). Employees were found leaving early to avoid the lines which affected the level of performance attached to the job. The human resource manager, Herr Hillert perceiving the difficulty found the solution to this rigid hours and this was referred as "Gleitzeit"- sliding time / gliding time or otherwise flexible schedule. By 1972, out of 20,000 employees in the firm, only 6000 employees were found working under flexitime flexibility and helped the company to saved \$40000 monthly which influence the reduction in travel hindrance, recruitment problems, absenteeism and overall performance of the firm. By 1973, the concept of schedule flexibility has been adopted in all companies in Germany and across Europe due to labour force shortage. This concept influence females to work and still care of their families without stress as they will attain early to work or late at work and still performed a standard number of hours every day. The concept of schedule flexibility can be understood in terms of flexi-time flexibility, compressed work week flexibility, teleworking flexibility, part-time work flexibility and job sharing flexibility. Flexi-time is a kind of schedule flexibility which allow employees to be involved in determining the start and end times of their working day, provided a certain number of hours is worked and allows them to attain their family needs. Compressed work week flexibility allows employees to work longer shifts in exchange for a reduction in the number of working days in their work cycle which may be weekly or biweekly basis. Teleworking flexibility occurs when employees do their regular work from home instead of going into the office. Part-time work flexibility is when employees choose not to work on the normal hours or days but attain on their conventional time to work in order to achieve their work-life balance while job sharing flexibility occurs when two or more employees jointly perform one fulltime job, with responsibility and working time shared between them (Lazar, Osoian, Ratiu, 2010). For the purpose of this study as it relates to the performance of Ebonyi State civil Service, emphasis will be paid only on flexi-time and job sharing flexibilities.

Civil service has been identified as the fulcrum capable of contributing to the industrialization of Ebonyi State. The civil servants in most Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) are often engaged in various tasks (jobs), working longer hours more than 48 hours per week, in order to

improve clients' satisfaction hence making it impossible for them to strike a balance between personal health and family needs. Thus, this problem leads to civil servants to seek for diverse alternative work schedule such as flexi-time, compressed work-week, part-time work and job sharing in order to reduce the level of stress and improve work life balance. It is clear that civil servants in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) work more than 48 hours on average per week, which affect the extent of performance among civil servants in the Ebonyi State. Because of long working hours and tight schedule without vacations or days off to attain to personal and family needs, civil servants in the Ebonyi State lack needed performance, which affect their interpersonal relationship with their administrators. Therefore, the major problem for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) is on how to ignite the spirit of commitment and performance from their staff.

A pilot survey of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) shows that civil servants have often complained for lack of support from their co-staff in the work environment, which make the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) not family-friendly and make them feel stressed up because of role overload, which is a reflection of lack of schedule flexibility in the civil service. An employee is often assigned to a job, which is otherwise meant for more than one employee to do on daily basis, and this has made them to feel social neglect and invariably affect the level of commitment among employees in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). A study by Coenen and Kok (2014) in the developed countries found that flexi-time has a positive significant effect on both employees and organization as it leads to job satisfaction and lower turnover intention. Higher intention to remain means greater emotional attachment to the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and sensitive to the job experience, such as organizational support to flexible schedule as it manifests from performance but what is not clear is whether same relationship exists in the developing nations like Nigeria especially in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to determine the relationship between schedule flexibility and performance of Ebonyi State civil service. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the extent of relationship between flexi-time flexibility and performance of Ebonyi State Civil Service.
2. To examine the extent of relationship between job sharing flexibility and performance of Ebonyi State Civil Service.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Concept of Schedule Flexibility

Instituting schedule flexibility programmes has become a vital part of human resource function across the world and is required to induce employees to higher performance (Fernandez-Rios, Rico, Martin and De la Corte, 2005; Kersley, Alpin, Forth, Bryson, Bewley, Dix and Oxenbridge, 2006). Schedule flexibility refers to employees' abilities and motivation to work more hours, conduct more tasks, and adapt easily when performing multiple roles in the organization (Way, Tracey, Fay, Wright, Snell, Chang and Gong, 2015).

Translating schedule flexibility to the workplace, and especially in Ebonyi State civil service enable civil servants to reduce or rebalance workload, whereby actively external control is exercised over one's work. Kooij, Tims and Kanfer (2015) assert that employees are active shapers of their jobs and use flexibility to align jobs with their personalities. On the other hand, flexibility may entail the

ability of employees to conduct more work, and see their job descriptions expanded, involving more working hours and more effort.

Schedule flexibility can be defined as ‘the ability of both employers and employees to make changes on where, when and the total time they would spend or engage in work-related tasks’ (Rau & Hyland, 2002; Hill, Grzywacz, Allen, Blanchard, Matz-Costa, Shulkin and Pitt-Catsoupes, 2008). Such flexible work practices have become widespread within organizations and are often used as part of the human resource strategy to attract, motivate and retain key talent (Hill et al., 2008). Government also encourages many employers to offer flexible working conditions, like flexi-hours, flexible or remote work places and part-time working options to their employees. Functional flexibility is the tendency of ministries, agencies and departments to vary in the type and amount of work they use without using the external labour market.

Preenen, Vergeer, Kraan and Dhondt (2015) assert that flexibility arrangements indicate the procedures that organization adopt facilitate their workers in flexibly performing various tasks and roles in their organization. Functional flexibility arrangements are practices centered on improving the capability of workers to perform different tasks (Kalleberg, 2001). These schedule flexibility arrangements comprise of practices that influence workers to perform different tasks, such as multitasking (parallel work in different functions), and job rotation (sequential work in different functions), but equally in a less direct way, like organization of their work, participation of employees in job design, work arrangements, allowing for tailor-made arrangements of the job content and procedures (Arvanitis, 2005). This work arrangement provides staff of ministries, agencies and departments the chance to perform more jobs, and offers them with more flexibility in how they explain their function since the employees have more freedom and ability to determine the procedure to carry out their work. This implies that organizations that practice functional flexibility have the ability to position workers from one task to another (Michie & Sheehan, 2005) within and outside their units. Schedule flexibility provides employees greater discretion over their work schedules and office locations, which boosts their job autonomy. They have the authority to make their own decisions and allocate their resources. Hence, the more empowered an organization’s employees are, the stronger the positive influence of job autonomy on employee innovation Jiang, Pan, Luo, Guo and Kou (2023). Consequently, many researchers have indicate that schedule flexibility are conducive to promoting employees’ innovative behaviours (Wang and Xie, 2023; Wang, Qiu, Jin and Zhang, 2022). The positive impact of flexible work arrangements on employee innovation performance mainly manifests through the mediating effects of psychological empowerment (Azeem and Kotey, 2023), top management team support (Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, and Vrontis, 2022), work–life balance (Stamm, Bernhard, Hameister and Miller, 2023) and job satisfaction (Bjarntoft, Hallman, Zetterberg, Larsson, Edvinsson and Jahncke, 2021).

Schedule flexibility provides the organization with better sustainability while presenting considerable opportunities and challenges to its employees. Some studies have shown that FWAs also have a “dark side”. Flexible working practices and changing workplaces lead to role ambiguity for employees (Zhang, Hong and Smith, 2022), bring a larger workload and more responsibilities (Rodrigues and Rebelo, 2023), and increase work–family conflicts and turnover intentions (Wang, et al, 2022).

Moreover, Zhou, Dekker and Kleinknecht (2011) maintain that functional flexibility offers the employees’ chances for a long-term career in the same organization and it can be perceived as an investment in the loyalty, trust and commitment of employees. This study will focus on employees

that change function or department in the same organization, because the dataset that will be used in this study cannot be used to investigate other concepts of functional flexibility.

Schedule flexibility is a family-friendly workplace practice that facilitates the reconciliation of work and family-life and it increases the possibility of cross-functional cooperation, expand the heterogeneous knowledge exchange within the team, and improve the sense of self-efficacy among organization members, which is conducive to stimulating the creativity of employees (Wang and Xie, 2023). Flexibility enables parents to readjust their job schedule to be in line with school and childcare center hours. The degree at which flexitime arrangements enable employees balance job and family-life is co-determined by the level to which employees have control over flexibility arrangements. Chung, Kerkhofs and Ester (2007) assert that schedule flexibility is designed to address employers requirements in the production process and their use as a reconciliation tool is ascertain by the degree to which workers can apply these practices to reflect their preferred working schedule.

2.1.1 Flexible Working Hours (Flexi-time)

Flexi-time consists the key divergence from the standardized 45 hour week, 8 to 4 workweek. The practice of allowing workers some personal degree of choice as to commencing and ending times was first introduced in Germany in 1967. At that time, it was observed as ways of relieving transit and commute time difficulties. Within the period of it's accepts as a way of attracting women with family responsibilities into the labour force. In 1972, Hewlett Packard was noted with introducing flexi-time in the United States, after having first tried it in a German division to determined employees performance. Flexi-time refers to a scheduling practice for full-time workers which enables employees to choose their starting and ending times daily, so far as they complete a stipulated number of hours and still achieve higher performance within the allotted period. In this case, the entire workers expected to be present during certain "core hours", which is usually fixed at a period between the latest permissible starting time and earliest permissible finishing time.

The performance of employees in their respective offices will be determined considering their starting and finishing time. An efficient time-keeping system is essential in the implementation of flexi-time; so as avoid compromising the organizations' goals, e. g service to customers must be maintained and operational requirements must be met. There is a need to provide the necessary training to senior staff to familiarize them with the new system and to avoid common problems such as: loss of control because of changing attendance patterns; coordination of work activities; and ensuring access to staff.

2.1.2 Job Sharing

The term "job sharing" was first introduced in mid-1960s. This workplace practice was designed as a means to create more part-time opportunities in positions which could not be decreased in hours or share into two part-time jobs. The job sharing option influences employers to preserve works in their full-time basis while gaining on the expertise and skills of two or more employees. However, job sharing was mapped as a way to improve employment flexibility, and has helped to boost employment opportunities in situation of high unemployment in order to improve employees' performance. Job sharing is an arrangement where the duties and responsibilities of one job are shared by 2 or more workers. This is a good arrangement when a job needs to be filled on a full-time basis but not necessarily by one employee. Job sharing arrangements were most common in

secretariat, clerical and administrative work. Split week (Monday to Wednesday lunch time/Wednesday lunch time to Friday) was the most popular way of dividing work time between job sharing employees. This arrangement supports the pooling of ideas, and offers the opportunity for job sharers' to learn from one another. It makes it easier to provide for coverage of duties when one partner goes on vacation leave or sick leave. Jobs under the job sharing arrangement continue to retain their full-time status. Job sharers are hence in a better position than part-timers to preserve their career skills and status.

2.1.3 Employee Performance

The Hawthorne Studies and other researchers on human capital development found that workers who are satisfied with their job will certainly increase their job performance and display supreme loyalty, commitment and retention than employees who are not happy with their jobs (Landy, 1985). The performance of civil servants in terms of quality and quantity expected can be determined considering the level of commitment and loyalty to their respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These performance parameters are important in assessing the performance of civil service in Ebonyi State. Ngah and Ibrahim (2010) defined employee performance as the act of comparing the required outputs with the actual ones, examining the deviations from plans, evaluating individual employee performance and ascertaining the progress made in achieving the targeted objectives. The level of civil servants performance in Ebonyi State can be assess in terms of commitment. This is because employee commitment is the psychological state that defines a worker's relationship with the organization together with the implications for the decision to remain membership in the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). The performance of civil servants within the flexible hours whether on flexi-time or job sharing flexibilities depends on the extent the staff demonstrate high commitment to attain the expected results in the offices. On the other hands, employee loyalty is a major indicator that link other performance indices in the service oriented organizations like civil service. Without employee loyalty, it is very difficult for the organization to survive especially where the civil servants show civil disobedience to their superiors. Employee loyalty is the voluntary acceptance of the beliefs, values, capability, behavior and attitudes of the individual employee and willingness to display extra effort in achieving the expected objectives and goals of the organization within the specified time (Ugo, 2018). Employees' loyalty to schedule flexibility influence their commitment and sincerity toward the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the organization (Satyendra, 2015) as it is a strong sense of duty to the job and demonstration of intrinsic value on the job.

2.1.4 The Civil Service of Ebonyi State

The Civil Service is the single largest employer in Ebonyi State, employing over 25,000 workers. With the general objective of reducing traffic congestion during peak hours, it introduced the flexi-time and job sharing flexibility arrangement when it was created in 1996. The alternative work options influence employees to have higher flexibility to start, finish and share their working hours in order to achieve both work and family needs. With these practices civil servants can commence work anytime from 8.00 am to 9.00 am and finish between 4.00 pm and 5.00 pm on weekdays and between 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays as the needs arises in their respective offices. Feedback on these schemes are often positive as staff are in the position to balance job hour requirements and family commitments. These schedule flexibilities are satisfactory among staff with young schooling children.

Recently, a number of ministries including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Works and Ministry of Manpower (MOM) offered extended service hours to the public. For Ministry of Works, Ministry of Environments and Ministry of Power their departments remain opened for an extra half hour on Mondays to Fridays. To enable the each ministry to deliver the extra half-hour service each day, the employees' working schedules were adjusted within the overall framework of the 45-hour workweek. Apart from enhancing the service to the public, flexi-time and job sharing schemes enables the workers to rest on some days, that is Saturdays and Sundays. The staff favourably received it as it enables them to have a better work-family balance. At the Ministry level, the schemes have helped to better attract and retain valued employees at the ministry level.

2.2 Empirical Review

A study on the effect of flexible working arrangement on employee performance: mediating role of work engagement and supervisor support in indonesia digital startup was carried out by Pradipta and Martdianty (2023). The study aimed to examines the mediating role of work engagement and supervisor support on the relationship between flexible work practices and team member performance. The data were collected from 316 employees working in digital startup companies in Indonesia. The data generated were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results show that work engagement and supervisor support as mediating roles affect the relationship between flexible work practices and employee performance. The results found work engagement as a mediating relationship between supervisor support and employee performance. Supervisory support in the form of support for employees makes them feel more valued, and it affects job performance. High work involvement improves employee performance while practicing flexible work arrangements.

Choo, Desa and Asaari (2016) conducted a study on the relationship between flexible working practices and organizational commitment and work-family conflict in Malaysia. The study aimed to determine the relationship that links flexi-time with organizational commitment and work-family conflict. A sample of 130 finance executives was administered a structured questionnaire. The findings revealed that a positive significant relationship exist between flexi-time and organizational commitment and work-family conflict. The study recommends that organizations should reconsider effective implementation of flexible working policies to take care of the needs of the employees.

Man and Ling (2014) in their study of the relationship between working hours and productivity in Hong Kong. The study focused on examining the relationship between flexi-time and productivities determinants in service oriented industries. A total of 312 employees responded on the questionnaire. Data generated were analyzed using correlation model. The results indicated that duration of working hours and productivity are negatively correlated in food services and information communication industries but working environment, job content and information technology skills are positively significant in the two industries. The study recommended that managers should concentrate on developing these key variables for the improvement and enhancement the productivity of workers so as to benefit the organization.

Mungania, Waiganjo and Kihoro (2016) conducted a study on the influence of flexible work arrangement on organizational performance in the Banking industry in Kenya. The employed a cross sectional survey of 43 banks in Nairobi. A structured questionnaire was used for collection of data and the data gathered were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The findings showed that a positive significant relationship exist between flexible work arrangement and organizational

performance. That is, flexi-time provides the employees the opportunity to put required energy and effort in the job within the stipulated times. The study recommended that managers should design flexi-time to enable employees decide when to start and finish work as long as they achieve the desired objectives and also invariably influences organizational performance in the banking industry.

A study on the impact of flexible working hours on the employees' performance in Pakistan was conducted by Abid and Barech (2017). The objective of the study was to determine the impact of flexi-time on employees' performance. A descriptive survey was adopted and a convenient sample of 200 respondents were selected. Primary data was used mainly through questionnaire. The data were analyzed using simple graphs and frequency distribution. The results revealed that there is a positive significant impact of flexi-time and employees' performance in Pakistan. Schedule flexibility in terms of flexi-time is a source of commitment, job satisfaction and quality of life among workers. The recommended that firms should support and encourage the implementation of flexi-time since both the firm and employees benefit from the scheme.

Russell, O'Connell and McGinnity (2007) conducted a study on the impact of flexible working arrangements on work-life conflict and work pressure in Ireland. The study seeks to determine the relationship between various flexibility indicators and employees outcomes- work pressure and work-life conflict using the first national survey of employees in Ireland in 2003. The data generated were analyzed using structural equation model. The findings showed that flexi-time, job share and part-time work decrease the level of work-life conflict and work pressure while teleworking increases work-life conflict and work pressure among employees. The study suggested that it is necessary to design flexible work schemes so as to reduce work-life conflict and work pressure.

Okemwa (2016) investigated the relationship between flexible work arrangement and commitment of nurses in public hospital in Kenya through a cross sectional survey method. Data collected were subjected to regression analysis and the results revealed that a positive significant association exist between various flexible work schemes and commitment among nurses in public hospitals. The study suggested that management of public hospitals should design work flexible schemes that suit personal needs of the nurses and apply them in order to greatly influence their commitment.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Work-family Enrichment Theory

Work-family enrichment theory can be credited to Powell and Greenhaus study in 2006. This theory emphasizes that employee engages in different flexible work arrangement in order to accomplish the requirement of his job and at the same time attain his personal and family needs thereby satisfying and enriching both the organization and family. This theory focused on the assumption that employee has only a certain amount of psychological and physiological energy which needs to be divided between work and family (Russo and Buonocore, 2012).

This theory explains the degree at which individual's experiences and skills in one job enhances the quality of life in the other role (Powell and Greenhaus, 2006). Despite the limited model to approach this concept, it is suggested that psychological and physiological resources are not finite. Work-family enrichment theory states that the need to balance work and family obligations leads to situation of and interrole conflict (McNall, Masuda and Nicklin, 2010; Russo and Buonocore, 2012). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) did more creative work by demonstrating that individual participation in various roles not only does not leave the employee without energy to participate in other roles but it create additional energy to perform in the latter roles. That is, the social knowledge gained in one role can be successfully utilized in other role when needed.

2.3.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory explains that employees' relationships are coined by a subjective cost-benefit indices and the comparative of alternatives (Wainaina, 2015). Social exchange consists a series of interactions that generate obligations. These interactions are usually seen as interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person. Wainaina (2015) maintains that the social exchange theory opines that employees evaluate the overall worth of a particular relationship by deducting its costs from the benefits it renders. In civil service setting, there exists a relationship between an employee and the ministry and its destiny will be ascertained by the value of the relationship on both parties (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

The social exchange theory discovers that the major factor in interpersonal relationship is the satisfaction of both parties' interest (organization and employees). Heshizer (1994) argues that employees expect benefits in form of such things like flexible work–arrangements. Performance will act as cost in terms of time spent in the workplace and lost opportunities. To enhance performance and productive behavior among employees, employers are expected to adhere to the principles of social exchange. For ministries, agencies and departments to achieve the benefits in terms of higher performance, employees demand just and fair treatment. Flexible work practices may influence the level of participation of employees in decision makings through a felt obligation to give extra effort in return for additional benefits (De DeCuyper, De Witte and Emmeric, 2011; Lambert ,2000). Therefore, it is believed that ministries, agencies and departments that adopts flexible work practices may influence an obligation manifested as improved employee commitment toward higher performance. Besides, any ministry, agency and greater employee commitment or reduced turnover (Haar and Spell, 2004). Social exchange theory can therefore be used in this study to explain the relationship between flexible work –arrangements and employee performance. Higher employee performance will occur when flexible schedule practices adopted lead to desirable relationship with an individual employee's particular needs.

METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This study focused mainly on civil servants in Ebonyi State with particular attention to civil servants at Government House, = 200; Cabinet Office, = 320; State Secretariat (Unity Square), = 2200; Federal Secretariat (Nnorom) = 600 and other ministries, agencies and departments outside the secretariat = 2000. However, the total civil servants considered for the study was five thousand three hundred and twenty (5320) as sourced from the office of the Head of Service. Out of this population, a sample size of three hundred and seventy two (372) civil servants were determined using Taro Yamani's formula. Only 360 copies of questionnaire were correctly filled, returned and used for analysis. Primary source of data was employed through the structured questionnaire administered on the selected respondents. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity and the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Coefficient Alpha to ascertain the extent the instrument was reliable. A Cronbach Alpha value of 0.849 (flexi-time); 0.854 (job sharing); 0.956 (employee commitment) and 0.973 (employee loyalty) was found to be reliable. The data collected were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of SPSS version 21.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Questionnaire Response Rate on Flextime Flexibility

Table 1: Flexi-time Flexibility

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	Flexibility allows me to make time for myself and for things that are important to me	3.33	1.142	Accepted
2	My working hours allows me to run errands that can only be done during business hours	3.34	1.128	Accepted
3	My flexible working hours are extremely important to my mental wellbeing	3.31	1.141	Accepted
4	My flexible working hours enable me to work when it is most suitable for me	3.35	1.136	Accepted
5	I can work more effectively and efficiently and my work quality is now better	3.49	1.180	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

The means and standard deviations of questions under flextime flexibility construct is shown. The results for one sample t-test of for mean for questions under this construct is shown in appendix. At 0.05 levels, the questions under the flextime flexibility constructs are accepted.

Questionnaire Response Rate on Employee Commitment

Table 2: Employee Commitment

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
6	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization because my goals are in agreement with its goals	3.333	1.133	Accepted
7	My relationship with my fellow workers is so cordial that I look forward to work	3.32	1.131	Accepted
8	I really feel as if the organization problems are my own	3.32	1.127	Accepted
9	I feel emotionally attached to this organization	3.31	1.131	Accepted
10	I fell a strong sense of belonging to my organization	3.30	1.131)	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

The means and standard deviations of questions under employee commitment construct is shown above. The results for one sample t-test of for means for questions under this construct is as shown in appendix. At 0.05 levels, the questions under the employee commitment constructs are accepted.

Response Rate on Job Sharing Flexibility

Table 3: Job Sharing Flexibility

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
11	I usually recommend job sharing as a good alternative to my coworkers	3.33	1.142	Accepted
12	Job sharing provides me the opportunity to make balance between work life and personal life	3.34	1.28	Accepted
13	Job sharing provides me the opportunity to share knowledge experience and skills with my work partners	3.31	1.141	Accepted
14	When I work with my partner, we put out minds together the tasks are solved more easily	3.35	1.136	Accepted
15	In job sharing there is more time for more to attain my family needs	3.49	1.180	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

The means and standard deviations of questions under job sharing flexibility construct is as shown above. The results for one sample t-test of for means for questions under this construct is shown in appendix. At 0.05 levels, the questions under the job sharing flexibility constructs are accepted.

Questionnaire Response Rate on Employee Loyalty

Table 4: Employee Loyalty

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
16	I take my task as a responsibility to make my organization successful	3.36	1.147	Accepted
17	I am ready to continue to work in this organization no matter what	3.30	1.136	Accepted
18	I have some belief in the norms and values of organization	3.33	1.137	Accepted
19	I am willing to put extra effort to help my organization achieve its objectives	3.31	1.124	Accepted
20	I am convinced that I can realize my full potential in my organization	3.38	1.168	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

The means and standard deviations of questions under employees loyalty to flexibility hours construct is as shown in table 4 above. The results for one sample t-test of for means for questions under this construct is as shown in appendix. At 0.05 levels, the questions under the employee loyalty to flexibility hours constructs are accepted.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no positive significant relationship between flexi-time flexibility and Commitment among Ebonyi State Civil Servant.

H₁: There is no positive significant relationship between flexi-time flexibility and Commitment among Ebonyi State Civil Servant.

Correlation coefficients

Correlations			
		Flexitime flexibility	Employee commitment
Flexitime flexibility	Pearson Correlation	1	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	360	360
Employee commitment	Pearson Correlation	.811**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	360	360

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation result connecting flexi-time flexibility and employee commitment is 0.811. This output implies that there is a strong significant correlation between flexi-time and employee commitment among Ebonyi State Civil servants which is statistically significant at 5% level with a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, flexi-time flexibility influences staff commitment in the Ebonyi State Civil Servants.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no positive significant relationship between job sharing flexibility and loyalty among Ebonyi State Civil Servants.

H₁: There is no positive significant relationship between job sharing flexibility and loyalty among Ebonyi State Civil Servant.

Correlations

		Job sharing flexibility	Employee loyalty to flexible hours
Job sharing flexibility	Pearson Correlation	1	.637**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	360	360
Employee loyalty to flexible hours	Pearson Correlation	.637**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	360	360

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The finding of the correlation between job sharing and employee loyalty is displayed above. The correlation result between job sharing flexibility and employee loyalty in the Ebonyi State Civil Service is 0.673. This value indicates that there is a strong positive significant relationship between job sharing and loyalty among Ebonyi State Civil Servants which is statistically significant at 5% level with a p-value of 0.001. Therefore, job sharing influences staff loyalty in the Ebonyi State Civil service.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ebonyi State Civil Service is well known to have controlled more than 85 percent of the total workforce as there is no single manufacturing firms in the state. Within the period of creation of the state, the idea of schedule flexibility has been incorporated in the administrative documents of the state. Notably among these alternative work practices are flexi-time flexibility and job sharing flexibility which is believed to have influenced employee performance in terms of employee commitment and employee loyalty to flexible hours. Due to the nature of work and environment determine to large extent the degree at which these mode of schedule flexibilities were adopted to increase the level of employee commitment and loyalty in the administration of the state effectively and efficiently. The findings of the correlation test showed that there is a positive significant relationship between flex-time flexibility and employee commitment among civil servants in Ebonyi State. This result implies that the implementation of flexi-time flexibility will increase the level civil servants display their commitment toward higher performance in the state. Also, the results showed that job sharing has a positive correlation with employee loyalty in the Ebonyi State Civil Service. The performance of civil servants are determined by the extent they are loyal and strictly adhere to the rule and procedures guiding day-to-day operations in their respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The implementation of flexi-time and job sharing can be adjudged by employee commitment and loyalty toward achieving the desired objectives of the state.

Based on the conclusion, the study recommended that government should redirect itself toward the implementation of flexi-time in order to influence and sustain employee commitment to higher performance in the state civil service. In the same-vein, government and other employers of labour should endeavour to make provision for job sharing in order to enjoy continued loyalty of employees in the organization. This will invariably reduce the level of unemployment in the state and civil disobedience often experience in different state. The study however suggests in depth study on the nexus between teleworking and employee performance among persons with disabilities since the state has embarked on mass recruitment of disable persons into the state civil service.

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