Work Life Balance and Employee Commitment in Indigenous Oil Servicing Companies in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between work life balance and employee commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional research survey design. Primary source was generated through self- administered questionnaire. The population of the study is 270 employees of twenty-four (24) selected indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. The sample size of 161 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70 selected. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The results of the analysed data revealed that there is a significant relationship between work environment and employee commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. The study thus concludes that work life balance significantly influences employee commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. Therefore, the study recommends that indigenous oil servicing companies should adopt policies that encourage work life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements, family responsibilities support, and wellness programs. The considerations of childcare, dependent care and allowing employees more time with their families which are issues that characterize employee's role at home should be encouraged.

Keywords: *Work Life Balance, Affective Commitment, Normative Commitment and Continuance Commitment*

1.0 Introduction

Organizations value commitment among their employees because it is typically assumed to reduce withdrawal behaviour, such as lateness, absenteeism and turnover. Hence, there is no doubt that these values appear to have potentially serious consequences for overall organizational performance. The study of employee commitment is important because as Yadav and Uprtou (2022) noted that employees with sense of employee commitment are less likely to engage in withdrawal behaviour and more willing to accept change. Hence, there is no doubt that these values appear to have potentially serious consequences for a core of committed individuals who are the source of organizational life.

In today's society, workplace pressures continue to mount globally. Work target demands, family pressure and the pressure to balance the two have taken a toll on most employees' health

and well-being (Nnko, 2022). The reality of modern life is that the Quality of Work Life (QWL) has continued to deteriorate as people continue to focus on work more than ever. It is the fact from researches that on an average, employees in the developed countries spend 14 to 15 hours a day on work against the accepted norms 8 to 9 hours and most distressing is that the trend is on the rise. Burn out; stress leading to health hazards is the natural off shoot (Dubey & Srivastava, 2020).

Performing at peak level is pertinent to all organizations, profit or non-profit. For this reason, organizations will need to have an army of committed employees who are genuinely committed to the course of the organization's goals. Commitment is practically desirous trait in all employees for fully committed employee adds to operations several folds than does a comparatively, less committed employee (Pathiranage, Jayatilake & Abeysekera, 2020).

Work life balance is a very important phenomenon that is of great concern to various employees in both private and public sector. It goes beyond prioritizing the work role and one's personal life. It also affects the social, psychological, economical and mental well-being of the individual. All these is been reflected in the output of the individual, which affects his or her performance in the work place on the long run. Work life balance has implication on employee attitudes, behaviours, wellbeing as well as organizational effectiveness (Awosusi, Olusesi & Zakariya, 2020). The competition for market leadership in the oil and gas sector, may lead to manager's giving their employees excessive work load in order to meet up with their target. Employees try their best to be retained in the organization by putting in more time at work which may be at detriment of their personal life. All these may affect the upbringing of children, lead to broken and unhappy homes and poor social life.

Employers can support work-life balance by providing flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible schedules, and encouraging employees to take time off when needed. On the other hand, an employee who feels a strong sense of commitment to their employer and work is more likely to be engaged, motivated, and productive. Employers can foster employee commitment by providing opportunities for professional development, recognizing and rewarding good performance, and fostering a positive and inclusive work culture.

The purpose of this paper therefore was to examine the relationship between work life balance and employee commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study were:

i. Examine the relationship between work life balance and affective commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State?
ii. Access the relationship between work life balance and normative commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State?
iii. Investigate the relationship between work life balance and continuance commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State?
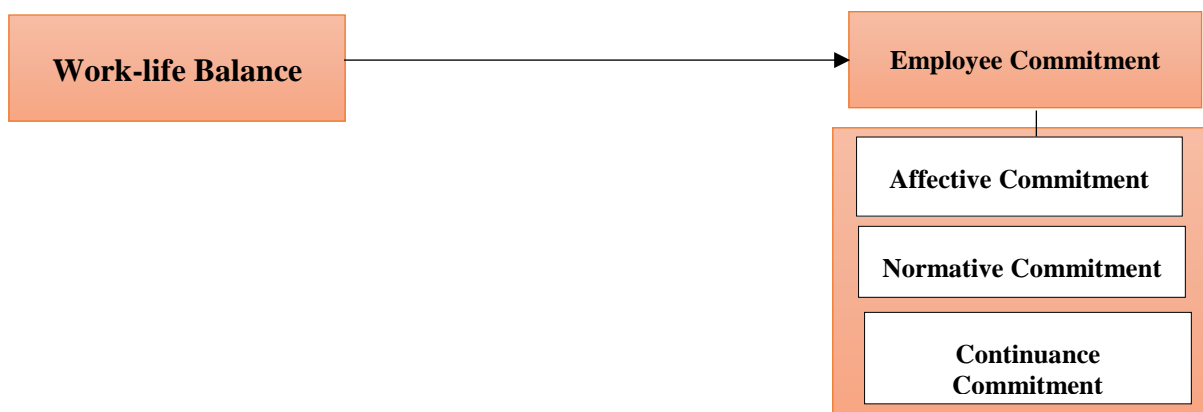
Figure 1: *conceptual model for the relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment.*

Source: Guest, (2002); Meyer & Allen (1997)

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Spill over Theory

The spill over theory suggests that there is a similarity between what occurs in the work environment and what occurs in the family environment (Sidin, Sambasivan & Ismail, 2010). The theory emphasizes on the tendency of the worker to carry their emotions, attitudes, skills and behaviors that they establish at work into their family life and vice versa (Sidin *et al.,* 2010). The spill over process can be either positive or negative. The negative spill over induces stress in individuals and the positive spill over can lead to high levels of satisfaction and performance. Extensive research into the field of work life balance has indicated that employees who continuously work long hours have greater degree of work life conflict (Dex & Bond, 2005). The boundary between work and home are relatively weak and tend to spill over positive or negative spills into the home or work environment (Lewis, 1997).

From an organizational point of view, positive spill over theory can have a direct influence on the financial well-being of the organization. A satisfied employee will have spill -over effect to their customer as well, hence increased performance of an organization and vice versa. More over satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal to that specific company and loyalty enhances higher productivity of an organization. The experiences resulting from spill over in the organization can manifest themselves as either positive or negative (Morris & Maden, 2007). Positive spill over refers to the extent to which positive experiences in one domain (affect, development and capital) are transferred to another domain (Carlson, Kalmar, Wayne & Grzywacz, 2006). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) described work-family enrichment a concept similar to positive spill over as the extent to which fulfilment of one role enhances the quality of the other role. They proposed that enrichment occurs either through instrumental (e.g. skills and perspectives gained) or affective mechanisms.

2.2 Work Life Balance

Work life balance which refers to organizational support for dependent care, flexible work options and family (Cvenkel, 2021), is a very important phenomenon that is of great concern today to various employees and organizations in both private and public sector. The term gained importance at the beginning of the 21st century in Europe and the United States of America with the argument that workers were having a problem balancing between what they

wanted to do, that is caring for their families and their careers at work place especially young mothers. In the Late 1960's the aspect of work life balance was increased due to concerns about the effects of work on the general wellbeing of employees, up until the mid-1970's, where employers concern was on work design and working conditions improvement (Cummings & Cummings, 2020).

Maertz and Boyar (2009) cited in Agono (2022) defines work-life balance as a specific set of organizational practices, policies, programmes, plus a philosophy, which actively supports efforts to help employees achieve success both at work and at home. Work-life programmes cover reward, gains and other human resource programmes, all of which tackle the significant connections of employees, their families, communities, and the workplace. Lee and Sirgy (2019) describes work family balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict. Tan (2019) define work-life balance as the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and equally satisfied with – his or her work role and family role. Work-life can be viewed from the lenses of creating and supporting healthy environment which will enable employees have balance between work and personal responsibilities that tends to strengthen employee loyalty and productivity. Ali and Ashraf (2021) defines work-life conflict as inter-role conflict arising due to conflicting roles required by organization and from one's family. Cazan and Pavalache-Ilie (2019) defines work-life balance as a direct result of compatible pressure from an individual family roles and work domain. Lockwood (2008) observes that the meaning of work-life balance has changing features since it implies various things to various groups, and its meaning is frequently determined by the perspective of the discussion and the belief of the author. Submitter, Bello and Tanko (2020) contend that in a wide sense, work life balance has to do with an acceptable degree of 'fit' between the numerous responsibilities in an individual's life.

Work-life balance is a satisfactory level of involvement between the multiple roles in a person's life. Although definitions and explanations vary, work-life balance is generally associated with equilibrium, or maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life (Clarke, 2004). The study of work-life balance involves the examination of people's ability to manage simultaneously the multifaceted demands of life. Although work-life balance has-traditionally been assumed to involve the devotion of equal amounts of time to paid work and non-work roles, more recently the concept has been recognized as more complex and has been developed to incorporate additional components (Akter, Hossen & Islam, 2019). Work life balance aims at providing quality of life for an employee at the same time retaining the productivity levels of an employee at the work place. The balance work life score provides an organization with a productive and innovative employee, whereas disparity in the work life balance tends to develop depressed and dissatisfied staff (Akter, Hossen & Islam, 2019).

2.3 Employee Commitment

In recent time, several scholarly research works have been conducted in the area of employee and organization commitment. Commitment is a difficult concept to define (ushtaq, Ellahi & Khan, 2019). They defined commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target. Meyer & Maltin (2010) are of the opinion that the binding force can be experienced in different ways (i.e. can be accompanied by different mindsets), including an affective attachment and involvement with the target and an awareness of the cost associated with discontinuing involvement with the target and that in its pure form, these mindset are referred to as affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC) and continuance commitment (CC) respectively.

According to Akintayo (2010) employee commitment can be defined as the degree to which the employee feels devoted to their organization. In the view of Kalitanyi (2022), employee

commitment is described as an effective response to the whole organization and the degree of attachment or loyalty employee feels towards the organization. In the same vein, Zheng, Sharan and Wei (2010) saw employee commitment as simply employee attitude to organization. Therefore, employee loyalty to management is shown in how committed they are to their job in the organization. It shows identification with involvement in the day-to-day activities of the organization and management of organization should be concern with determining the level of commitment displayed by managers and would-be managers at all times. According to Kalitanyi (2022) employee commitment is multi-dimensional in nature, encompassing workers loyalty, their willingness to exert more effort on behalf of the organization, adherence to organizational values, and desire to remain in the organization.

Shahid & Azhar (2013) argued that employee commitment has been an important factor to determine the success of an organization and that employee commitment to an organization has acquired increasing demand as it aids the organization to retain more staff thereby increase in achievement, productivity and effectiveness. In addition, that the three top drivers to employee commitment are fulfilment, fairness and care and concern for employees. According to Beheshtifar and Herat (2013), employee commitment is also seen as the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization and wants to continue actively participating in it. Lee and Chen (2013) argued that employee commitment is relative to the worker's attachment to participation in the activities of the organizations in which they are employed.

In another development, Bennett and Robinson (2000) performed an exploratory study which identified three psychological bases for organizational attachment. They are compliance commitment, identification commitment and internalization commitment. Compliance commitment is conceived to mean the employee is committed to the organization because there are high monetary and social costs associated with the organization. Identification commitment is commitment based on an emotional bond with the organization and the persons desire to be affiliated with the organization. And lastly, internalization commitment is internalizing norms shared with the organizations goals, value and mission as encapsulated by (Madi, Abu-Jarad & Alqahtani, 2012).

2.3 Measures of Workers Commitment

2.3.1 Affective Commitment (AC)

According to Chanana (2021) affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to identification with, and involvement in the organization based on positive feelings, or emotions, toward the organization. The antecedent for affective commitment include perceived job characteristic where there is task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety and supervisory feedback, organizational dependability that mean extent to which employees feel the organization can be counted on to look after their interest, and perceived participatory management that they can influence decisions on the work environment and other uses of concern to them (Madi *et al,* 2012). They further asserted that the use of these antecedents is consistent with the findings by Rowden (2002) that these factors all create rewarding situations, intrinsically conducive to development of affective commitment.

Also, Emmanuel, Nwakoby and Augustina (2020) argued that the primary basis for the development of affective commitment is personal involvement, identification with the relevant target, and value congruence (Sungu, Weng & Xu 2019). As a result of the above view of Sipior, and Lombardi (2019), which states that when there is a high level of affective commitment, employees will be willing to remain in that organization, otherwise the reverse will be displayed. It has also been seen in the view of Bal, Bozkurt and Ertemsir (2014) that affective commitment reflects an emotional attachment and involvement in the organization.

But earlier, Allen & Meyer (1991) cited in Grund and Titz (2022) defined affective component as an emotional attachment to the organization via identification, involvement and enjoyed membership. It has also been said that affective commitment shows commitment that depends on emotional ties the employee develops with the organization through work experiences that are positioned. The 'work experience relates to the boss-driven development as a dimension in management development.

2.3.2 Normative Commitment (NC)

According to Madi, *et al* (2012) normative commitment refers to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization where it based on the employee having internalized the values and goals of the organization. Normative commitment is said to reflect a sense of obligation on the part of the employee to maintain membership in the organization (Bal, *et al.,* 2014). It has also been conceived that the potential antecedents for normative commitment include co-worker commitment where it includes affective and normative dimensions as well as commitment behaviour, organizational dependability and participatory management. And that co-workers' commitment is expected to provide normative signals that influence the development of normative commitment. It is worthy to mention that organizational dependability and participatory management are key issues that will foster and install a sense of moral obligation to reciprocate to the organization. Normative commitment is said to reflect a sense of obligation instilled in the employee to sustain membership in the organization (Bal, *et al.,* 2014).

Unarguably, Meyer and Maltin (2010) opined that latter observation regarding normative commitment is consistent with recent findings; demonstrating that normative commitment can have two faces, one reflecting a moral imperative and the other reflecting indebted obligation. Firstly, the moral imperative mindset is experienced when normative commitment combines with strong affective commitment. Secondly, the indebted obligation mindset results from a combination of strong normative commitment and continuance with weak affective commitment. Also, Lee & Chen (2013) asserted that normative commitment relates to obligation employee may feel they owe the organization for being given a job when they need it most. That in no small measure will increase or boost the employee level of commitment especially in a society where there is an army of unemployed people.

2.3.3 Continuance Commitment (CC)

Bal *et al.* (2014) opined that continuance commitment is based on the perceived costs associated with discontinuing employment work with the organization. Kanter (1968) referred to continuance commitment as a cognitive orientation where costs are considered when leaving or remaining with the organization. Continuance commitment is seen as the commitment that is based on the cost that the employee is associated with when leaving the organization (due to high cost of leaving). And the potential antecedents of continuance include age, tenure, career satisfaction and intent to leave. Age and tenure can be seen as adopted predictors of continuance commitment, as a result of their roles as substitute measures of investment in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In the view of Madi *et' al* (2012), tenure indicates non-transferable investments that means close working relationship with co-workers, retirement investments, career investments and skills peculiar to the particular organization while age can be negatively related to the number of available job opportunities. Career satisfaction was said to provide a more direct measure of career related investments which could be at risk if the individual leaves the organization. They went further to assert that whatever employees perceive to as sunk costs, resulting from leaving the organization, are antecedents of continuance commitment.

Also, Bal e*t al*, (2014) further opined that continuance commitment is based on the perceived costs associated with discontinuing employment with the organization. It is imperative to assert that while employees with strong affective commitment will continue employment with the organization because they want to, those with strong continuance commitment remain because they need to. In the same vein continuance commitment is said to relates to such terms of employment as job contract, which may make leaving the current job very costly and troublesome (Muoghalu & Tantua, 2021). Continuance commitment is further developed as the result of accumulated investments, or side-bets that would be lost if the individual discontinued a course of action, and as a result of lack of alternative to the present course (Powell & Meyer, 2004).

2.4 Work-life Balance and Employee Commitment

Research by Berguig, and Abdelbaki (2022) measures QWL in four dimensions: work-life balance; job characteristics; supervisory behavior; and compensation and benefits. The findings show that the perception of QWL has a significant impact on employee commitment. They also show that the perception of balancing family and work life has a very strong positive effect on reducing employees' intention to leave a company. Sironi (2019) reported the positive relation between job satisfaction, employee commitment and quality of life. That is, if a person is happy with the job, he/she also enjoys his/her quality of life. It also shows that there is no relationship between job satisfaction and income if one's income is not strongly related to work. The aspects included in the quality of life in Tang's research are leisure, knowledge, social connections, and family life. Availability of work-life balance practices has also been related to increased affective commitment and decreased turnover intentions (Singh & Mohanty, 2016). Bae and Goodman (2014) found that parental leave; childcare information and referral, flexible work hours, and financial assistance with childcare predicted both increased affective commitment to the organization and decreased turnover intentions among all employees, not just users of the practices.

An employee experiencing a high quality of work life is highly committed to the organization and contributes to the organization performance (Maya & Pushpavalli, 2021). Support should be provided for enhancing the commitment to the organization (Tho'in & Muliasari, D. (2020). For retaining the employee the organizations should enhance the organizational commitment (Stallworth, 2004). Extra role behaviors are the results of the organizational commitment. (Tunio, Unar & Jabeen, 2022).

From the foregoing discourse, the study hypothesized thus:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and affective commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and normative commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and continuance commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional research survey design. Primary source was generated through self- administered questionnaire. The population of the study is 270 employees of twenty-four (24) selected indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. The sample size of 161 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with

all the items scoring above 0.70 selected. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient.

4.0 Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Correlations Work Life Balance and the Measures of Employee Commitment

			Work Life Balance	Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Spearman's rho	Work Life Balance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.868**	.722**	.585**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	117	117	117	117
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.866**	.868**	1.000	.779**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	117	117	117	117
	Normative Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.722**	1.000	.868**	.853**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	117	117	117	117
	Continuance Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.585**	.853**	.779**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	117	117	117	117

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Research Data 2022 and SPSS output version 23.0

Table 1 illustrates the test for the last set of three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements. The results show that for

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between work life balance and affective commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between work life balance and affective commitment. The *rho* value 0.866 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Based on this empirical finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between work life balance and affective commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between work life balance and normative commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a positive relationship between job design and normative commitment. The *rho* value 0.722 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Based on this empirical finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby

rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between work life balance and normative commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between work life balance and continuance commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a positive relationship between job design and continuance commitment. The *rho* value 0.585 indicates this relationship and it is significant at p $0.000<0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a moderate correlation. Based on this empirical finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between work life balance and continuance commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between Work Life Balance and each of the measures of employee commitment. This finding is in line with Riyanto, Ariyanto and Lukertina (2019) who argued that work life balance refers to organizational support for dependent care, flexible work options and family. This is a very important phenomenon that is of great concern today to various employees and organizations in both private and public sector. The term gained importance at the beginning of the 21st century in Europe and the United States of America with the argument that workers were having a problem balancing between what they wanted to do, that is caring for their families and their careers at work place especially young mothers.

This finding agrees with Agono (2022) who examined the relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance in Idah Local Government Council and found that there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and employee performance in Idah Local Government Council. Flexible work arrangement has a positive significant influence on performance of staffs in Idah Local Government Council, Kogi State, Nigeria. Similarly, the finding agrees with Mmakwe and Ukoha, O. (2018) who examined Work-life balance and employee performance in Nigerian banks, Port Harcourt and found a strong correlation between the measures of work life balance and the measures of employee performance. Subsequently, the study recommends that organizations in the banking sector should promote policies and structures which foster a balance between the personal commitments and responsibilities of an employee and his organizational roles and duties in order to effectively enhance employee performance.

According to Susi (2010) work life balance is drive for satisfaction of employees. Many organizations feel the need of work life balance which leads to retention of valuable work force, reduce work family conflict, and reduce employee stress, job satisfaction and better life balance. Strong and supportive organizational culture increase employee intent to remain in the organization. Employees' attitude toward their organizations and life are affected by work-life balance. Work-life balance is especially important when organization has to manage highly technical professional because their high commitment and loyalty is needed forth success of the organization.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study thus concludes that work life balance significantly influences employee commitment in indigenous oil servicing companies in Rivers State. Therefore, the study recommends that indigenous oil servicing companies should adopt policies that encourage work life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements, family responsibilities support, and wellness programs. The considerations of childcare, dependent care and allowing employees more time

with their families which are issues that characterize employee's role at home should be encouraged.

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