



Human Resource Management Policies and Work-Life Balance: Impact on Job Satisfaction in The Post-Pandemic Workplace in Nigeria

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a structural shift in how work is organized globally, and Nigeria's labor market has been no exception. This conceptual paper examines the impact of Human Resource Management policies on work-life balance and job satisfaction in the Nigerian post-pandemic workplace. Anchored on the Job Demands-Resources model and Work-Family Border Theory, the study argues that HRM policies such as flexible work arrangements, supportive leadership, and digital infrastructure serve as critical job resources that buffer work demands and improve employee well-being. Drawing on literature from 2022 to 2024, this paper contends that organizations that institutionalize family-friendly HRM policies will achieve higher job satisfaction and lower turnover. The Nigerian context presents unique challenges including infrastructural deficits, extended family obligations, and a legacy of presenteeism culture that complicate work-life balance. This study adopts a qualitative research design. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns across the literature. The study found out among others that Nigerian organizations with formalized flexible HRM policies report significantly higher perceived work-life balance among employees, but only when flexibility is accompanied by clear boundaries and managerial support. The paper also recommends among others that organizations should provide infrastructure support such as internet and data allowances to enable effective remote work in Nigeria, recognizing that flexibility without resources is ineffective. The paper concludes that sustainable HRM frameworks that integrate work-life balance are no longer optional but strategic imperatives for Nigerian organizations operating in a hybrid work era.

Keywords: HRM policies, work-life balance, job satisfaction, post-pandemic, Nigeria, JD-R model, hybrid work.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 triggered the most rapid transformation of work arrangements in modern history, and Nigeria's labor market experienced this shift in real time. Within weeks, organizations across sectors were compelled to adopt remote work, virtual collaboration, and flexible schedules, dismantling decades of rigid, time-based work norms (ILO, 2023). This abrupt change placed work-life balance at the center of HRM discourse in Nigeria. Before the pandemic, Nigerian workplaces were largely defined by long hours and physical presence. Presenteeism was often equated with commitment, particularly in public institutions and traditional corporations where visibility was used as a proxy for productivity (Guest, 2023). Flexible work was viewed with skepticism and the idea of balancing work with personal life was treated as foreign to local realities. Employee expectations have changed decisively since 2020. The 2024 Jobberman Nigerian Workforce Report shows that 68% of professionals now rank work-life balance among their top three criteria for accepting a job, with many prioritizing it above salary in tech, finance, and BPO sectors (Jobberman, 2024). This reflects a new psychological contract where well-being is part of the employment offer.

HRM policies have become the primary tools for responding to these expectations. Flexible arrangements, mental health support, digital infrastructure, and results-based performance systems are now being used strategically to manage talent (Boxall & Purcell, 2023). Organizations that fail to adapt risk losing skilled employees to competitors who offer more supportive work environments. The Nigerian context, however, makes this transition complex. Challenges such as unstable electricity, expensive internet data, and long commuting times mean that flexibility does not automatically lead to better balance (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). Without complementary support, remote work can increase personal costs and stress rather than reduce them. Evidence from organizational psychology consistently links work-life balance to job satisfaction. When employees perceive that their organization supports their non-work roles, they report higher engagement, lower burnout, and stronger commitment (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). In collectivist societies like Nigeria, this effect is amplified because family and community obligations are central to identity (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023).

Technology has played a contradictory role. Digital platforms enabled business continuity during lockdowns, but they have also eroded boundaries between work and home (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). The expectation to respond to emails and messages after hours has created digital overload, particularly where HRM policies have not set clear limits. The public sector has lagged in adaptation. Although the Federal Government published the 2023 National Policy on Teleworking, implementation across MDAs remains inconsistent and slow (Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2023). This has widened the gap between public and private employment experiences and accelerated talent migration to the private sector. Scholars emphasize that imported HRM models cannot be applied in Nigeria without cultural adaptation. Extended family responsibilities, religious activities, and communal expectations require policies that reflect local realities (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Policies that ignore these factors often fail to achieve intended outcomes. Given these developments, this paper examines how HRM policies influence work-life balance and how that balance subsequently affects job satisfaction in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace. The goal is to provide a conceptual synthesis that can guide HR practitioners and policymakers in designing sustainable, context-specific HRM frameworks.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian workplace has permanently shifted toward hybrid and remote models, yet many HRM policies remain anchored in pre-pandemic assumptions of physical presence and time-based supervision (Guest, 2023). This misalignment creates role confusion, policy gaps, and employee frustration across sectors. Nigerian employees face infrastructural barriers that are largely absent in Western contexts. Unreliable power supply, poor internet connectivity, and high transportation costs mean that flexible work policies must be accompanied by resource support to be effective (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). Without this, flexibility becomes a burden rather than a benefit. There is documented evidence of declining work-life balance since 2021. The 2023 NOI Polls report found that 54% of Nigerian employees felt their work-life balance had worsened despite increased flexibility, citing longer hours and digital intrusion (NOI Polls, 2023). This suggests that flexibility without boundaries is counterproductive.

Organizations lack empirical guidance on which HRM policies yield the greatest return in terms of work-life balance and satisfaction. Some firms prioritize wellness programs while others focus on leave policies, with no strategic framework to guide investment (Olawayin, 2024). This leads to inconsistent outcomes and wasted resources. Existing Nigerian literature on work-life balance is fragmented and sector-specific. Most studies focus on banking, healthcare, or academia, with little cross-sector synthesis or theoretical grounding (Adebayo & Eze, 2022). There is a need for integrated conceptual work that speaks to the broader Nigerian labor market. Cultural factors such as extended family care, gender roles, and communal obligations are rarely incorporated into HRM policy design in Nigeria (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Policies modeled on Western templates often fail to resonate because they do not account for these realities.

Managerial capability remains a critical bottleneck. Many Nigerian supervisors were trained in command-and-control models and struggle to manage remote teams based on trust and output rather than presence (Guest, 2023). This undermines the effectiveness of flexible policies. The public sector, which employs a large portion of Nigeria's workforce, has been slow to digitize and formalize flexible work policies (Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2023). This creates inequity and drives talent to the private sector. There is limited application of established theories such as the Job Demands-

Resources model and Work-Family Border Theory to explain work-life balance dynamics in Nigeria (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023; Clark, 2022). This limits the ability to develop evidence-based HRM interventions. Without strategic HRM interventions, Nigerian organizations face risks of increased turnover, burnout, and reduced productivity. This study addresses the urgent need to conceptualize how HRM policies can be leveraged to improve work-life balance and job satisfaction in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do flexible HRM policies influence work-life balance among employees in Nigeria?
2. How does work-life balance mediate the relationship between HRM policies and job satisfaction?
3. What types of HRM policies are most effective in enhancing job satisfaction in the post-pandemic Nigerian workplace?

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective is to examine the impact of HRM policies on work-life balance and job satisfaction in the post-pandemic workplace in Nigeria. While the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To assess the influence of flexible HRM policies on work-life balance.
2. To examine the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between HRM policies and job satisfaction.
3. To identify the most effective HRM policies for enhancing job satisfaction in the Nigerian context.

Hypotheses

1. Flexible HRM policies have a significant positive effect on work-life balance.
2. Work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between HRM policies and job satisfaction.
3. Supportive HRM policies are positively associated with higher job satisfaction in the post-pandemic workplace.

Literature Review

HRM Policies in the Post-Pandemic Workplace

The pandemic forced HRM to move from administrative processing to strategic workforce management. Organizations had to redesign jobs and policies almost overnight to ensure continuity, and this shift elevated HRM as a core function for resilience (Boxall & Purcell, 2023). In Nigeria, this change was largely reactive but still marked a turning point. Flexible work arrangements have become the most visible policy response. Options such as flexitime, compressed weeks, and hybrid schedules are now common in private firms, especially in technology and financial services (Olawoyin, 2024). The 2023 National Policy on Teleworking provided a federal framework, but adoption in the public sector remains uneven due to infrastructure and managerial resistance (Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2023). Digital HRM practices expanded rapidly. Virtual recruitment, onboarding, e-learning, and digital performance tracking are now standard in many organizations (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). These tools require new competencies from HR professionals and line managers, and many Nigerian firms are still building capacity to use them effectively.

Employee wellbeing has gained prominence as an HRM priority. Post-pandemic policies now include counseling, wellness days, and stress management programs (Guest, 2023). However, utilization in Nigeria remains low due to cost, stigma, and limited awareness, which limits the impact of these initiatives (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). Performance management has shifted from monitoring inputs to evaluating outputs. Results-Only Work Environment models are gaining traction in sectors where deliverables are measurable, representing a departure from presenteeism culture (Olawoyin, 2024). This shift requires trust and new supervisory skills that many managers are still developing. Leave policies have also been revised to reflect new realities. Organizations are increasingly including caregiving leave and health-related leave in HRM manuals (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022). The challenge is that policy existence does not guarantee practice, as workload pressures often discourage employees from using available leave.

A persistent problem is inconsistency in policy application. Employees report that flexible arrangements are granted selectively, which creates perceptions of unfairness and reduces trust (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). Perceived justice is therefore critical to whether HRM policies produce positive outcomes. HRM policies in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace are evolving but their effectiveness depends on alignment with local infrastructure and culture (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Policies that succeed elsewhere may not work in Nigeria without adaptation to power, connectivity, and social realities.

Work-Life Balance and Its Determinants in Nigeria

Work-life balance refers to the ability to engage in work and personal roles with minimal conflict and with satisfaction in both domains (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022). It is not about equal time allocation but about managing boundaries and role quality. Infrastructural deficits are a major determinant in Nigeria. Erratic power supply and costly internet mean that working from home often increases financial burden and stress for employees (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). Flexibility without resource support can therefore worsen rather than improve balance. Commuting remains a critical factor. In cities like Lagos and Port Harcourt, daily travel can take several hours, contributing to fatigue and reduced personal time (Jobberman,

2024). Hybrid and remote options have helped some employees reclaim this time, but only where organizations have formalized such arrangements.

Cultural obligations shape balance in unique ways. Extended family responsibilities, religious duties, and community events are integral to Nigerian life and place demands that Western work-life models rarely address (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Policies that ignore these commitments often create tension for employees. Gender dynamics are also significant. Nigerian women continue to bear a disproportionate share of domestic work, and without supportive HRM policies, flexible work can increase their total workload by merging paid and unpaid labor (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Gender-sensitive policy design is therefore essential. Technology has further blurred work-home boundaries. The expectation of constant availability through WhatsApp and email has increased work-family conflict, particularly in the absence of organizational rules on after-hours communication (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). Work-Family Border Theory explains that organizations must act as border-keepers to protect personal time (Clark, 2022).

Recent survey data suggests that balance has not automatically improved. The 2023 NOI Polls report found that 54% of Nigerian employees felt their work-life balance had worsened since 2021 despite increased flexibility, citing longer hours and digital intrusion (NOI Polls, 2023). This highlights the importance of boundaries. Organizational culture ultimately determines whether employees benefit from policies. In workplaces with strong presenteeism norms, employees avoid using flexible options for fear of career penalties, even when policy permits it (Guest, 2023). Culture therefore acts as a filter for policy effectiveness.

Linking HRM Policies, Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

The Job Demands-Resources model provides the theoretical foundation for this relationship. It posits that job resources such as autonomy, support, and flexibility buffer job demands and promote engagement and satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). HRM policies are key sources of these resources. Empirical studies show that flexible HRM policies improve perceived work-life balance by giving employees control over time and location (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022). This control reduces role conflict and time pressure, which are major sources of stress in contemporary work. Improved work-life balance in turn predicts higher job satisfaction. Employees who can meet both work and personal obligations evaluate their jobs more positively and report stronger affective commitment (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). This relationship is particularly strong in collectivist contexts.

Perceived organizational support strengthens the link. When HRM policies signal that the organization cares about employee well-being, employees reciprocate with loyalty and satisfaction (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). The symbolic value of the policy matters as much as its content. Leadership behavior moderates these effects. Managers who respect boundaries and focus on results enable HRM policies to translate into satisfaction, while supervisors who demand constant availability undermine them (Guest, 2023). Managerial capability is therefore critical. In Nigeria, context moderates the relationship. Flexibility without internet, power, or data support does not improve work-life balance and therefore does not improve satisfaction (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). HRM interventions must be bundled with practical resources to be effective. Sector differences are evident. Private firms in banking and tech that have bundled flexible policies with support report higher satisfaction, while public institutions with rigid structures continue to struggle with engagement (Olawoyin, 2024). This creates a two-tier labor market. The overall evidence indicates that HRM policies influence job satisfaction primarily through work-life balance. Organizations that treat balance as strategic rather than peripheral are more likely to achieve retention, engagement, and performance gains in the post-pandemic era (Boxall & Purcell, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Job Demands-Resources Model and Work-Family Border Theory. The Job Demands-Resources model posits that job demands deplete energy and cause strain, while job resources buffer demands and foster engagement and well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). HRM policies such as flexibility, autonomy, and support function as key job resources that help employees manage competing roles. The model has been widely validated across contexts and is particularly relevant in post-pandemic work where demands have intensified due to digital overload and role ambiguity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). In Nigeria, infrastructural deficits add to job demands, making the availability of HRM resources even more critical for employee well-being (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). Work-Family Border Theory explains how individuals create and manage boundaries between work and family domains (Clark, 2022). The theory argues that borders can be physical, temporal, or psychological, and that organizations act as “border-keepers” through policies and culture. Flexible HRM policies can make borders more permeable, allowing integration, or more rigid, protecting personal time.

In the Nigerian context, border management is complicated by extended family obligations and communal expectations that demand time outside formal work hours (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Without clear organizational boundaries, employees experience work-family conflict and reduced satisfaction. Together, these theories provide a framework for understanding how HRM policies influence work-life balance and how that balance subsequently affects job satisfaction. The JD-R model

explains the resource mechanism, while Border Theory explains the process of managing work and non-work roles (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022).

Gap In Literature

Despite the growing body of research on HRM policies and employee outcomes, most studies on work-life balance in Nigeria were conducted before 2020 and focus on specific sectors such as banking, healthcare, or academia (Adebayo & Eze, 2022). These studies largely examined traditional office-based work and did not account for the structural changes brought by remote and hybrid work. As a result, there is limited conceptual and empirical work that explains how post-pandemic HRM policies such as flexitime, digital HRM, and wellbeing programs influence work-life balance and job satisfaction within the Nigerian context. The few recent studies available tend to be descriptive and sector-specific, without integrating robust theoretical frameworks like the Job Demands-Resources model or Work-Family Border Theory to explain the underlying mechanisms (Chukwu & Musa, 2023; Olawoyin, 2024).

A second gap relates to context. Much of the literature on work-life balance and HRM is drawn from Western and Asian economies where infrastructure is stable and social systems differ significantly from Nigeria (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). In Nigeria, unique factors such as unreliable electricity, expensive internet, extended family obligations, and a legacy of presenteeism culture moderate how HRM policies are experienced (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). However, there is a paucity of recent conceptual work that explicitly links these infrastructural and cultural realities to the effectiveness of HRM policies in enhancing work-life balance and job satisfaction (Jobberman, 2024; NOI Polls, 2023). This study therefore seeks to fill this gap by providing a context-specific synthesis of how HRM policies influence work-life balance and job satisfaction in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is appropriate because the study seeks to understand meaning, context, and processes through which HRM policies influence work-life balance and job satisfaction in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace. Given the complexity of cultural and infrastructural factors in Nigeria, a qualitative approach allows for in-depth exploration of employee experiences. Data was sourced through secondary qualitative methods including systematic review of peer-reviewed journal articles, government policy documents, industry reports, and organizational case studies published between 2022 and 2024. Key sources include Jobberman reports, NOI Polls surveys, ILO publications, and academic journals focused on HRM and organizational behavior. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns across the literature. Data was coded to extract themes related to flexible HRM policies, work-life balance challenges, infrastructural constraints, cultural factors, and job satisfaction outcomes. The analysis was guided by the Job Demands-Resources model and Work-Family Border Theory to ensure theoretical coherence.

Discussion of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Flexible Hrm Policies Have A Significant Positive Effect On Work-Life Balance

Flexible HRM policies such as flexitime, compressed work weeks, and hybrid schedules give employees greater control over when and where they work (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022). This control is critical in Nigeria where long commuting times in cities like Lagos and Port Harcourt consume several hours daily and reduce time available for family and rest (Jobberman, 2024). By reducing commuting, flexible policies directly free up personal time. From a JD-R perspective, flexibility functions as a key job resource that buffers job demands and prevents burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). When employees can adjust work schedules to accommodate personal responsibilities, they experience less role conflict and time pressure. This is particularly important in Nigeria where extended family obligations place additional demands on workers (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Empirical evidence from Nigeria shows that remote and hybrid work arrangements have helped employees reclaim time and reduce exhaustion (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). The 2023 NOI Polls report indicates that employees with access to flexible schedules report lower stress levels compared to those on rigid schedules, despite infrastructural challenges (NOI Polls, 2023).

However, flexibility alone is insufficient. Without clear boundaries, flexible work can increase work hours and digital intrusion, harming work-life balance (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). The expectation to be constantly available on digital platforms has led to "always-on" culture that erodes personal time if not managed by HRM guidelines. Managerial support is a critical moderator. Flexible policies only produce positive outcomes when managers trust employees and evaluate performance based on output rather than presence (Guest, 2023). In organizations with presenteeism culture, employees may not utilize flexible options for fear of career penalties, even when policy permits it. Infrastructural context also matters. Flexibility without support for internet, power, and data does not improve work-life balance in Nigeria (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). Organizations that provide data allowances or power subsidies alongside flexible policies report better employee outcomes than those that do not. Gender dynamics further shape the effect. Nigerian women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of domestic work, and flexible policies are more likely to improve their work-life balance when combined with caregiving support (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Without this, flexibility may simply merge paid and unpaid work. Overall, the literature supports a positive relationship between flexible HRM policies and work-life balance, provided

that policies are well-implemented, culturally aligned, and accompanied by managerial and infrastructural support (Boxall & Purcell, 2023). From the above analysis, we accept hypothesis one.

Hypothesis Two: Work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between HRM policies and job satisfaction

HRM policies alone do not automatically translate to job satisfaction. The mechanism occurs through improved work-life balance (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). When employees perceive that policies help them manage both work and personal roles, they evaluate their jobs more positively. The JD-R model explains this process. HRM policies provide job resources that reduce strain and enable employees to meet demands in both domains (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). As strain reduces, employees experience greater well-being and subsequently report higher satisfaction with their jobs. In Nigeria, this mediation is particularly strong because family role fulfillment is central to identity in collectivist culture (Nwosu & Okoro, 2023). Employees who can attend to family and community obligations without work interference report higher affective commitment and job satisfaction. Evidence from recent studies shows that Nigerian employees who report good work-life balance also report significantly higher job satisfaction, even when controlling for pay and position (Olawayin, 2024). This suggests that balance acts as a key pathway through which HRM policies influence satisfaction.

Perceived organizational support strengthens the mediation. When employees believe that HRM policies are designed with their well-being in mind, they reciprocate with loyalty and positive job attitudes (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). The symbolic message of the policy matters as much as its content. Without work-life balance, even well-designed HRM policies may not lead to satisfaction due to persistent role conflict (Greenhaus & Allen, 2022). For example, flexible scheduling that is not respected by managers creates frustration rather than satisfaction. The 2024 Jobberman report found that organizations with high scores on work-life balance also scored highest on employee satisfaction and retention intentions (Jobberman, 2024). This reinforces the mediating role of balance in the Nigerian labor market. Therefore, the literature strongly supports the hypothesis which states that work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between HRM policies and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis Three: Supportive HRM policies are positively associated with higher job satisfaction in the post-pandemic workplace

Supportive HRM policies signal that the organization cares about employee well-being, triggering reciprocity and higher satisfaction (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). Supportive policies include mental health services, caregiving leave, manager training, and resources to address infrastructural barriers. In the post-pandemic era, employees place greater value on policies that address well-being rather than just productivity (Guest, 2023). Mental health support and wellness programs have become particularly important as digital overload and burnout have increased (Owolabi, Bello, & Yusuf, 2023). In Nigeria, supportive policies that address practical barriers are most appreciated. Examples include internet data allowances, power support, and flexible leave that recognizes extended family obligations (Chukwu & Musa, 2023). These context-specific supports make generic policies meaningful. Fairness in policy application is critical. When supportive policies are applied inconsistently, employees perceive favoritism and satisfaction declines despite the existence of good policies (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2023). Procedural justice therefore moderates the relationship.

Supervisor support is another dimension of supportive HRM. Managers who respect after-work boundaries and focus on results enhance satisfaction more than those who monitor hours (Guest, 2023). Training managers in supportive leadership is therefore a key HRM intervention. Public sector organizations in Nigeria report lower job satisfaction partly because of lag in supportive policies compared to private firms (Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2023). This creates a two-tier labor market where talent migrates to organizations with better support. The JD-R model explains that supportive policies function as job resources that buffer demands and foster engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023). When these resources are available, employees are better able to cope with post-pandemic work pressures. Evidence supports a strong positive association between supportive HRM policies and job satisfaction in Nigeria's post-pandemic workplace. Therefore, the discussion above support hypothesis three.

Findings

Based on the qualitative synthesis of literature, the following findings are proposed:

1. Nigerian organizations with formalized flexible HRM policies report significantly higher perceived work-life balance among employees, but only when flexibility is accompanied by clear boundaries and managerial support.
2. Work-life balance acts as a key mediating mechanism through which HRM policies influence job satisfaction in Nigeria, with the effect being stronger in collectivist cultural contexts.
3. Supportive HRM policies that address infrastructural barriers such as internet and power are most effective in the Nigerian context. Policies that ignore these realities often fail to produce desired outcomes.
4. Managerial support and organizational culture determine whether flexible HRM policies translate into improved work-life balance and satisfaction. Command-and-control supervision undermines policy effectiveness.
5. The post-pandemic shift to hybrid work requires HRM to move from ad-hoc flexibility to sustainable, culturally aligned policy frameworks that integrate technology, wellbeing, and performance management.

Recommendations

Based on the Findings, The Following Recommendations are Made:

1. Organizations should institutionalize flexible work policies by codifying hybrid work, flextime, and results-only work environments with clear guidelines to prevent ambiguity and digital overload.
2. Organizations should provide infrastructure support such as internet and data allowances to enable effective remote work in Nigeria, recognizing that flexibility without resources is ineffective.
3. Organizations should train managers on supportive leadership and shift performance management from hours to output while respecting after-work boundaries, in line with Work-Family Border Theory.
4. HRM should design culturally relevant policies that include extended family leave and recognition of community obligations, moving beyond Western templates.
5. Organizations should conduct annual work-life balance audits to measure employee well-being and refine HRM strategy, using Job Demands-Resources principles to align resources with demands.

Conclusion

The Nigerian workplace has been permanently transformed by the pandemic. Employees now expect HRM policies that support not just productivity but also work-life balance. This paper has shown that flexible and supportive HRM policies, when aligned with Nigerian cultural and infrastructural realities, can significantly improve work-life balance and subsequently job satisfaction. The Job Demands-Resources and Work-Family Border theories provide useful lenses for designing such policies. For Nigerian organizations to remain competitive and retain talent, HRM must evolve from administrative compliance to strategic resource management. This requires investment in policy design, manager capability, and employee support systems. As Nigeria navigates the hybrid work future, organizations that prioritize work-life balance through thoughtful HRM will build more engaged, resilient, and productive workforces.

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