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**FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION: EVIDENCE FROM
SELECTED ENTREPRENEURIAL FIRMS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) on employee job satisfaction among selected entrepreneurial firms in Lagos State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Using Yamane's (1967) formula, 154 questionnaires were administered to employees drawn from selected entrepreneurial SMEs through stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations), Cronbach's alpha for reliability, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Four dimensions of FWAs (flexitime, remote/telework, compressed work schedule, and job sharing) were examined against employee job satisfaction indicators (autonomy, workload satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall satisfaction). The study's results indicate that all four FWA dimensions have statistically significant positive effects on employee job satisfaction. Flexitime significantly predicted employee commitment ($\beta = 0.561, p < 0.001$); remote/shift flexibility significantly predicted productivity ($\beta = 0.510, p < 0.001$); compressed schedules significantly improved work-life balance and reduced job stress ($\beta = 0.571, p < 0.001$); and job sharing significantly enhanced productivity-related satisfaction ($\beta = 0.573, p < 0.001$). The full model explained 32.2% of variance in job satisfaction ($F(4,149) = 17.701, p < 0.001$). This study provides empirical evidence on FWAs within the under-researched context of Nigerian entrepreneurial SMEs, applying multiple motivational theories and contributing to the growing literature on work flexibility in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as providing evidence for human resource managers, policy makers, and entrepreneurs to integrate FWAs into organisational strategy. With the outcome of this study, entrepreneurial firms in Lagos State should formalise

FWA policies to attract and retain talent, reduce absenteeism, and improve employee morale.

Keywords: Flexible work arrangements, job satisfaction, entrepreneurial firms, Lagos State, Nigeria, work-life balance, employee productivity, flextime, job sharing, remote work

JEL Classification: M12, M51, M54, J81

Introduction

The contemporary global work environment is characterised by intense competition for skilled employees and market share, driving organisations to reconsider how, where, and when work is performed (McLean & Collins, 2011). Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) have emerged as a strategically significant instrument in human resource management, with growing evidence linking them to enhanced employee satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, improved retention, and increased organisational commitment (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007; Davidescu et al., 2020). FWAs encompass a broad range of practices — including flextime, remote work, compressed work schedules, and job sharing — that allow employees to exercise control over the temporal and spatial boundaries of their work (Fiksenbaum, 2014; Coenen & Kok, 2014).

The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed a profound transformation in employment practices globally. Advances in information and communication technology, combined with heightened awareness of work-life balance, have accelerated the mainstream adoption of flexible working models (Agbanu, Tsetim & Suleman, 2020; Kaiser et al., 2022). Research increasingly demonstrates that employees report higher job satisfaction when work arrangements are flexible (Shu, Chiang & Lu, 2020), and that such arrangements enhance employee well-being, reduce stress, and improve performance outcomes (Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2020; Smite et al., 2023).

In Nigeria, the majority of formal and informal organisations remain anchored to rigid, long-hour work cultures that impose significant psychological and physical burdens on employees (Muhammadi et al., 2009). Employees in the country's entrepreneurial SME sector are particularly vulnerable to work-life conflict, as these firms typically operate with lean structures, high workloads, and limited formalised HR practices. Despite the demonstrated benefits of FWAs in contexts such as Kenya (Mungania et al., 2016; Mwebi & Kadaga, 2015) and various Western economies (Davidescu et al., 2020; Wohrmann et al., 2020), empirical evidence on FWA-job satisfaction relationships within Nigerian entrepreneurial SMEs remains limited.

Lagos State, as Nigeria's premier commercial hub and a major cluster of SMEs and start-ups, offers an important and under-examined context for studying FWAs. Ikorodu Local Government Area — a rapidly expanding semi-urban commercial zone within Lagos — represents a setting where entrepreneurial firms are proliferating amidst significant commuting challenges, cost-of-living pressures, and diverse workforce demographics, each of which may shape how FWAs influence job satisfaction.

This study, therefore, seeks to fill this empirical gap by examining the effect of FWAs on employee job satisfaction among selected entrepreneurial firms in Ikorodu LGA, Lagos State. Specifically, the study investigates how flextime, remote/shift work flexibility, compressed schedules, and job sharing independently and collectively influence employee commitment, productivity-related satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall job satisfaction.

Literature Review

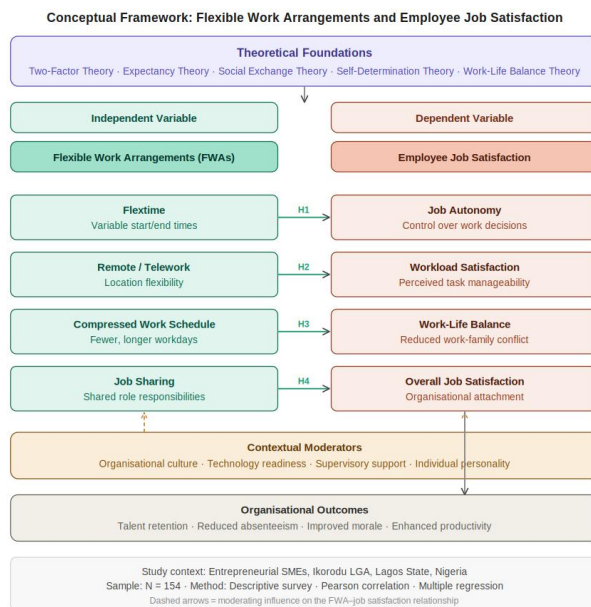
2.1 Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Underpinning

Flexible work arrangements are broadly defined as organisational policies — formal or informal — that permit employees to vary when, where, and how long they engage in work-related tasks (Mwebi & Kadaga, 2015; Fiksenbaum, 2014). This study draws on multiple complementary theoretical frameworks to explain the FWA-job satisfaction relationship.

Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (working conditions, organisational policies) and motivators (recognition, autonomy, achievement). FWAs function simultaneously as hygiene factors — reducing dissatisfaction by improving working conditions — and as motivators, as employees perceive flexible arrangements as organisational recognition of their needs and capabilities (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory provides a complementary lens: FWAs enhance all three components of motivation — expectancy, instrumentality, and valence — by giving employees the autonomy to perform optimally and rewarding that performance with continued flexibility.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) posits that organisational goodwill — manifested here as the provision of FWAs — elicits reciprocal employee responses in the form of commitment, loyalty, and increased productivity. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) further supports this link, arguing that autonomy and competence — both enhanced by FWAs — are foundational psychological needs whose fulfilment leads to intrinsic motivation and well-being. Work-Life Balance Theory (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006; Frone, 2003) underscores the role of FWAs in reducing work-family conflict, a known antecedent of job dissatisfaction, particularly in urban Nigerian contexts characterised by demanding commutes and family responsibilities.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the hypothesised relationships between the four FWA dimensions (independent variables), the four dimensions of employee job satisfaction (dependent variables), contextual moderating factors, and the



anticipated organisational outcomes.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Empirical Review

Mungania, Waiganjo and Kihoro (2016) examined flexible work arrangements in the Kenyan banking industry and found strong positive relationships between FWA implementation and organisational performance ($\beta = 0.262$, $p < 0.000$), recommending that managers grant employees flexibility over start and end times while maintaining performance targets. Similarly, Mwebi and Kadaga (2015) reported a significant positive relationship between flexitime and employee performance in Nairobi commercial banks ($N = 291$, $r = .344$, $p < .005$). Kipkoech (2018) found that flexible strategies — including shift work and part-time arrangements — significantly improved employee performance in a Kenyan hospital setting, with flexible working methods contributing 22.9% of performance variance.

In Nigeria, Essien and Edwinah (2017) investigated flexible work time schedules and organisational commitment across 320 bank workers in two Nigerian states, finding that flexible work schedules positively impacted affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Eleftherios (2018) used OLS analysis to demonstrate a significant positive relationship between flexible employment arrangements and workplace performance, with education, age, and quality of manager-employee relations as significant moderating factors. Okemwa (2016) reported a significant positive linear relationship between FWAs (flexitime, compressed schedules, shift scheduling, and job sharing) and nurses' commitment in Kenyan public hospitals.

A persistent limitation in the extant literature is the focus on large organisations and Western or East African contexts, with limited empirical evidence on the specific FWA-job satisfaction relationship in Nigerian entrepreneurial SMEs (Davidescu et al., 2020; Jaafar & Rahim, 2024). Furthermore, most prior studies treat FWAs as a unidimensional construct rather than disaggregating their individual components — flexitime, remote work, compressed schedules, and job sharing — and examining their differential effects on specific dimensions of job satisfaction. This study addresses both gaps.

Methodology

Research Design and Area of Study

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee job satisfaction among selected entrepreneurial firms in Ikorodu Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was deemed appropriate because it facilitates the collection of quantitative data from a defined population without experimental manipulation, and allows the use of statistical tools for inferential analysis (Yamane, 1967). Ikorodu was selected as the study area due to its rapid commercial expansion, high concentration of SMEs, and significant commuting and socio-economic challenges that make FWAs particularly relevant.

Population and Sample

The target population comprises all employees of selected registered entrepreneurial firms in Lagos State. Applying Yamane's (1967) sampling formula at a 95% confidence level ($e = 0.05$) to an estimated population of 250 employees yielded a sample size of 154. Stratified random sampling was employed, grouping employees by job role — administrative, operational,

technical, and support — and randomly selecting respondents within each stratum to ensure proportional representation.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed in three sections. Section A captured socio-demographic information (gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, job position, work experience, and employment type). Section B measured flexible work arrangements across four dimensions — flextime (A1–A4), remote/telework (B1–B4), compressed work schedule (C1–C4), and job sharing/part-time (D1–D4) — using 16 items. Section C measured employee job satisfaction across four dimensions — job autonomy (E1–E4), workload satisfaction (F1–F4), work-life balance (G1–G4), and overall satisfaction/organisational attachment (H1–H4) — using 16 items. All items used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Items were adapted from validated instruments in prior studies (Mungania et al., 2016; Okemwa, 2016; Adigun et al., 2025) and subjected to expert review for content validity. A pilot study of 15 respondents was conducted to assess reliability.

Data Analysis

Data collected from 154 respondents were analysed using Python 3 (scipy 1.x). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) were computed for demographic characteristics and all construct variables. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to assess the bivariate relationships among the FWA dimensions and job satisfaction. Four simple linear regression models were estimated to test the four research hypotheses, and a multiple regression model was estimated to assess the collective predictive power of the FWA dimensions on overall job satisfaction.

Results And Discussion

4.1 Response Rate and Demographic Profile

Out of 154 questionnaires administered, 150 were returned and 150 were usable, representing a 97.4% response rate. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 150)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	78	52.0
	Female	72	48.0
Age Range	18–25 years	37	24.7
	26–35 years	63	42.0
	36–45 years	33	22.0
	46–55 years	17	11.3
Educational Qualification	SSCE/WAEC	12	8.0

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	OND/NCE	27	18.0
	HND/B.Sc	87	58.0
	Master's Degree	24	16.0
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	18	12.0
	1–3 years	42	28.0
	4–6 years	48	32.0
	7–10 years	27	18.0
	Above 10 years	15	10.0

The demographic profile reveals that respondents were predominantly male (52%), aged 26–35 years (42%), and educated to HND/B.Sc level (58%). The majority had 4–6 years of work experience (32%), suggesting a workforce with sufficient organisational experience to meaningfully evaluate flexible work arrangements.

Reliability Analysis

Table 2 presents Cronbach's alpha values for all measurement scales. All values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978), confirming adequate internal consistency of the research instrument.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Decision
Flexitime (FWA)	4	0.897	Reliable
Remote/Telework (FWA)	4	0.862	Reliable
Compressed Schedule (FWA)	4	0.868	Reliable
Job Sharing (FWA)	4	0.869	Reliable
Job Autonomy (JS)	4	0.895	Reliable
Workload Satisfaction (JS)	4	0.885	Reliable
Work-Life Balance (JS)	4	0.908	Reliable
Overall Job Satisfaction (JS)	4	0.900	Reliable

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of the Contract Composites

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for all construct composites. FWA dimension means ranged from 3.48 (job sharing) to 3.77 (flexitime), indicating moderate-to-favourable perceptions of flexible work availability. Job satisfaction dimension means were lower, ranging from 2.27 (workload satisfaction) to 2.44 (overall satisfaction), suggesting that employees

perceived moderate levels of job satisfaction that could be improved through enhanced FWA implementation.\

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Research Constructs (N = 154)

Construct	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N
Flextime (FWA)	3.765	0.594	2.00	5.00	154
Remote/Telework (FWA)	3.576	0.596	2.00	5.00	154
Compressed Schedule (FWA)	3.670	0.582	2.00	5.00	154
Job Sharing (FWA)	3.481	0.587	2.00	5.00	154
FWA Total Composite	3.623	0.560	2.00	5.00	154
Job Autonomy (JS)	2.430	0.637	1.00	5.00	154
Workload Satisfaction (JS)	2.271	0.620	1.00	4.75	154
Work-Life Balance (JS)	2.407	0.659	1.00	4.75	154
Overall Job Satisfaction (JS)	2.435	0.619	1.00	4.50	154
JS Total Composite	2.386	0.610	1.06	4.75	154

Correlation Analysis

Table 4 presents Pearson correlation coefficients among FWA dimensions and overall job satisfaction. All FWA dimensions were significantly and positively correlated with JS_Total at $p < 0.01$. FWA_Total showed the strongest correlation with JS_Total ($r = 0.557$, $p < 0.01$), while the individual dimensions ranged from $r = 0.507$ (remote) to $r = 0.550$ (flextime). The high inter-correlations among FWA dimensions (r ranging from 0.848 to 0.889) indicate that respondents who experienced one form of flexibility tended to experience others as well, consistent with findings by Davidescu et al. (2020).

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Flextime	1.000	0.889**	0.865**	0.879**	0.956**	0.550**
2. Remote	-	1.000	0.878**	0.865**	0.956**	0.507**
3. Compressed	-	-	1.000	0.848**	0.944**	0.511**
4. Job Sharing	-	-	-	1.000	0.945**	0.549**
5. FWA Total	-	-	-	-	1.000	0.557**
6. JS Total	-	-	-	-	-	1.000

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

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

Four simple linear regression models were estimated to test the study hypotheses. Results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing — Simple Linear Regression Results

Hyp.	Predictor → Outcome	β	SE	t	p-value	R ²	Decision
H1	Flextime → Commitment	0.561	0.074	7.555	< 0.001	0.273	Reject H0
H2	Remote/Shift → Productivity	0.510	0.074	6.936	< 0.001	0.240	Reject H0
H3	Compressed → WLB/Stress	0.571	0.079	7.203	< 0.001	0.254	Reject H0
H4	Job Sharing → Productivity	0.573	0.072	7.975	< 0.001	0.295	Reject H0

4.6 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 6 presents the multiple regression model estimating the collective effect of all four FWA dimensions on overall job satisfaction.

Table 6: Multiple Regression — FWA Dimensions Predicting JS_Total

Predictor	β	SE	t-value	p-value	Sig.
Constant	0.177	0.273	0.648	0.518	ns
Flextime	0.300	0.179	1.678	0.096	ns
Remote/Telework	-0.058	0.177	-0.326	0.745	ns
Compressed Schedule	0.068	0.164	0.413	0.680	ns
Job Sharing	0.298	0.163	1.823	0.070	ns [†]
Model Fit: R ² = 0.322 Adj. R ² = 0.304 F(4,149) = 17.701, p < 0.001 — Significant					

[†] Marginally significant ($p = 0.070$); ns = not significant at 0.05 level

The overall model was statistically significant ($F(4,149) = 17.701, p < 0.001$), explaining 32.2% of the variance in employee job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.322$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.304$). This finding supports the broad proposition that FWAs collectively constitute a significant predictor of employee job satisfaction in entrepreneurial SMEs. While the collective model is significant, the multicollinearity among the FWA predictors (evidenced by high inter-correlations in Table 4) suppressed individual coefficients in the multiple regression, suggesting that the dimensions

share substantial common variance with job satisfaction. The simple regression results in Table 5 therefore provide cleaner estimates of the individual effects.

DISCUSSION

The results provide substantial empirical support for the role of flexible work arrangements in enhancing employee job satisfaction within entrepreneurial SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. All four hypotheses were supported, with each FWA dimension demonstrating a statistically significant positive effect on its respective job satisfaction outcome.

The finding that flextime significantly predicted employee commitment ($\beta = 0.561$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.273$) aligns with Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor Theory, where flexible scheduling reduces hygiene-related dissatisfaction (rigid hours, long commutes) while simultaneously functioning as a motivator through the signal of organisational trust. This result echoes Mwebi and Kadaga's (2015) Kenyan banking study and Essien and Edwinah's (2017) findings in Nigerian banks, confirming that the FWA-commitment relationship transcends sectoral contexts.

Remote and shift work flexibility's significant positive effect on productivity-related satisfaction ($\beta = 0.510$, $p < 0.001$) is consistent with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964): employees who receive the flexibility to work remotely reciprocate with enhanced effort and productivity. This finding aligns with Smite et al. (2023) and Kaiser et al. (2022), who reported that digital work environments enabled by remote flexibility enhance both productivity and satisfaction. In the Lagos context specifically, remote work reduces exposure to the city's notoriously demanding traffic conditions — a significant hygiene factor (Herzberg et al., 1959).

The significant effect of compressed work schedules on work-life balance and stress reduction ($\beta = 0.571$, $p < 0.001$) is consistent with Work-Life Balance Theory (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006; Frone, 2003) and corroborates Okemwa (2016), who found compressed schedules positively related to nurses' commitment in Kenya. For employees in Ikorodu's SME sector, compressed schedules provide additional days for family obligations and personal development, directly addressing sources of work-family conflict.

The strongest individual effect was observed for job sharing predicting productivity satisfaction ($\beta = 0.573$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.295$), consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When job responsibilities are shared, individual workloads are reduced, stress diminishes, and employees report higher perceived competence and engagement — all of which translate into satisfaction. This finding supports Rogier and Padgett (2004), who argued that flexible schedules reduce absenteeism and increase commitment.

The multiple regression results indicate that the four FWA dimensions collectively explain 32.2% of the variance in job satisfaction. This is a meaningful effect size for a parsimonious model, and the remaining variance may be attributable to factors not captured in this study — including organisational culture, technology readiness, supervisory support, and individual personality differences (Davidescu et al., 2020). The non-significance of individual predictors in the full multiple regression model is attributable to multicollinearity among the dimensions, a common finding in studies that disaggregate FWA components (Adigun et al., 2025). Future studies should consider structural equation modelling to better account for the shared variance structure among FWA dimensions.

Conclusion, Recommendations, and Limitations

Conclusion

This study examined the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee job satisfaction among selected entrepreneurial firms in Ikorodu LGA, Lagos State, Nigeria. Drawing on a sample of 154 employees and applying correlation and regression analysis, the study finds compelling empirical support for the proposition that FWAs — specifically flextime, remote/shift flexibility, compressed work schedules, and job sharing — significantly and positively influence employee job satisfaction across all assessed dimensions: autonomy, workload satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall organisational attachment. The FWA dimensions collectively explained approximately 32% of the variance in job satisfaction ($F(4,149) = 17.701, p < 0.001$), affirming the strategic significance of FWA policies for entrepreneurial firms.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are offered. First, entrepreneurial firms in Lagos State should formalise FWA policies — particularly flextime and job-sharing arrangements — as standard components of their human resource management frameworks, given the strong positive effects observed on employee commitment and productivity. Second, firms should invest in the technological infrastructure (digital platforms, VPN access, project management tools) necessary to support remote work, as remote flexibility significantly predicted productivity satisfaction. Third, organisations should communicate FWA policies transparently and equitably, consistent with Adams' (1963) Equity Theory, to prevent perceptions of favouritism that could negate the positive effects. Fourth, government and industry associations should promote FWA adoption among Nigerian SMEs through policy frameworks and capacity-building programmes that address the unique infrastructural and cultural barriers in the Nigerian context.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations warrant acknowledgement. First, the study is restricted to Ikorodu LGA, limiting generalisability to other states or larger corporate organisations. Second, reliance on self-reported questionnaire data introduces potential response bias. Third, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference, and longitudinal or experimental designs would strengthen causal claims. Fourth, the high multicollinearity among FWA dimensions restricted the interpretability of individual coefficients in the multiple regression model; future studies should apply structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the mediated and moderated pathways suggested by the conceptual framework. Fifth, the model explains only 32.2% of job satisfaction variance, indicating that contextual factors — organisational culture, technology readiness, supervisory support — warrant inclusion in future models.

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