

Mediating Role of Organization Citizenship Behaviour on the Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance among Selected Public Teaching Hospital Employees in Northwest Nigeria: Proposed Framework

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Abstract

Purpose: The study is aimed at examining the mediating effect of organization citizenship behaviour on the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance among healthcare employees of public hospitals in northwest Nigeria.

Methodology: This paper is conceptual; therefore, it relies on review of previous literatures on employee performance, OCB and work-life balance practices. The study relies on secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved through Google Scholar, books, and credible online databases.

Result and conclusion: Based on the reviewed literature the study found that work-life balance practices (flexible work schedule, leave program and work-family conflict) can serve as dimensions of WLB to measure performance of employee in the healthcare setting and the study further found that organization Citizenship Behaviour will mediate the relationship between WLB and employee performance as this is supported by social exchange theory in the study.

Implication: Employee in organization especially health sector, faced with various challenges ranging from work overload, stress, lack of leisure time and conflicts that exist between professional life and personal life which affect their performance and make them not to support the organization. Therefore, it is recommended that hospitals employees should be given proper attention by offering them good working conditions and additional incentives which will motivate them to stay on the job and increase their performance.

Keywords: Employee Performance, work-life balance practices, Organization Citizenship Behaviour, Flexible Working Arrangements, Leave Program, Work-family Conflict.

1. Introduction

Globally it is believed that the ultimate goal for any organization is to achieve its targets through its employees and this can only be possible if the employees can perform well in the organization. The successful delivery of high-quality and innovative services within an organization is heavily dependent on the performance of its employees (Rizaie et al., 2022). Employee performance is regarded as a foundational obligation critical for realizing organizational goals and has garnered considerable empirical attention. Numerous studies, including those conducted in the health sector by Sakuan et al. (2025); Situmorang et al. (2025); Singh and Ranchi (2023) have highlighted the importance of employee performance in the industry. Employee performance is a critical factor in the quality and sustainability of healthcare services (Situmorang et al., 2025). In an era of globalization and rapid technological change, organizations face increasingly complex challenges in an effort to retain and improve employee performance, especially organization in the field of services like hospitals (Budianto & Kurniawati, 2024). Employee performance affects a company's overall performance. Employees are the lifeblood of the business. Therefore, employees in any industry must face the challenge of how to balance work and personal obligations (Singh & Ranchi, 2023)

Employee performance is one of the critical factors that determine the quality and sustainability of healthcare services (Situmorang, et al, 2025). Therefore, institution, whether public or private, are interested in the performance of its employees that can be created by the series of systems that apply

in the organization. Healthcare workers who engage in excessive workloads often experience not only physical exhaustion but also diminished satisfaction in both their professional and personal lives. These demanding schedules limit their ability to participate in activities outside of work, leading to feelings of social isolation despite having family and friends. Furthermore, their restricted leisure time is largely devoted to rest and recovery, thereby preventing engagement in recreational or fulfilling hobbies and ultimately reducing their overall quality of life (Singh & Ranchi, 2023). However, over the years employee performance has declined, the performance of an employee is influenced by various things like high pressure, fast-paced work rhythms, demands for accurate decisions, and significant emotional burdens (Sakuan et al. 2025).

Nurses are the largest human resource and work force in the healthcare delivery system worldwide, and their performances has a direct impact on healthcare; therefore, investing in them is imperative to achieve efficient, effective, resilient and sustainable health systems. They not only provide essential care but also play a critical role in shaping health policies and driving primary healthcare [World Health Organization (WHO, 2025)].

The global shortage of nurses has become a persistent and urgent issue. According to the WHO State of the World's Nursing Report 2020 (Access 2024), there were 27.9 million nurses worldwide, with a global shortfall of 5.9 million in 2018. This shortage is projected to reach 4.6 million by 2030 if no action is taken. The absence of nurses leads to increased workloads for on-duty nurses, negatively impacting performance and quality of the patient, while also threatening patient safety (International Council of Nurses, 2024).

In Nigeria's healthcare sector, employee turnover amongst healthcare professionals has become rampant, with thousands of professionals leaving the industry, old and young, moving to the developed countries for better opportunities related to economic, social and career opportunities which ultimately affects the performance of the employee as a result high workloads and high work pressures (Oyemwinmina, 2024). Employee performance in Nigerian hospitals has shown measurable decline. For instance, diagnostic accuracy among healthcare workers dropped from 56.2% in 2023 to 46.1% in 2025, indicating a significant deterioration in clinical performance. This decline is further compounded by a high burnout rate (69%) and systemic inefficiencies within the health sector [National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2025)]. The International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) (2022) reported that the Nigerian health sector's employee performance faced many challenges which include heavy workload, stress, prolonged night shifts and job hazards in dealing with infectious diseases. Work-life balance is linked to workers' physical and mental well-being (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024). The study of Singh and Ranchi (2023), affirmed that Work-life balance dimension contributes about 41% of the change in employee performance.

Similarly, when employees demonstrate good organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), organizations can enhance and maximize their performance in executing job tasks which lead to an increase in performance. Thus, OCB is an attitude that is highly essential to foster in order to propel organizational development. Elevated organizational performance is the outcome of a heightened degree of OCB, fostering a robust connection between employees and the organization. This fosters employees' effective fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities aligned with their organizational roles and positions (Purwati & Sah 2024). The exodus of health workers from the country fuelled by the search for better pay and working conditions, has left Nigerian hospitals grossly understaffed. With many hospitals now operating with very few nursing staff, this has increased the workload on the remaining staff who are

left behind. Nurses working in government-owned hospitals across the country now face numerous problems ranging from poor remuneration, staff shortages, unpaid allowances, and unsafe working conditions amid brain drain from the health sector (Abdullahi, 2025). World over, about 50–56% of nurses now experience burnout and about 64% also face one form of stress or another (Abdullahi, 2025).

Despite Nigeria having some of the best-trained personnel, many are leaving due to a lack of care. The performance of the health-sector professionals is declining drastically reducing as a result of an increase in workload and this contributes to the failure on the part of health care employees (Abdullahi, 2025). Furthermore, several studies have been carried out on the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance (Nugroho, 2025; Anggraeni & Riana 2025; David et al, 2025; Kurniasari, & Dewi 2023; Ahmaddien 2024) and some of these researches are proposing that a study should be carried out in a different context such as health sector (Alharbi, 2022; Mutheu, 2023; Agunda et al, 2024; Anggraeni & Riana 2025) others are suggesting that future studies can consider the inclusion of a broader population and a larger sample size to make the study more robust (Badaruddin, et al 2024; Atan & Obeng, 2024; Alharbi, 2022). Furthermore, organization citizenship behaviour has been identified having great potential in improving employee performance (Haji et al, 2024; Wonda, 2024; Purwati & Sah, 2024; Utomo, 2023; Putri et al, 2023; Pratiwi et al, 2023; Hidayat & Tannady 2023;), because employees in organization especially the service institution perform better if OCB is high to the organization (Sutrisno et al, 2022; Hartono et al 2023; Purwati & Sah, 2024;). The study of Aditya and Deviastri (2024); and Ahmaddien (2023) have suggested that future studies should include a mediating variable between Work-life balance and employee performance.

Furthermore, various studies have established the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance but to the knowledge of the researcher few studies have examined mediation effect of OCB. Among these studies that established significant positive relationship between these two constructs are Nugroho, (2025); Anggraeni and Riana (2025); Echie, et al, (2023); Pangaribuan et al (2025); Sriutami et al (2025); Lydia & Molly (2023); Njenga (2023); Atan and Obeng (2024); Ndulue (2024); Minabo, et al (2023); Putri et al (2024); Alharbi, (2022); Chinonso & Ile (2024). And according to Baron and Kenny (1986) that a mediator should be introduced so as to strengthen or change the direction of the relationship that existed among the independents and dependents variables. Therefore, this study will examine mediating effect of OCB to see if it can strengthen the relationship between work life balance and employee performance among the public hospital employees in Northwest Nigeria, hence there is a need for further in-depth study of the variables. Organization citizenship behaviour can be justified by looking at the effect of work-life balance on employee which alone cannot improve performance through stress reduction and employee well-being. The discretionary behaviours shown by employees towards their organization and these behaviors subsequently improve employee performance. This is in line with SET theory of reciprocity. To address the above gap, the study seeks to examine the multi-dimensional approach to work-life balance (flexible work schedules, leave program and work-family conflict). Therefore, this study adds to the existing literature by examining the mediating role of Organization Citizenship Behaviour on the relationship between work life Balance and employee performance among employees in public Hospitals in Northwest, Nigeria.

2. Literature review

This section discusses the related literature on the dependent variable (employee performance), independent variable (flexible work arrangement, leave program and work-family conflict) and the

mediating variable which is OCB. In addition, social exchange theory, which serves as the main theory and the spill over theory as the supporting theory.

2.1 Concept of Employee Performance

According to Bernardin (2003) performance is a record of the results obtained from certain job functions or activities over a certain period of time. Employee performance refers to how effectively an individual fulfills their job responsibilities and contributes to organizational goals (Luitel, & Poudel, 2024). Over time, the definition of employee performance has expanded to encompass not just task execution but also behaviors that benefit the organization and its culture (Luitel, & Poudel, 2024). Campbell (1990) defined employee performance as observable behaviors that people do in their jobs that are relevant to organizational goals. Employee performance can be interpreted as an employee's effort to achieve goals through work productivity produced in terms of quantity and quality (Sari & Saputra, 2022). Employee performance is the result or overall level of achievement of employees during a certain period in carrying out tasks, which is compared to various possibilities such as work standards, targets, or criteria that have been previously set and agreed upon (Rahmawathi & Supartha, 2018). Employee performance is a description of the level of achievement of an employee in his work which is carried out to achieve targets and objectives and to implement the vision and mission of the organization, as planned by the organization (Fauziyyah & Rohyani, 2022). Based on the different definitions proposed we can say that employee performance is the result of employee's effort and contribution to the organization.

2.2 Concept of Work-life Balance

The beginnings of the concept of work-life balance emerged in the late 1970s. The reason was to describe the balance between personal life and work-life of homemakers who were at home and wish to go back to work. (Families Working, 2009). Since then, work-life balance practices have been studied across disciplines including economics, gender studies, information systems, management, social psychology, and sociology (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). During the twentieth century, many studies (Mayers, 1924) took place on the WLB concept, which resulted in emphasizing the role of human relations and the effect of reducing the working hours on workers' output. According to Berry, (2010) the definitions of work-life balance vary but it generally converges around the ideas that this balance is not about the equivalent distribution of time between professional and personal activities, but rather general satisfaction with one's life.

2.2.1 Flexible Working Schedules

Flexible working schedules occur where the employees are free to choose from the set standards that are determined by the employer (Business link, 2011). This is an arrangement where the organization gives the employees a leeway to choose which hours they can work and which they may take for other commitments. According to Armstrong, (2014) flexible working schedules involve reassessing outdated employment forms and use of arrangements like flexible working hours, job sharing and working from home. The practices are aimed at providing flexibility, increased productivity and reduce in employment costs associated with recruitment among others. Employers provide flexibility in their schedules to employees to enable them to select their schedule for their job, which helps them manage their personal and family responsibilities. Flexible scheduling permits employees to restructure the shifts' starting and ending times, giving them more control over their schedules.

2.2.2 Leave Programmes

Leave is the numbers of hours or days employees of an organization are permitted to be away from their employment position within a period of time without consequences. Leave refers to the amount of days

or hours an employer allows an employee to spend away from the office in a given period of time without facing repercussions (Orogbu et al, 2015). The optimal time to implement leave programmes is at the start of each calendar year to prevent disruptions to the organization's operations and to prevent tense situations for employees. Leaves is available in different categories, depending on which one an organization adopts. There are annual leave, parental leave, casual leave, medical leave, compassionate leave, study leave, career leave. According to Cascio (2009), leave is a period during which an employee is absent from work without pay such as sick leave or holidays. In other cases, some leaves such as annual leave, maternity leave, paternity leave are paid. In today's workplace, provision of leave to employees is most prevalent. Organizations that provide leave for their employees had more committed employees which leads to the achievement of the organization objectives.

2.2.3 Work Family Conflict

Nancy (2003) defined Work-Family Conflict as the pull and push between work and family life that results in conflict which happens when the demands of the job and those of the family create an imbalance leading to a conflict. It is therefore important to have a balance where job demands do not affect family life and also where family responsibilities do not affect work. Work-family conflict occurs for many reasons, precisely this state of conflict happens when challenges at work interfere with family daily routines and sequence of family life; pressures in the family environment might be the presence of young children, elder care responsibilities, interpersonal conflicts within the family, and the presence of unsupportive family members (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016; Greenhaus, 2002). Work-to-family conflict is a situation that arises when work demands conflict with family responsibilities, causing stress, challenges, and impacts negatively on life satisfaction, personal relationships and mental health. This is largely because work and family are fundamental and inseparable aspects of human life that often cause conflict and dilemma for employees (Grace et al, 2025).

3.3 Concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior as a Mediator

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) can be defined as voluntary actions that are not included in an employee's formal work duties but positively support the effective functioning of the organization (Robbins & Judge, 2018). OCB refers to voluntary and extra-role behaviors that go beyond the core duties expected of employees. OCB may involve helping coworkers, complying with rules, cooperation, organizational loyalty, and individual initiative (Rustandi et al., 2023). OCB is a voluntary choice of behavior that is not part of an employee's formal work obligations but supports the effective functioning of the organization (Wardani & Dewi, 2022). OCB is the behavior of individuals who have the freedom to choose, neither directly or indirectly related to the reward system or contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational functions (Rembet et al., 2020). Additionally, OCB promotes a positive workplace environment, reducing stress and enabling employees to focus on their tasks, thereby improving overall performance (Syah & Safrida, 2024). Thus, OCB serves as an engine for higher employee productivity and organizational success (Rahman & Karim, 2022).

3.4 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) proposes that behaviors can be thought of as the result of cost-benefit analyses by people attempting to interact with society and the environment. If a person believes that they are able to extract more of a reward through a behavior than they lose by performing it, then the person will perform the behavior. The social exchange theory is based on an exchange process. According to sociologist George Homan, who developed the theory, people weigh the potential benefits and risks in social relationships when the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon the relationship. This is different from economic exchange as it contains both intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Social

exchange thus generates an action that needs reciprocity and relies entirely on trust. The exchange framework between the employers is providing a favour and employees responding to the favour with positive outcomes (Yasbek, 2004). For instance when employers provide an environment that promotes work-life balance practices, employees may respond by showing more commitment and engagement which results high productivity (Sorensen, 2014).

3.5 Spill over Theory

The Spill-over theory, developed by Guest (2002), is one of the most well-known theories in work-life balance in the management and business world (Pleck, 1977). According to this view, experiences in the workplace and at home are interrelated. This hypothesis highlights the tendency of employees to carry over their unique feelings, approaches, abilities, and behaviours from the workplace into their personal lives and vice versa (Guest, 2002). Staines introduced the spillover idea in 1980. The spill over hypothesis describes work-life balance relationships as a method to understand how elements from professional environments impact personal lives. The spill over hypothesis postulates that experiences, feelings, and actions from one domain (job or personal life) may transfer to the other domain and affect the person's overall balance and well-being. This theory considers issues of both professional and home life (Audretsch and Lehmann, 2022). According to Schüttengruber et al. (2023), effort, attitude, and time spillover can be harmful if relationships between job and family are not rigorously regulated. Hence, employees benefit from good spillover when they balance their personal and professional lives.

Therefore, social exchange theory is the underpinning theory, because human beings are social animals. The idea behind SET is that when employees perceive that their organization provides favorable treatment through work-life balance practices like supportive supervision, wellness programmes they may feel an obligation to reciprocate through positive behaviours, such as voluntarily helping colleagues, cooperate with supervisors and participate in organizational activities.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a conceptual research design, focusing on in-depth review and synthesis of the literature between employee performance as the dependent variable, work life balance practices (flexible work schedule, leave programmes and work-family conflict) as the independent variable and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) as the mediating variable. The study relies on secondary sources, including peer re-viewed journal articles through Google scholar, books, and credible online databases. The literature was systematically reviewed to identify theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and conceptual gaps relevant to the study variables. A systematic literature review approach was employed to critically analyze and synthesize key studies published. The selected studies were evaluated based on their relevance, methodological rigor, and contribution to understanding the nexus between work life balance and employee performance with the mediating effect of organization citizenship behaviour. As argued by Fink, (2019), this type of review allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis of the topic of discussion and also make the researcher to synthesize the already published work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners. More than 200 articles were reviewed between 2020-2026 using the following keywords in the Google scholar work-life practices, employee performance, flexible working arrangements, leave programmes, work-family conflict and organization citizenship behaviour.

4. Proposed Research framework

Independent Variables

Work-life Balance Practices

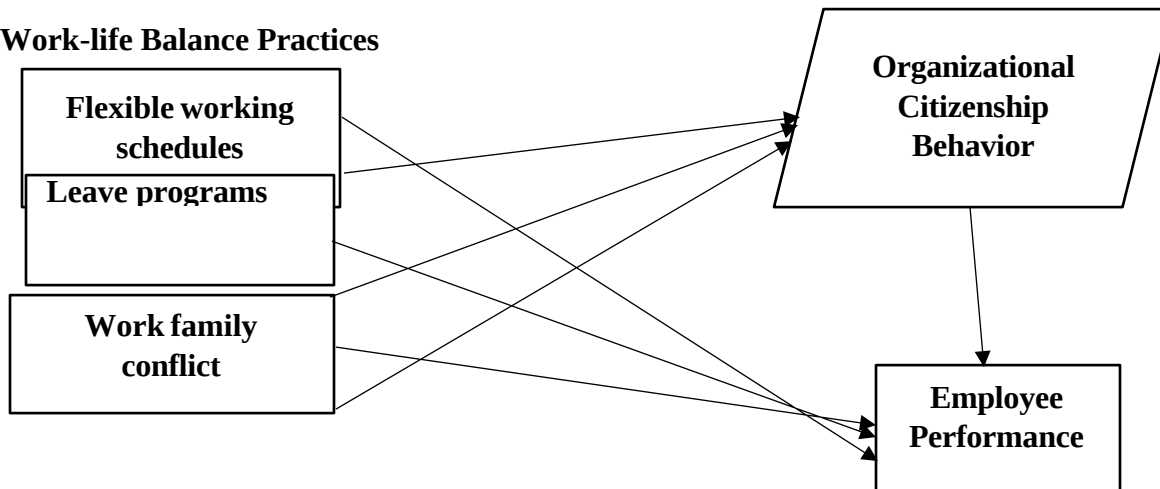


Fig 1.0: Proposed Framework
Source: Literature Review (2026)

5. Conclusion

Based on the literature reviewed it is evident that work-life balance can serve as a mechanism for improving the performance of employees in the organization. WLB practices makes employees to balance the both their professional life and family life. Flexible work schedules, leave program and work-family conflict if fully utilized will improved the performance of employees in health setting and this will lead employees to make an extra effort toward their organization and the employees in general. It is also established that organization citizenship behaviour can serve as a mediator between work-life balance practices and employee performance of the Nigerian health care sector. Based on the theoretical view the study concludes that social exchange theory and spill over theory confirm employees in organizations respond to favourable working condition which they also reciprocate by improving the level of their performance in an organization. Furthermore, the proposed model integrates three dimensions of work-life balance i.e treating work-life practices as multidimensional variable and this is because most of the previous studies are taking it as uni-dimensional construct.

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