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Workplace Flexibility and Job Satisfaction of Food and Beverages Firms in Rivers State

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Abstract: This survey-based study investigated how workplace flexibility are connected with satisfaction for workers in the food and beverage industry in Rivers State. From a potential pool of 290 workers at 15 different food and beverage companies in Rivers State, a sample size of 165 was figured out with the help of the Krejcie and Morgan table. Only 118 of the 165 surveys filled out and returned were actually valid. In the SPSS 25.0, we used the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient to test the hypotheses and a frequency distribution analysis to look at the characteristics of the respondents. According to the results, workplace flexibility significantly correlates with contentment in one's job. According to the study's findings, employees in food and beverage companies in Rivers State are happier when they are allowed more freedom in their schedules and work locations. This study shows that organisations in the food and beverage industry should always include their employees in the scheduling process and give them a voice in how they work.

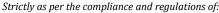
Key words: Job Satisfaction, Location Flexibility, Time Flexibility, Workplace Flexibility.

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Introduction

Job satisfaction is defined as "an overall sense of contentment with one's work life" (Locke, 1976, as referenced in Montuori et al., 2022). Happiness in one's job has far-reaching effects on one's personal relationships, sense of well-being, and outlook on life in general. Work

performance, absenteeism, and turnover are all negatively affected, which can have a significant mental impact in some cases, similar to burnout (Penn et al., 1988; Tsigilis et al., 2004; Leiter et al., 2013; Erdogan & Yildirim, 2017; Lee, 2018). Nearly half of the 1 billion full-time workers around the world feel "disengaged," or emotionally alienated from their work and their employers, according to the most recent Gallup study on workplace happiness. Only 15% of employees report being both happy and productive in their jobs (Gallup, 2020). According to Swamy et al. (2015), happy employees are the company's most valuable resource. According to Nanjundeswaraswamy (2016), for companies to survive in the competitive business world, skilled and talented workers must be retained. Only through a humanised job design approach that boosts worker satisfaction can this be achieved.

Workplace flexible choices are defined as those that enable employees some leeway in terms of when and where they complete their job (often known as telecommuting or flexplace) (Allen et al., 2013). However, other researchers (Berg, Kossek, Misra, & Belman, 2014) argue that flexibility encompasses much more than just letting workers decide when and where they put in their hours.

Today, many businesses place a premium on accommodating employees' preferred working arrangements (Way et al., 2015). Furthermore, few experts now question the value of adaptability in the modern workplace. For this reason, numerous research (e.g., Spreitzer et al., 2017; Way et al., 2015) have looked into the advantages of a flexible work environment for both people and businesses. Employees are asking for and negotiating more flexibility in their schedules, as evidenced by recent studies (Bal et al., 2012; Hill et al., 2008). There are four basic types of workplace flexibility that have been identified by Kossek et al. (2015) and Kossek and Michel (2011): time, location, amount of work, and continuity. In their 2011 article, Kosseck and Michel define "time flexibility" as the ability of employees to determine their own schedules. Workers who qualify for flexible schedules are free to determine when they come in and when they leave. Compressed workweeks, flextime, seasonal work, flexible shifts, and the possibility to set a minimum amount of hours worked each day are all examples of time flexibility (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). When choosing between two similar jobs or homes, you have some wiggle room. Employees who have the option to do so can now spend some or all of their time working away from their traditional place of employment thanks to technological advancements (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). Telecommuting, working from home, and temporary office spaces based on actual needs are all examples of location-agnostic strategies (Kossek & Thompson, 2016).

According to numerous studies, workplace flexibility benefits both people and the organisations they work for (Kossek and Thompson, 2016; Wickramasinghe & Wickramasinghe, 2012). Employee participation in organisational activities and initiative-taking will increase in a flexible workplace in exchange for the additional benefits that come with flexibility (Lambert, 2000). Additionally, it boosts employee wellness (Butler et al., 2009), attracts and retains top talent (Kesavan et al., 2014), and boosts income (Martnez-Sánchez et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 2015).

Bekele and Mohamed conducted research in 2020 to see how different work schedules affected employees' happiness on the job. According to the study, reduced workweeks and flextime schedules both had a significant favourable impact (R = .9, R2 = .159, p = .039). There is evidence to suggest that happier workers result from shorter workweeks and more flexible schedules. Davidescu et al.'s research from 2020 on workplace flexibility, employee satisfaction, and productivity in Romania has important implications for HRM in the next

years. Empirical studies using logistic regression analysis have shown that allowing workers some leeway in their schedules, hours worked, and physical location all contribute to greater job satisfaction, which is why they are all included in the flexibility composite indicator. In 2021, Ray and Pana-Cryan studied the correlation between employment flexibility and happiness in the United States. The rate of employment adaptability was found to be rather constant throughout the study period. Working for him increased happiness at work by 65% and decreased stress on the workplace by 22%. Taking time off from work has been shown to boost job satisfaction by over 100%, decrease stress by 56%, and free up extra time for 24% of the days. A 2018 study by Viorel et al. looked at how workplace flexibility affected job happiness and productivity among Romanian workers. Job happiness and productivity were found to be significantly affected by scheduling alternatives (such as a flexible programme, teleworking, or reducing overtime). Researchers found that all four types of unconventional workplace arrangements (flex office, co-working, home office, and home work) improved workers' satisfaction, productivity, and morale.

Even with these results, it is obvious that not nearly enough research has been done on the topic of workplace flexibility and job satisfaction, especially in less developed countries like Nigeria. Therefore, there are significant discrepancies due to variances in context. The purpose of this study was to examine how employees in the food and beverage business in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, felt about their workplace flexibility and how that felt about their job satisfaction.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study's overarching goal is to learn how workplace flexibility affects employee happiness at Rivers State food and beverage companies. Therefore, the following aims are explained in detail:

- to evaluate the relationship between time flexibility and job satisfaction.
- to x-ray the relationship between location flexibility and job satisfaction.

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between time flexibility and job satisfaction. **Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between location flexibility and job satisfaction.

Concept of Workplace Flexibility

The term "workplace flexibility" is used to describe a work environment in which employees have some leeway in determining how and when they get their work done (Hill et al., 2001). Employees should have the freedom to determine "when, where, and for how long" (Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008) they carry out work-related activities. Workplace flexibility is a prominent topic because of its necessity in today's firms. More individuals than ever before live in two-income or single-parent families, meaning everyone must chip in to meet the costs of caring for children and elderly relatives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Having the ability to change work hours in the event of an unexpected family emergency is becoming increasingly vital for modern families with two working parents (Persson & Rossin-Slater, 2019). Employees and employers both benefit when they are given the freedom to make adjustments to their work schedules, locations, and methods. According to Hill et al. (2001), many firms adopt flexible work arrangements to attract, inspire, and retain talent pools. Having some leeway in one's

work schedule often leads to better results for the individual. Rhee et al. (2019) found that flexible work arrangements lessen work-family conflicts and boost worker happiness. Worker motivation is increased, productivity is increased, and costs are reduced when flexibility policies are implemented (Hill et al., 2001).

Many industries are beginning to embrace the concept of a more adaptable workplace. It's been hailed as an essential trait for making it in the economic world today (Halpern, 2004). It has been proven by researchers from a variety of fields to be a reliable predictor of individual, household, workplace, and community results (Jacob, Bond, Galinsky, & Hill, 2008). Adaptability can serve a variety of purposes in theoretical connections, which can vary from one study to the next (see, for example, Allen & Shockley (2006), Barnett, Gareis, & Brennan (1999), and Stavrou (2005).

Concept of Time Flexibility

Full-time workers who opt into the flexibility-time programme are given the freedom to select their own workday schedules, within certain limits. The normal working start and end times can be adjusted to accommodate employees' schedules (Kelly & Kalev, 2006). Workers are required to be on-site from the latest permitted start time until the earliest permitted termination time (core hours) (Eaton, 2003). Monday through Friday, between the hours of nine and three, are the most crucial hours for any business. Depending on their preference, workers can clock in between 6:30 and 9:00 am and clock out between 3:30 and 6:00 pm, providing they each clock in for a total of eight hours. Another possibility is to have workers come in between 7:00 and 9:00 in the morning, take a lunch break between 11:00 and 1:00, and then leave between 3:30 and 6:30 in the evening; this would still amount to eight hours of labour (Lutz, 2012). It is more likely that both managers and workers will be pleased with the results when the organisation promotes flexibility as a win-win business strategy for figuring out the best way to get work done and when.

Employees are given some leeway in scheduling their work hours each week so that they can balance work and personal commitments like flextime, comp time, and other obligations. According to Cole (2002), flexible work schedules provide employees with more leeway in planning their personal lives around their work schedules, provided they still show up for work during a "core" period. Dalcos and Daley (2009) argue that giving workers greater say over when, where, and for how long they do their duties is a key benefit of flexible work arrangements like flex time. Because of this, more people will join in. If an employer is willing to be flexible with a worker's start and end timings, that worker can put in the same amount of hours per week or day as any other full-time worker.

Concept of Location Flexibility

The ability to perform one's obligations in a number of locations, with a wide range of job responsibilities, employment arrangements, work hours, and compensation (Grote & Rader, 2009) is what is meant by location flexibility. Members of consulting and advisory firms place a premium on having a pleasant workplace. These deviations from conventional workplaces place a premium not on long-term loyalty or employer-managed careers, but on employees' ability to acquire new skills and find work elsewhere (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Members who work remotely may discover new settings outside of their primary office where they can generate, use, and exchange information. Those working alone or in groups can share these new places, which can blend physical areas with social and virtual

environments. As a result, several places in which duties must be accomplished become entrenched (Koroma et al., 2014).

Sometimes too many employees work offshore, so members of the organisation cannot always benefit from the traditional advantages of a co-located workplace, such as face-to-face engagement and work collaborations (Rockmann, & Pratt, 2015). Those employees who insist on remaining in the central office during this transition will feel the effects most keenly. People are more inclined to try out remote work when they learn that others in their organisation do so as well (Rockmann & Pratt, 2015). Because of this, concerns have been raised about the overall usefulness of flexible scheduling for the company. Employability requirements must be made clear and members must receive institutional assistance as they develop the skills necessary to meet the expectations in order to handle the flexibility asked of them (Grote & Raeder, 2009). When allowed and encouraged by management and fitting the company's culture, employees cherish the opportunity to work from home for both personal and professional reasons (Galea et al., 2014).

Concept of Job Satisfaction

"Work satisfaction" refers to both employees' good and negative feelings about their jobs and their general happiness at work (Singh & Jain, 2013). As a result, one of the organisational psychology's most extensively explored issues is job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction, in the words of Locke (1976), is the favourable and pleasurable emotion that comes from assessing one's jo or work experience.

Job satisfaction, as defined by Lussier (2005) and Zhu (2013), is an employee's feeling about their job as a whole. In particular, the majority of motivational studies are founded on the work of intellectuals like Herzberg, whose ideas are now being acknowledged by a growing number of modern research investigations. Work satisfaction, for instance, is a feeling one gets from thinking about one's job or one's experiences on the job, as explained by Frye (2012). Work happiness, as defined by Bakotic and Babic (2013), is "a sense of comfort and positive experience that an employee has related to his job" (p.206). The researcher, however, thinks that questionnaires designed to gauge employees' contentment with their jobs shouldn't be comprehensive, but rather narrow in scope. Based on this premise and the Herzberg perspective of job satisfaction (salary, policy, and working conditions), this study examined the extrinsic or hygiene aspect of job like (responsibility and opportunity for career advancement) and the intrinsic or motivator aspect of employee job like (responsibility and opportunity for career advancement).

Theoretical framework Hertzberg's two factor Theory

This idea examines satisfaction and discontentment as potential explanations for motivation and well-being on the job. Hertzberg theorises that pleasure and motivation are linked, with a wide range of factors contributing to both happiness and unhappiness. Hertzberg (2003) argues that two of the most crucial factors in an employee's dedication to and pleasure with their employment are a clean workplace and a positive attitude towards one's work. A job's motivators or satisfiers are the things that make going to work each day worthwhile. Job satisfaction was found to be highly correlated with factors intrinsic to the workplace (Syptak, Marsland, & Ulmer, 1999). This is because employees' feelings of pride in their job and in themselves are influenced by the workplace culture.

Frederic Hertzberg developed a two-part theory that has connections to Maslow's hierarchy of requirements. Motivators and hygiene can be thought of as representing and influencing the pursuit of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. In the workplace, motivators can be anything that encourages you to work hard and achieve your goals. The working environment, salary, work-life balance, and job security are all part of what constitutes a healthy working environment. According to Hertzberg, job discontent stems from an absence of hygienic elements, whereas the usage of motivators is key to overcoming this. Although he acknowledged that a lack of these "hygiene elements" can lead to dissatisfaction on the job, Syptak et al. (1999) contended that happiness in the workplace is not automatically tied to their presence.

Alderfer's ERG Theory

According to Alderfer's ERG theory (1969) (Alderfer, 1969), people have basic requirements for survival, growth, and social connection that must be met. Maslow's "social" and "esteem" requirements, which highlight the importance of friendships and admiration, are compared to "relatedness," which describes the desire for meaningful relationships.

The Existence-Relatedness-Growth theory (1969) builds on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1954). In contrast to Maslow's theory, which divides human needs into five groups, this one divides them into three. The needs can be broken down into three groups: those for survival, belonging, and development. When one is unable to consistently supply higher-level requirements, Alderfer (1969) argues that one's motivation will instead be determined by lower-level demands. People's motivation moves back and forth between these levels, which is why Alderfer's idea that low-level demands must not be fully supplied before high-level needs are satisfied sets ERG theory apart from Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Ramprasad, 2013).

Similar to Maslow's third and fourth levels of needs, which also include relationships with one's family, friends, and coworkers, are the third and fourth levels of relatedness needs. Growth needs like self-actualization and self-esteem are addressed in Maslow's fourth and fifth levels of the hierarchy.

Methodology Research Design

The survey method was used for this research. This research involved 15 strategically chosen food and beverage companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. A total of 290 workers from 15 different food and beverage companies in Rivers State were surveyed, and from that pool, a sample size of 165 was calculated using the Krejcie and Morgan table. Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the reliability of the instrument, and the results are within the range of.70 to.80 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Both external and internal validity were used. There were 165 copies of the survey given out to staff, but only 118 were filled out and returned. There were four measures used to gauge workplace flexibility (time and location) and job satisfaction (strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, disagree = 3, strongly disagree = 2, Neither agree = 1). Spearman The hypotheses were tested with the help of SPSS Version 25.0, a statistical tool designed for the social sciences, and the frequency distribution method was used to examine the demographics of the respondents (gender, age, and level of education).

Result and Discussions

Table 1: Respondents' Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
				Percent	Percent
	Male	82	69.5	69.5	69.5
Valid	Female	36	30.5	30.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

The breakdown of respondents by gender is presented in Table 1. Of the total responders, 82 were men (or 69.5%), while 36 were women (or 30.5%).

Table 2: Respondents' Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
				Percent	Percent
	30-39	57	48.3	48.3	48.3
Valid	40-49	31	26.3	26.3	74.6
	50-59	19	16.1	16.1	90.7
	60 and Above	11	9.3	9.3	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

The respondents' ages are listed in Table 2. 57 respondents, or 48.3%, were in the 30-39 age range; 31 respondents, or 26.3%, were in the 40-49 age range; 19 respondents, or 16.1%, were in the 50-59 age range; 11 respondents, or 9.3%, were 60 or older.

Table 3: Respondents' Educational Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
				Percent	Percent
	Others	18	15	15	15
Valid	OND/HND	33	28	28	43
	Bachelor	53	45	45	88
	MSc/MBA	14	12	12	100
	Total	118	100	100	

The respondents' levels of schooling are listed in Table 3. Fifty-three respondents, or 45 percent, have a bachelor's degree; fourteen respondents, or 12 percent, have a master's degree; and 18 respondents, or 15 percent, have some other educational qualification.

Analyses of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between time flexibility and job satisfaction

Table 4: Correlation between time flexibility and job satisfaction

		Time_Flexibility	Job_Satisfaction	
	Correlation	1	.759**	
Time Flexibility	Coefficient			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	118	118	
	Correlation	.759**	1	
	Coefficient			
Job Satisfaction	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	118	118	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 4 displays the results of a bivariate analysis of the relationship between telecommuting and job satisfaction. According to the data in the table, there is a strong positive correlation between work schedule flexibility and contentment with one's position (r = 0.759**, p = 0.000). We accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null. Origo and Pagani (2006) and Possenriede and Plantenga (2014) found that temporary and localised work flexibility requires employee control over their professional lives, strengthening the bond between paid work and private life, and ultimately resulting in an increase in the overall level of job satisfaction. Casey and Grzywacz (2008) found a correlation between workplace flexibility and both positive work-family interactions and high job satisfaction. According to Almer and Kaplan (2002), flexible work schedules are good for employees in many ways, including their happiness at work, their resilience in the face of adversity, and their overall health and well-being (Jijena Michael & Jijena Michael, 2015). The significance of these studies can't be overstated, as they examine the link between workplace flexibility and contentment on the job.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between location flexibility and job satisfaction.

Table 5: Correlation between location flexibility and job satisfaction

		Location_Flexibility	Job Satisfaction		
	Correlation	1	.814**		
	Coefficient				
Location Flexibility	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000		
	N	118	118		
	Correlation	.814**	1		
	Coefficient				
Job_Satisfaction	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	118	118		
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

The bivariate analysis between remote work and contentment in the workplace is displayed in Table 5. The table data leads us to believe that there is a substantial positive association between geographical flexibility and job satisfaction (p.05;.814**), therefore rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative.

Workers report higher levels of job satisfaction when given the opportunity to better balance their professional and personal lives through flexible work arrangements (Solanki, 2013; Govender et al., 2018; Burtaverde, 2015; Casuneanu, 2011; Lefter & Casuneanu, 2018). Increased workplace flexibility improves working conditions, productivity, and profitability. Economists concur that giving employees some scheduling flexibility can improve their well-being and morale on the job (Ehnert et al., 2014; Manzoor et al., 2019).

Conclusion

Allowing workers some autonomy over how they spend their workday has been demonstrated to boost morale and output. Flexibility in the workplace is crucial, and technology and digital revolutions now make it possible to carry out tasks everywhere there is an internet connection. This study draws the conclusion that workplace flexibility, as evaluated by time and location flexibility, has an impact on employees' job satisfaction in food and beverage businesses in Rivers State. This conclusion is based on observations and empirical data.

Recommendations

Following were advised in light of the findings and conclusion:

- 1. Self-roistering should be ingested by food and beverage companies as part of the flexible timing procedure. As a result, the employees' skills, enthusiasm, and ardour for their work in the company tend to increase. Also, it produces high-quality goods.
- 2. Workers should be given the freedom to make decisions for themselves that will direct their work activities, increase job effectiveness, and increase job satisfaction.
- 3. Third, food and drink businesses may boost morale by encouraging open lines of communication between management and staff.
- 4. Allowing job telecommuting will increase employee job satisfaction.

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