



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INFLUENCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN IMO STATE UNIVERSITY, OWERRI

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of work-life balance on employee performance with particular reference to Imo State University, Owerri. The study specifically aimed to: ascertain the influence of work-life balance on employees' effectiveness; verify the influence of work-life balance on employees' creativity; and identify the challenges of realizing work-life balance for improving employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri. The spill over theory was utilized as theoretical framework. The descriptive survey design was utilized. 261 respondents were sampled out of the 750 population of the study. The questionnaire instrument was employed for data collection, and the mean score was utilized for data analysis. The study revealed that work-life balance has significant positive influence on employees' effectiveness; and work-life balance has considerable positive influence on employees' creativity in Imo State University. In addition, it was observed that poor time management, long working hours, financial pressures, heavy workload, work-related stress, poor organizational support policies, and technological demands are challenges to effective work-life balance in Imo State University. The study recommends among other: comprehensive policies for effective time management, reduction of excess work load and training and development programmes.

Keywords: Work-life balance, employee performance, effectiveness, creativity

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The success of any organization depends on the performance of its employees. So, to achieve high level of employees' performance requires motivated and committed employees whose work responsibilities are not undermined by the challenge of social and family responsibilities and issues. This is because employees that work in organization are social beings that belong to different culture and have different family background, which requires them to perform both organizational and family functions (Offiah et al., 2025). As the work environment becomes more dynamic, there is need to ensure better work-life balance for achievement of positive performance in organization.

The increasing rate of global competition among organizations and rapid growth of technology have made organization to emphasize on work-life balance initiatives in order to improve employees' performance (Essien et al., 2023). World-life balance (WLB) is now a global issue particularly the evolving workplace dynamics facilitated by technological advancement and COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations are now grappling with issue of realizing productivity while ensuring the well-being of employees (Okon et al., 2025). Work-life balance means the capability of employees to properly manage the demands of their work roles alongside their personal, family, and social responsibilities without experiencing excessive conflict between these roles or responsibilities. It deals on ensuring a harmonious relationship between professional obligations and personal life in order to realize employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

The initiative of work-life balance (WLB) began in the 1930s when the Kellogg Company conducted three days' workweek to assist employees towards realizing better balance between their professional and personal obligations (Solihu et al., 2023). The WLB first emerged in the United Kingdom in the 1980s in the last stage of the industrial revolution, where blue collar employees were overworked leading to the revolt by workers against long hours. This further contributed to 40-hour work week in the UK and United States. The 40-hour working week was enshrined in the United States law in the 1940 (Grace et al., 2025). In Nigeria, the Nigeria Labour Act of 1974 considers the issue WLB which provides daily work hour, rest intervals and annual leave (Grace et al., 2025).

Employee performance remains a crucial determinant of organizational success. It refers to the degree to which employees realize their assigned tasks and contribute to the attainment of organizational objectives. High employees' performance indicates or leads to efficiency, effectiveness, innovation, commitment, and quality service delivery. Employee performance means an increase in efficiency, effectiveness, higher quality of the completion of tasks assigned to an employee in an organization or company (Dizaho et al., 2025).

Researches have indicated that there is a positive relationship between work-life balance and employee outcomes. Research conducted in higher education institutions revealed that flexible work arrangements significantly improve employee performance and that work-life balance serves as a relevant instrument through which such organizational productivity is enhanced (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024). Similarly, studies have shown that employees who are exposed to effective work-life balance most likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational engagement, leading to improved performance (Inegbedion, 2024). In addition, Dizaho et al. (2025) revealed that a positive correlation between work-life balance and employee performance. Also, Babatunde et al. (2020) noted that work flexibility significantly affects employee performance.



The management of work and home balance has become a pressing issue of discussion most especially in the academic environment. The tertiary education system is currently more scrutinized than ever before and is under a lot of strain at work. The tertiary education is now more complex and diverse where teaching and research is now time consuming and requires a lot of energy which leads to pressure on how to balance work and family responsibilities (Theresa et al., 2023).

In Imo State University and other Nigerian tertiary institutions at large, the challenge of achieving work-life balance has become increasingly significant as a result of economic pressures, rising job demands, family responsibilities, and inadequate institutional support systems. Academic staff in public universities often face multiple responsibilities, which include administrative duties, teaching, examination supervision, marking of examination scripts, research activities, community service engagements, and family commitments. These demands can create considerable pressure, potentially affecting employee performance if appropriate work-life balance mechanisms are not available. Therefore, this study intends to examine the influence of work-life balance on employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri.

The activities of academic staff in Imo state university and other tertiary institutions for the growth cannot be overemphasized. However, the teaching staff are battling on how to balance their jobs and responsibilities at home, which is as a result of family and social demands, increasing number of students and work load in terms of teaching and marking, administrative activities, conducting research, supervision of research projects, self-development programmes etc. (Babatunde et al., 2020; Offiah et al., 2025; Theresa et al., 2023). According to Babatunde et al., (2020) employees in tertiary education sector are faced with the challenges of how to combine work and family affairs, and responsibilities like lectures, marking of scripts, administrative responsibilities in the university, and most importantly, self-development programmes (acquisition of higher degrees, research publications etc.) looks cumbersome for academic staff to manage with family affairs. These challenges have contributed to high level of negative job stress, improper handling family responsibilities, delay in publications or poor-quality research, delay in marking of paper and release of results, health issues etc., which undermines the overall performance of the teaching staff and the university as a whole

Despite the measures adopted by the university management and government, it appears that the teaching staff of Imo State University Owerri are still confronted with issues of balancing their job responsibilities and their personal and family responsibilities. In addition, despite the growing attention given to work-life balance globally, there is limited empirical evidence focusing specifically in Imo State University, Owerri. Consequently, there remains insufficient understanding of how work-life balance influences employee performance within the unique organizational environment of Imo State University. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the influence of work-life balance on employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the influence of work-life balance on employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri. The specific objectives are to:

1. To ascertain the influence of work-life balance on employees' effectiveness in Imo State University, Owerri.
2. Verify the influence of work-life balance on employees' creativity in Imo State University, Owerri.



3. identify the challenges of realizing work-life balance for improving employees performance in Imo State University, Owerri

1.2. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to provide direction for this study.

- i. To what extent has the work-life balance influences employees' effectiveness in Imo State University, Owerri?
- ii. What is the influence of work-life balance on employees' creativity in Imo State University, Owerri?
- iii. What are the challenges of realizing work-life balance for improving employees performance in Imo State University, Owerri?

2.0. CONCEPTS, THEORY, AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1. Conceptual Review

Work-life Balance

The concept of work-life balance is generally linked with the balance or equilibrium between the level of time and effort employees committed to work and personal responsibilities to realize overall sense of harmony in life (Offiah et al., 2025). Work-life balance is the process of integrating employees' work, family and individual self-demands and time. Eboh (2022, p. 448) defined work-life balance "as combination of career responsibilities, personal life and family commitments for the well-being of loved ones or households." Furthermore, Dizaho et al. (2025, p. 153) see work-life balance to "involve the prioritization between work (viz career and ambition) and life which is comprised of health, leisure, pleasure and family life."

Voydanoff (2019 as cited in Dizaho et al., 2025) noted that work-life balance is where works and family resources are adequate to meet work and family demands such that participation is effective in both domains. According to Grace et al. (2025, p. 124) work-life balance is "an interface between work and family, the work aspect involves formal tasks and life activities that are not associated with work." The work-life balance seeks to strike a balance between time spent in workplace, time spent with family and time spent in doing other things (Bagobiri et al., 2024). Bagobiri et al. (2024) further noted that work-life balance is a blend of interactions amid different realms of one's life, such as work-life, religion, recreation, family etc. In this research, we see work-life balance as maintaining balance or equilibrium between employees' responsibilities at work and family and other private responsibilities in order to improve their performance at work.

Employee Performance

According to Mathis and Jackson, 2022 as cited in Offiah et al., 2025) employee performance means the quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence on the job, and efficiency of the work completed and effectiveness of work accomplished. In addition, Sathyanarayana (2023 as cited in Offiah et al., 2025) sees employee performance to involve the execution of work activities or job duties which requires effectiveness, efficiency and better quality. Employee performance deals with how effectively employees carry out their responsibilities and contributes to the goals of the organization, which is measured in terms of work quality and task completion in line with job expectation (Okon, 2025).



In addition, Dizaho et al. (2025) define employee performance as the extent to which employees improve efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of executing assigned tasks within an organization. They further explain that employee performance can be assessed through measurable work outcomes as well as behavioural attributes that may not be easily quantified. Similarly, Al-Jammal et al. (2015, as cited in Dizaho et al., 2025) describe employee performance as the degree of effort exerted by employees and the level of achievement attained in carrying out their responsibilities. Also, employee performance encompasses effectiveness, efficiency, and the quality of work output, all of which shape employees' perception of their contribution and value to the organization (Grace et al, 2025). In this study we see performance as the behaviour employees exhibit in discharge of their duties. In the research we focused on effectiveness and creativity.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the spill over theory as the framework for analysis. The spill over theory was developed by Aldous in 1969, followed by Piotrkowski in 1979, staines in 1980, Crouter in 1984 and Guest in 2002. This theory is concerned with the work related and family related factors (Essien et al., 2023).

The theory maintained that work and personal life responsibilities are inseparable from one another and a spillover can occur from one domain into other. Therefore, work can spillover from work sphere to personal life, and also from personal life to work sphere (Dizaho et al., 2025). Therefore, there is no clear separation between work and family life. The two domains of work and family life are interconnected and mutually influential. Experiences acquired in one role are transferred into another role. This implies that negative or positive experiences can spill over easily from one domain to another leading to negative or positive consequences. The theory posits that work-to-family relationship will experience negative spillover effect in aspect of time, energy, and behaviour if they are inflexibly arranged in both place and time. To realize positive spillover effect or work-life balance, there is need to integrate and overlap work and family duties in terms of time and place (Grace et al., 2025).

The theory identified two types of spill over namely: positive and negative spill over. Positive spill over is when favourable experiences in one domain improve outcomes in another, while negative spill over occurs when adverse experiences in one domain negatively affect another. The theory is based on the following assumptions:

1. Work life and family life are interdependent. That is work and family cannot be completely separated
2. Experiences are transferable. That is, experiences from one domain automatically influence another domain.
3. Human behaviour is holistic. That is employees function as whole persons rather than separate personalities at work and at home.
4. Emotional states cross boundaries. Positive and negative emotions experienced at work affects emotions at home, and family emotions equally affect work-related behaviour.
5. Employee performance is determined not only by workplace conditions but also by family conditions or factors.

The theory is relevant to the study because it helps us to explain how the level of performance of academic staff in Imo State University is affected by how the experiences in the family life. The



lecturers simultaneously perform multiple roles as lecturers, administrators, researchers, spouses, parents, and community members. Therefore, when the academic staff maintain a healthy balance between work and personal responsibilities, positive experiences spill over into the workplace. Employees become more motivated, emotionally stable, committed, and productive. Conversely, poor work-life balance generates stress and fatigue that spill over into their work, reducing performance. The academic staff in Imo State University are confronted with several roles or responsibilities like teaching, research and publications, administrative task, project or thesis supervision etc. So, when these demands from work become excessive, stress spills over into family life and eventually returns to the workplace through fatigue, emotional exhaustion, absenteeism, and reduced productivity.

1.3. Empirical Review

This research reviewed some related empirical studies by some scholars. Theresa et al. (2023) investigated the relationship between work-life balance and the performance of female academic staff in selected public tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The researchers adopted a survey research design and focused on female lecturers in the selected institutions. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that job stress, work overload, and family-work conflict did not have a statistically significant effect on the performance of female academic staff. However, the study established that family-friendly workplace policies and practices significantly enhanced the performance of the female academics.

Similarly, Offiah et al. (2025) examined the influence of work-life balance on employee performance at Abia State University, Uturu. The study employed a survey research design and used simple random sampling to select 277 respondents from a population of 900 staff members. Data were collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using percentages, mean scores, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). The results revealed that work-life balance significantly improved employee punctuality, timely completion of assigned tasks, and workplace discipline. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended the adoption of supportive organizational policies, the use of democratic leadership practices, and the reduction of excessive work schedules to promote better employee performance.

Furthermore, Adegboyega and Babatunde (2022) studied the influence work-life balance on employees' performance in selected private universities in Osun State. The study adopted the descriptive research design to sample 210 respondents. The structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from the field; and the data analysis was realized using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The revealed that organizational support have significant influence on employees' job satisfaction; leisure-time management has significant impact on employee job commitment in the selected private universities. The study suggested for effective design of policies that will promote job satisfaction, balance work and social time.

Ekezie et al. (2025) looked at the effect of work-life conflict on job satisfaction in selected tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria. The survey research design was utilized. The questionnaire was used for instrument for data collection. The descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and Pearson Correlation Coefficient were adopted for data analysis. The research discovered that work-life conflict has significant negative impact on job satisfaction. This shows a negative correlation, which implies that increase in work-life conflict leads to decrease in job satisfaction. The study



recommended for proper coping strategies in order to reduce work-life conflict, which will improve job satisfaction and employees' performance.

Babatunde et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between work-life balance and the performance of academic staff in selected tertiary institutions in Kwara State. The researchers employed a descriptive survey research design and selected a sample of 285 academic staff from the population of lecturers in the participating institutions. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Multiple Linear Regression. The findings showed that work flexibility significantly influences employees' performance, while a conducive work environment also has a significant positive effect on employee performance in the selected tertiary institutions. The study concluded that improvements in workplace flexibility and the work environment contribute to enhanced employee performance. Consequently, the authors recommended that tertiary institutions should establish adequate flexible work structures and provide a conducive working environment to improve employees' performance.

Similarly, Bagobiri and Dakwoyi (2024) examined the influence of work-life balance on employee performance among staff of First Bank branches in the Abuja Municipal Area Council, Abuja. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and sampled 224 respondents from a population of 508 employees working in the selected First Bank branches. Data were obtained using a structured questionnaire and analyzed with Multiple Linear Regression. The results indicated that leave policy does not have a significant effect on employee performance, whereas flexible work arrangements exert a significant positive influence on employee performance. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended the implementation of more flexible leave policies and appropriate work schedules to strengthen employee commitment and enhance overall job performance.

In addition, Dizaho et al. (2025) examined work-life balance and employee performance in selected Parastatals in the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Abuja, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was employed for the study. A structured questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were utilized for data analysis. The study observed that organizational leave policies and welfare policies do not have positive correlation with employee performance; and flexible work arrangement policies and family responsibilities have positive correlation with employee performance in the selected Parastatals. The study suggested for proper leave policies and welfare services or policies in the selected organizations.

Okon et al. (2025) looked at the work-life balance and employee performance in post COVID-19 era in Nigeria. The survey design was used for the study. The questionnaire instrument was distributed to 310 respondents, and descriptive statistics, Confirmatory factor analysis and structured equation modeling. The study revealed that flexible working hours, remote working, technology upgrade, and training on work-life balance have significant positive influence on employee performance. The study recommends for proper adoption of mixed approach to balance the work-life of employees for the enhancement of performance.

This doctoral study Pham (2026) examined the relationship between work-life balance, employee performance, and wellbeing across varied demographic groups and occupational contexts in the United Kingdom. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, One-Way



ANOVA, and Welch's ANOVA were utilized for data analysis. The study revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between WLB and both employee wellbeing and job performance. In addition, the study revealed that demographic variables like age and parental status did not show statistically significant effects, structural and psychological factors like job autonomy, organisational support, and emotional resilience were identified as key predictors.

From the studies reviewed above, the study identified some gap in term of geography and subject matter. Geographically, while the available studies reviewed have examined work-life balance and employee performance in various Nigerian tertiary educations, there is no empirical research that specifically focused on Imo State University, Owerri.

Based on subject matter, the reviewed studies mainly examined work-life balance from a general perspective without specifically looking its influence on distinct dimensions of employee performance such effectiveness, creativity etc. Some studies examined general performance indicators (Offiah et al., 2025; Dizaho et al., 2025), and other studies focused on job satisfaction (Ekezie et al., 2025) or commitment (Babatunde et al., 2020), there is limited research that specifically focus on effectiveness and creativity as distinct performance variables or indicators influenced by work-life balance in Nigerian universities. In addition, empirical studies reviewed in the study did not in any way focus on the specific challenges of realizing work-life balance for improving employee performance in Nigerian universities. Most studies focused on the relationship between WLB and employee performance rather than the obstacles to achieving WLB. Therefore, these identified gaps are what the study intends to fill.

3.0. METHODOLOGY

The study employed the survey research design, where questions were asked respondents who were sample of the population of academic staff in Imo State University, Owerri. The population of consists of seven hundred and fifty (750). The sample size was 323 which was determined using the Taro Yamene formula. The formula is represented as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n = Sample size; N = Population under study; e = Error margin; I = Constant figure.

$$n = \frac{750}{1 + 750(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{750}{1 + 1.875}$$

$$n = \frac{750}{2.875}$$

$$n = 260.86 = 261 \quad \text{Therefore, 261 is the sample size.}$$

The study adopted the multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, the study adopted the simple random sampling technique where the respondents were the researcher randomly selected faculties. After the selection of Faculties, the second stage involves employing the quota sampling where the researcher set quotas to select respondents from each Faculties. The researchers allocated the number of respondents to be sampled in each of the selected faculties. In the third stage, the study adopted



convenience sampling techniques to select the respondents. The researchers distributed the questionnaire to academic staff who were available in the selected faculties.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire titled "Work-life Balance and Employees' Performance Questionnaire (WBEPQ)." The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A elicited respondents' demographic information, while Section B contained items designed to address the specific objectives of the study. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale comprising Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, with the mean serving as the principal statistical tool for analysis. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review by two specialists, whose recommendations were incorporated through necessary revisions to ensure that the items adequately measured the study objectives. The reliability test was achieved using the test-retest reliability test. The result indicated a Pearson correlation coefficient of $(r) = 0.81$, which shows a highly reliable research instrument.

4.0. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Presentation of results

The data collected were presented and analyzed according to the research questions raised in this study. 261 questionnaires were distributed, and 226 of the questionnaires were successfully retrieved, which shows 86.6 percent of the retrieval rate.

Research Question One: To what extent has the work-life balance influences employees' effectiveness in Imo State University, Owerri?

Table 1: Respondents' Views on Work-life Balance and Employee Effectiveness

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	Excessive workload to a large extent negatively affects your effectiveness at work	162	38	10	16	0	4.53	Agreed
2	Maintaining a balance between your work and personal life increases your job performance	151	43	13	14	5	4.42	Agreed
3	Flexible working time enhances your task completion rate	90	100	15	19	2	4.13	Agreed
4.	You are more effective when you have sufficient time for rest outside work	103	108	8	7	0	4.35	Agreed
5.	Work-related stress significantly reduces your effectiveness in carrying out assigned duties	95	104	18	8	1	4.25	Agreed
6.	Striking a balance between your job demands and family activities improves your ability to complete job tasks effectively.	95	110	20	1	1	4.32	Agreed
Average Mean =							4.33	Agreed

Source: Field Survey (2026).

From the table above, item 1 indicates general agreement that excessive workload to a large extent negatively affects employees' effectiveness at work ($\bar{x} = 4.53$). Item 2 shows large proportion of agreement that maintaining a balance between employees' work and personal life increases their job performance ($\bar{x} = 4.42$). Item 3 indicated majority view that flexible working time enhances employees' task completion rate ($\bar{x} = 4.13$). Furthermore, item 4 shows that employees are more



effective when they have sufficient time for rest outside work ($\bar{x} = 4.35$). Item 5, indicated that work-related stress significantly reduces employees' effectiveness in carrying out assigned duties ($\bar{x} = 4.25$); and item 6 shows majority view that striking a balance between employees' job demands and family activities improves their ability to complete job tasks effectively ($\bar{x} = 4.32$). The average mean was 4.33. Since the average mean ($\bar{x} = 4.33$) is greater than the decision rule of 3.0, we conclude that that work-life balance has considerable or significant influence on employees' effectiveness in Imo State University Owerri.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of work-life balance on employees' creativity in Imo State University, Owerri?

Table 2: Respondents' views on Work-life Balance and Employees' Creativity

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	Remarks
1	A balanced work-life schedule enhances your ability to generate new ideas	74	127	16	7	2	4.16	Agreed
2	You become more creative when you are not overworked in your work place	11 2	69	23	18	6	4.19	Agreed
3	Stress as a result of imbalance between your work and personal life limits your creative thinking	11 4	71	20	16	5	4.20	Agreed
4.	Adequate rest outside work improves your problem-solving ability	62	119	24	17	4	3.96	Agreed
5.	Flexible work arrangements (like working from home) encourage innovative thinking in your job	49	73	53	40	11	3.48	Agreed
6.	You are more creative when you have time for personal development activities	75	83	46	16	6	3.90	Agreed
7	Work-life balance allows me to approach tasks from new and better perspectives	11 0	90	9	12	5	4.27	Agreed
Average Mean =							4.02	Agreed

Source: Field Survey (2026).

From table 2 above, item 1 indicated that a balanced work-life schedule enhances employees' ability to generate new ideas ($\bar{x} = 4.16$). Item 2, shows that employees become more creative when they are not overworked ($\bar{x} = 4.19$); and item 3 indicated that stress as a result of imbalance between work and personal life limits employees' creative thinking ($\bar{x} = 4.20$). In addition, item 4, shows that adequate rest outside work improves employees' problem-solving ability ($\bar{x} = 3.96$).

Furthermore, item 5, indicated that flexible work arrangements (like working from home) encourage innovative thinking in employees' job ($\bar{x} = 3.48$), while item 6 show majority view that employees are more creative when they have time for personal development activities ($\bar{x} = 3.90$), and item 7 shows that work-life balance allows employees to approach tasks from new and better perspectives ($\bar{x} = 4.27$). The average mean was 4.02. Since, the average mean ($\bar{x} = 4.02$) was greater than the decision rule of 3.0, we conclude that work-life balance has significant or considerable effect on employees' creativity in Imo State University, Owerri.



Research Question Three: What are the challenges of realizing work-life balance for improving employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri?

Table 3: Respondents views on the Challenges of Work-life Balance

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	Long working hours is a significant challenge maintaining balance between your work and personal life	104	83	10	20	9	4.11	Agreed
2	Heavy workload is one of the major problems preventing you from spending adequate time with their families.	112	50	21	31	12	3.96	Agreed
3	Poor organizational support policies pose a serious challenge to imbalance between your work and personal life	61	97	25	30	13	3.72	Agreed
4.	Technological demands keep employees connected to work after office hours, which poses a challenge towards balancing work and family responsibilities	68	63	40	35	20	3.54	Agreed
5.	Financial pressures make it difficult to achieve balance between your work and personal activities	78	105	15	25	3	4.01	Agreed
6.	Poor time management is a significant challenge towards balancing your work and personal activities.	98	102	10	12	4	4.23	Agreed
7	Work-related stress is a significant challenge to achieving work-life balance in your workplace	70	110	15	23	8	3.84	Agreed

Source: Field Survey (2026).

From the above table, item 1 shows that long working hours is a significant challenge maintaining balance between employees' work and personal life ($\bar{x} = 4.11$). Item 2, shows that heavy workload is one of the major problems preventing employees from spending adequate time with their families ($\bar{x} = 3.96$) and item 3 observed that poor organizational support policies pose a serious challenge to imbalance between employee work and personal life ($\bar{x} = 3.72$). Also, item 4 indicated that technological demands (that keeps employees connected to work after office hours) poses a challenge towards balancing work and family responsibilities ($\bar{x} = 3.54$).

In addition, item 5 observed that financial pressures make it difficult to achieve balance between employees work and personal activities ($\bar{x} = 4.01$). Item 6 shows that poor time management is a significant challenge towards balancing employee work and personal activities ($\bar{x} = 4.23$), and item 7 indicated that work-related stress is a significant challenge towards achieving work-life balance ($\bar{x} = 3.84$). The results above revealed that respondents agreed that all the identified variables constitute significant challenges to achieving work-life balance in Imo State University, Owerri. Among the identified challenges, poor time management ($\bar{x} = 4.23$) emerged as the most significant, followed by long working hours ($\bar{x} = 4.11$), financial pressures ($\bar{x} = 4.01$), heavy workload ($\bar{x} = 3.96$), work-related stress ($\bar{x} = 3.84$), poor organizational support policies ($\bar{x} = 3.72$), and technological demands ($\bar{x} = 3.54$).

4.2. Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis, this study made the following findings:



First the study revealed that that work-life balance has a significant or considerable positive influence on employees' effectiveness in Imo State University, Owerri, with an average mean score of 4.33, which is above the decision benchmark of 3.00.

It indicated that maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life enhances job performance, task completion, and overall effectiveness. This result implies that employees become more productive and efficient when they are able to adequately manage their professional and personal responsibilities. The findings are consistent with the study of Offiah et al. (2025), who found that work-life balance significantly improved employee punctuality, discipline, and timely accomplishment of tasks in Abia State University. Similarly, the findings support Okon et al. (2025), who reported that flexible working hours and work-life balance initiatives positively influence employee performance.

Second, the study observed that that work-life balance has significantly effect on employees' creativity. This is evident in the average mean score of 4.02, which above the decision rule of 3.0. It indicated that balanced work schedules improve their ability to generate new ideas, while excessive workload and work-life imbalance reduce creative thinking. It revealed that adequate rest, flexible work arrangements, and opportunities for personal development improve problem-solving ability, innovation, and the ability to approach tasks from new perspectives. The findings agree with research conducted by Pham (2026) that revealed a significant positive relationship between work-life balance, employee wellbeing, and job performance across different occupational groups in the United Kingdom. In addition, the results were in agreement with the study of Okon et al. (2025) that reported that flexible work arrangements and technological support significantly enhance employees' innovative capacity and overall performance.

Third, the findings identified several factors posing challenges to the realization of effective work-life balance among academic staff in Imo State University. These challenges include poor time management ($\bar{x} = 4.23$), long working hours ($\bar{x} = 4.11$), financial pressures ($\bar{x} = 4.01$), heavy workload ($\bar{x} = 3.96$), work-related stress ($\bar{x} = 3.84$), poor organizational support policies ($\bar{x} = 3.72$), and technological demands that keep employees connected to work after official working hours ($\bar{x} = 3.54$). Among these factors, poor time management was observed to be the most significant challenge.

This implies that academic staff struggle to properly allocate time among teaching, research, administrative responsibilities, supervision of students, and family obligations. This finding is in line with the study of Theresa et al. (2023), Ekeziel et al. (2025) and Dizaho et al. (2025). Theresa et al. (2023) maintained that academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions experience increasing pressure arising from teaching, research, and family responsibilities. Similarly, Ekezie et al. (2025) revealed that unresolved work-life challenges reduce employees' motivation and overall effectiveness. Also, Dizaho et al. (2025) observed that inadequate welfare and organizational support reduce employees' ability to balance work and family responsibilities.

The findings of the study support position of the Spillover Theory, which states that positive experiences within family and personal life spill over into the workplace by enhancing motivation and commitment. However, negative experiences arising from work overload and stress spill over into family life and return to undermine employees' performance. Therefore, realizing a proper work-life balance is paramount for improving employees' effectiveness and creativity in Imo State University.



5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

Striking a balance between job and personal responsibilities is a critical determinant of employees' performance. The study examined the influence of work-life balance on employees' performance in Imo State University, Owerri. The study observed that work-life balance has a considerable positive influence on the effectiveness and creativity of academic staff in Imo State University. However, the issue of poor time management, long working hours, financial pressures, heavy workload, work-related stress, poor organizational support policies and technological demands militates against effective work-life balance in Imo State University. Therefore, adequate strategies or measures are needed to be applied towards strengthening work-life balance for improving the performance of academic staff in Imo State University and other tertiary education at large.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. There is urgent need to formulate and implement comprehensive work-life balance policies that encourage flexible work arrangements and reasonable scheduling of academic activities. These measures will enable employees to effectively combine their work and personal responsibilities in order to enhance their performance.
- ii. Reduction of excessive workload through equitable distribution of responsibilities is necessary. Teaching, research, administrative duties, and student supervision should be allocated fairly among academic staff to prevent burnout and enhance employees' performance.
- iii. Regular training programmes and enlightenment activities on time management, stress management, and work-life balance should be organized for academic staff. This can be done through workshops and seminars, which will serve as instrument for equipping employees with practical strategies for time and stress management, managing competing responsibilities, and improving performance.
- iv. The university management should strengthen organizational support systems through the establishment of employee assistance programmes, counseling services, wellness programmes etc that will enhance the psychological well-being of employees and help manage work pressures.
- v. There is need for a periodic review of staff welfare packages and financial incentives in order to reduce financial pressures experienced by employees, improved job satisfaction and work-life balance.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that no conflict of interest of interest exist in this manuscript.

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