

HYBRID WORK SYSTEMS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF SELECTED FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS COMPANIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement is a critical determinant of an organization's success, since it affects job satisfaction, overall performance, and productivity. To tackle concerns like less commitment, lowered motivation, and impaired workplace collaboration, organisations are increasingly prioritising employee engagement strategies as they confront the difficulties of an evolving work environment. In response to the rising frequency of remote and hybrid work arrangements, organisations are striving to improve engagement to alleviate feelings of isolation, alienation, and reduced collaboration. By fostering active involvement, companies may alleviate the dangers of diminished discretionary effort, elevated attrition rates, and low morale, thereby enhancing overall workplace performance. Hence, this study aimed to determine the effect of hybrid work systems on employee engagement of selected fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design using

a well-structured survey questionnaire and the sample size of 375 managers was determined using Raosoft sample size calculator while simple random and proportionate sampling techniques were utilized to identify eligible managers. The results showed that hybrid work systems had positive significant effect on employee engagement ($Adj R^2 = 0.270$, $F(4, 276) = 26.476$, $p < 0.05$). The study makes significant empirical contributions by providing empirical evidence on the effect of hybrid work systems dimensions on employee engagement in selected fast moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Further research is needed around employee health and wellbeing in relation to remote work to ensure better understanding of the factors that contribute to maintaining healthy boundaries, supporting employee wellbeing, and dealing with loneliness in remote work environments.

Keywords: Hybrid work, Employee performance, Employee engagement, Work environment, Organisation support

INTRODUCTION

According to Dlamini et al. (2022), Africa's fast-moving consumer goods business has been a major success, and this is a result of its heavily affected by Africa's 1.3 billion inhabitants, quickly expanding urbanisation, a growing middle class, and rapid internet penetration in the burgeoning consumer goods industry. According to Zondo (2020), FMCG will account for around 14% of total consumer expenditure of \$2.1 trillion in 2025. Kenya's FMCG market was estimated at more than \$10 billion in 2022, with growth in food, drinks, cosmetics, and home care (Nyathi & Kekwaletswe, 2023). Employee performance is one of the performance difficulties that have evolved to impede the industry's performance in terms of context

performance, adaptive performance, engagement, and job performance (Khan et al., 2021). When a corporation seeks to achieve peak performance, economic volatility and inflation rates become additional challenges. This condition has also resulted in worker disengagement due to high levels of responsibility, limited opportunities for promotion, and economic insecurity (Govender & Bussin, 2020). However, research also presents several examples of how organisations engaged their staff with pledges that had nothing to do with engagement (Wang et al., 2020). South Africa is one of the primary development engines in the FMCG business, thanks to its well-developed retail networks and diverse customer groups (Forson et al., 2021). Other political instabilities and economic stagnations that have become economic productivity spoilers and contributors to these increased workloads include increased pressures on employees due to fuel price increases, longer power outages, and logistics inefficiencies (Mhlongo & Zondo, 2021). The Nigerian supply chain has been hampered by a lack of infrastructure, irregular electrical supply, and a weak transportation network; as a result, production is under great strain owing to increased duties on staff (Okoli et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hybrid Work Systems

Hybrid work systems provide employees with greater autonomy in terms of the location and method of fulfilling their obligations (Yating et al., 2024). The systems incorporate in-office and remote work arrangements. This methodology integrates conventional office utilities with the advantages of remote work, leading to enhanced organisational efficiency, work-life balance, and job satisfaction (Choudhury et al., 2020). Flexibility, inclusiveness, technological integration, and work enablers are critical components that contribute to improved employee engagement and performance. Hybrid work enhances efficiency by incorporating digital technologies for communication and collaboration, enabling organisations to recruit and retain a diverse workforce (Gartner & Kern, 2021). Nevertheless, a supportive organisational culture that encourages trust, responsibility, and seamless collaboration between in-office and remote staff is necessary for effective adoption (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016).

Hybrid work arrangements, despite their advantages, present challenges for remote workers, including communication barriers, feelings of isolation, and potential biases in project assignments and promotions (Ucho et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2021). The management of a hybrid workforce necessitates increased monitoring to ensure employee engagement and equality, which may place a strain on leadership resources (Bartsch et al., 2020). Additionally, the indistinctness of work-life boundaries may result in exhaustion, particularly if employees are obligated to maintain a constant level of accessibility (Kurland, 2022). This study evaluates the effect of hybrid work systems on employee engagement in the FMCG industry by examining four sub-variables: flexibility, inclusiveness, employee experience, and work enablers. Given the challenges faced in markets such as Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa, hybrid work has the potential to increase participation by reducing tension, increasing flexibility, and improving access to professional development opportunities (Agubosim et al., 2023; Elomien et al., 2021).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is typically assessed through various indicators, such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and the willingness to recommend the organisation as a great place to work (Gallup, 2022).

Employee engagement is characterized by several key attributes. It involves emotional commitment, reflecting how strongly employees connect their personal values and goals with those of the organisation, which often translates into a genuine enthusiasm for their work and a desire to contribute positively to the company's success (Kaduk et al., 2019).

Additionally, employee engagement includes a sense of ownership and accountability, where engaged employees take responsibility for their tasks and are more likely to demonstrate initiative in seeking out solutions to problems (Aprilina & Martdianty, 2023). Engaged employees exhibit strong interpersonal relationships within the workplace, collaborating effectively with colleagues and providing support to one another, thereby creating a positive work environment that fosters teamwork (Eneh et al., 2021). High levels of job satisfaction also mark employee engagement, as engaged employees often report feeling fulfilled and satisfied in their roles, which contributes to lower turnover rates and greater retention (Ishak et al., 2022). Furthermore, employee engagement is characterized by a proactive approach to personal and professional development, as engaged employees are more inclined to seek opportunities for growth, pursue additional training, and take on new challenges within the organisation, ultimately leading to enhanced skills and capabilities (Pokojski et al., 2022). Collectively, these characteristics underscore the vital role that employee engagement plays in fostering a motivated, productive, and resilient workforce.

Employee engagement offers numerous advantages that significantly benefit organisations. Engaged employees tend to exhibit higher levels of productivity (Kowalski & Slebarska, 2022). Their commitment and enthusiasm for their work often translate into improved performance and greater efficiency, which ultimately contributes to the organisation's overall success (Bakker & Demerouti, 2024). Engaged employees are also more likely to go above and beyond their basic job responsibilities, demonstrating discretionary effort that can lead to innovative solutions and increased productivity (Kirana et al., 2022). Additionally, employee engagement is linked to enhanced employee retention. When employees feel valued and connected to their organisation, they are less likely to seek employment elsewhere, thereby reducing turnover rates and associated costs related to recruitment and training (Makupa et al., 2023). This stability within the workforce fosters a more experienced and cohesive team, further improving organisational performance. Engagement also positively impacts customer satisfaction (Adekoya et al., 2019). Engaged employees are often more attentive and responsive to customer needs, leading to better service and stronger relationships with clients (Burbar, 2021). This customer-centric approach can translate into increased sales, loyalty, and positive brand reputation. Furthermore, organisations with high levels of employee engagement often experience improved morale and workplace culture (Morikawa, 2022). A positive work environment fosters collaboration and trust among team members, enhancing overall job satisfaction and creating a supportive atmosphere that can lead to greater organisational success

(Angelici & Profeta, 2024). Collectively, these advantages highlight the critical role of employee engagement in driving business outcomes and sustaining a competitive edge in today's dynamic marketplace (Nakrosiene et al., 2019).

While employee engagement has many advantages, it also presents certain disadvantages that organisations need to consider (Smith, 2020). One potential drawback is the risk of employee burnout. Highly engaged employees often take on additional responsibilities and work long hours to maintain their level of involvement, which can lead to increased stress and fatigue over time (Lenggang & Kirana, 2023). This burnout can negatively impact their performance and overall well-being, resulting in decreased job satisfaction and potential turnover. Additionally, there is a risk of creating an imbalance in the workplace if engagement levels are not managed appropriately (Chen et al., 2023). Employees who are highly engaged may overshadow their less engaged colleagues, leading to feelings of inadequacy or resentment among the latter group. This imbalance can create a competitive rather than collaborative environment, hindering teamwork and overall organisational cohesion (Costa et al., 2022). Furthermore, fostering employee engagement requires a significant investment of time and resources from management.

Implementing effective engagement strategies, such as training programs, team-building activities, and recognition initiatives, demands ongoing commitment and can strain budgets, particularly for smaller organisations (Barrero et al., 2021). If these initiatives are not well-planned or executed, they may fail to produce the desired results, leading to employee disillusionment and decreased morale. Excessive focus on engagement metrics can lead to a superficial understanding of employee needs and sentiments (Magaji et al., 2021). Organisations may prioritize numerical indicators of engagement over genuine employee feedback and dialogue, resulting in policies that do not effectively address the root causes of disengagement or dissatisfaction (Minoura et al., 2021). Therefore, the researcher in this study defines employee engagement as the level of commitment, passion, and enthusiasm employees show towards their job, often linked to their involvement and emotional investment in their work.

Empirical Review

Hybrid Work Systems Dimensions and Employee Engagement

Past studies from sundry authors (Adekoya et al., 2019; Gasic & Berber, 2023; Fadhilah et al., 2022; Mehta, 2021; Moens et al., 2021; Muzeyin et al., 2022; Yusuf et al., 2023; Parimita et al., 2020; Rahman, 2019; Sandoval-Reyes et al., 2021; Sibarani et al., 2023; Susilo, 2020; Uru et al., 2022; Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020) found significant, positive relationship between hybrid work systems and employee engagement. Generally, the findings support the notion that work from home employees experience greater enjoyment, satisfaction and motivation thereby enhancing engagement and ultimately, employee performance. Adekoya et al. (2019) found that employee engagement and individual well-being have significant effect on efficiency and effectiveness while Gasic and Berber (2023) concluded that there are direct positive effects of flexible work arrangements and employee engagement on turnover

intentions and that employee engagement has an indirect effect on the relationship between work engagement and turnover intentions. Mehta (2021) found that people experience autonomy in their work while working remotely and indicated that autonomy has significant impact on work engagement.

Corroborating the findings of these authors, Rahman (2019) stated that the study outcome indicate that flexible work arrangements have positive significant impact on employee job satisfaction and work life balance. Fadhilah et al. (2022) and Sibarani et al. (2023) in their separate studies reported that employee engagement has a significant effect on employee performance through different factors. Parimita et al. (2020) found that self-efficacy and communication skill have significant effect on work engagement and work engagement has significant effect on employee performance. Yusuf et al. (2023) identified employee engagement strategies (including empowerment, representation, partnership, and involvement) and they found that each of these strategies influence the productivity of bank employees. In the same vein, Uru et al. (2022) in their study concluded that each dimension of work engagement (vigour at work, dedication to work, and absorption in work) is positively associated with organisation identification.

However, other scholars (Baakeel, 2021; Bolingen et al., 2023; Palumbo, 2021; Sandoval-Reyes et al., 2021) in their studies found that hybrid work may have the opposite impact on engagement with factors like fatigue, stress, and work-to-home conflict all of which may worsen work life balance and affect employee's relationship and job satisfaction. Baakeel (2021) found that remote work has a statistically significant impact on employee productivity, communication, and job effectiveness but the impact of remote working on employee engagement was found to be insignificant. Corroborating these outcomes, Naqshbandi et al. (2023) in their study on teaching and non-teaching staff of Nigerian Universities found that telework does not have a significant and positive effect on job performance. Similarly, Sandoval-Reyes et al. (2021) concluded that remote work demands deliver higher level of productivity and engagement in the short term, however, the outcome is different if the situation persists, as the worker will not be able to keep the levels of energy, effort, and compromise especially when the perception of work stress appears.

Theoretical underpinnings

Person-Environment Fit Theory

According to the Person-Environment Fit Theory, which is applicable to hybrid work systems, employees are more engaged and productive when their work environment meets their individual needs, which include a combination of autonomy, flexibility, and a work-life balance (Gander et al., 2020; Kristof & Guay, 2011). In hybrid work environments, workers whose chosen work settings align with their person-environment experience happiness and satisfaction. Organisations might benefit from using hybrid work models to enhance employee engagement, productivity, and well-being (Zhang et al., 2023). Nonetheless, achieving such alignment requires the collaboration of both workers and managers to ensure that remote workplaces facilitate optimal performance levels. Consequently, work design is crucial, with

managerial support and technology serving as essential enabling factors (Holland, 1959). Despite its numerous advantages, critics argue that the PE-Fit Theory fosters discontinuity by presuming that employees consistently have access to affordances or the autonomy to select their environments based on their needs, thereby neglecting constraints such as economic or social factors (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). The approach has been critiqued for emphasising static compatibility while neglecting the evolution of individuals and the work environment over time (Caplan, 1987; van Zyl et al., 2022). Some argue that rigid implementation may hinder workplace diversity while ensuring organisational compatibility at the cost of flexibility (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Nevertheless, the theory is significantly pertinent to hybrid research because of its robust predictive validity.

Reliability

Reliability is an internal statistic that measures the instrument's consistency, demonstrating its ability to provide consistent and uniform results. A survey instrument with high reliability exhibits a high level of consistency. The device must be regarded dependable for measurement or data gathering, and the findings should remain consistent once received. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to examine the study's reliability, along with statistical approaches such as multiple-item assessments. The pre-test results showed that the scale was reliable (Cronbach's > 0.70).

Table 1.1: Reliability of Research Instrument

S/N	Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Comment
1	Hybrid Work Systems	5	0.751	0.92	Reliable
2	Employee Engagement	5	0.828	0.84	Reliable

Source: Researcher's Pilot Study, 2025

Data Analysis and Results

H₀₁: Hybrid work systems dimensions have no significant effect on employee engagement.

In hypothesis four, hybrid work systems (flexibility, inclusivity, employee experience and work enablers) is the independent variables, while the employee engagement is dependent variable. Data for hybrid work systems was generated by adding together scores of responses from all the items under each dimension to generate independent scores for that dimension. Data for employee engagement was generated by adding together the responses of all items under the variable to create an index of employee engagement. The results of the analysis and parameter estimates obtained are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Hypothesis One

N	Model	B	T	Sig.	ANOVA (Sig.)	R	Adjusted R ²	F (4, 276)
277	(Constant)	11.713	8.721	0.000	0.001 ^b	0.529 ^a	0.270	26.476
	Flexibility	0.180	2.746	0.006				
	Inclusivity	0.057	0.822	0.412				
	Employee Experience	0.178	2.885	0.004				
	Work Enablers	0.179	3.383	0.001				
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement								
b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Enablers, Flexibility, Inclusivity, Employee Experience								

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

Table 1.2 shows the multiple regression analysis results for the effect of hybrid work systems dimensions on employee engagement in selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State of Nigeria. The result revealed that flexibility ($\beta = 0.180$, $t = 2.746$, $p < 0.05$), employee experience ($\beta = 0.178$, $t = 2.885$, $p < 0.05$) and work enablers ($\beta = 0.179$, $t = 3.383$, $p < 0.05$) have significant and positive effect on employee engagement among employees of the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. However, inclusivity ($\beta = 0.057$, $t = 0.822$, $p > 0.05$) has a positive but insignificant effect on employee engagement. The results of the analysis revealed that three of the dimensions of hybrid work systems used in this study (flexibility, employee experience and work enablers) have positive and significant effect on employee engagement of the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. This indicates that flexibility, employee experience and work enablers are important predictors of employee engagement in the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The correlation R value was 0.529. This value showed that hybrid work systems have a moderately high positive relationship with employee engagement. The $Adj. R^2$ was 0.270 implying that 27% of the explained variance in employee engagement of the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria was attributable to hybrid work systems (flexibility, inclusivity, employee experience and work enablers) while the remaining 73% changes that occur is attributed to other variables not included in the model. Thus, hybrid

work systems being the independent variable contributes 27% of the employee engagement among the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$EEN = 11.713 + 0.180FLE + 0.057INC + 0.178EEX + 0.179WEN + U_i$ ----Eqn (i) (Predictive Model)

$EEN = 11.713 + 0.180FLE + 0.178EEX + 0.179WEN + U_i$ ----Eqn (i) (Prescriptive Model)

Where:

EEN = Employee Engagement

FLE = Flexibility

INC = Inclusivity

EEX = Employee Experience

WEN = Work Enablers

The regression model revealed that if hybrid work systems were held constant at zero, employee engagement of the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria will be 11.713. indicating that in the absence of hybrid work systems, employee engagement of the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies will be 11.713, which points to a positive and effective employee engagement. From the predictive model, three of the dimensions of hybrid work systems (flexibility, employee experience and work enablers) have significant positive effect on the employee engagement while inclusivity has positive but insignificant effect on employee engagement. From the prescriptive model, an improvement in flexibility, employee experience and work enablers would increase employee performance by 0.180, 0.178 and 0.179 units respectively. These results suggest that flexibility, employee experience and work enablers are significant predictors of employee engagement in the selected fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Thus, fast moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State should focus on implementing these hybrid work systems dimensions in their organisations to sustain effective employee engagement.

The F -statistics ($df = 4, 276$) = 26.476 at $p < 0.05$) indicated that the overall model is significant for predicting the effect of hybrid work systems on employee engagement. This implies that the regression model is a good fit. Also, as the p -value is less than 0.05, it implies that effect of hybrid work systems on employee engagement is significant and relevant for employee performance. The results also showed that flexibility has the highest effect on employee engagement closely followed by work enablers, and employee experience. Based on these results, the null hypothesis one (**H₀₁**) which states that hybrid work systems dimensions have no significant effect on employee engagement was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of the regression for hypothesis one (**H₀₁**) on the effect of hybrid work systems dimensions on employee engagement in the fast-moving consumer goods companies in Lagos State, Nigeria ($Adj. R^2 = 0.270$; $FLE = 0.180$, $EEX = 0.178$, $WEN = 0.179$, $p < 0.05$) reveals that hybrid work systems dimensions of flexibility, employee experience and work enablers are good predictors of employee engagement. This finding provides empirical and theoretical

implications. Firstly, the result of this study supports the findings of Weideman and Hofmeyr, (2020) who noted that there is a positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement. Their study also revealed that flexible work arrangements are positively associated with various employee engagement constructs found in literature, with the most prominent finding showing positive influence of flexible work arrangements on employee wellbeing. The findings of this study are also in tandem with the findings of Parimita et al. (2020) who noted that engagement has a positive significant effect on employee performance. Similarly, Chen et al. (2023) noted that work from home leads to less work distractions and greater perceived productivity and engagement. Sandoval-Reyes et al. (2021) concluded that remote work increases productivity and engagement but noted that the positive effect on productivity and engagement reduces when stress comes into the equation or when the situation stretches over time. They also noted that the perceived stress affects productivity more acutely for men than for women. Similar views were shared by Toscano and Zappala (2021) who noted that the relationship between overall performance and remote work productivity was mediated by work engagement and Hafshah et al. (2022) who claimed that remote work has a mediating impact on employee performance through employee engagement. Baakeel (2021) noted that work from home has a statistically insignificant influence on employee engagement while Naqshbandi et al. (2023) found that telework does not have a significant and positive effect on job performance. The authors concluded that their findings do not support the effect of hybrid work on employee engagement or the mediating role of employee engagement in the proposed relation between hybrid work and job performance. Based on the person-environment fit theory, Khatatbeh et al. (2023) noted that a good fit between employees' preferences and the characteristics of hybrid work systems ensures higher engagement of employees while Zhang et al. (2023) also noted that a better person-environment fit goes along with higher job and life satisfaction. Similarly, several authors (Bhattacharyya et al., 2020; Kim & Chang, 2022; Oamen, 2023) also noted that the perceived usefulness of technology and the ease of use is crucial to predicting employee's attitudes and behavioural intentions towards hybrid work. Thus, considering the relative quantity of empirical and theoretical foundations supporting the study findings that hybrid work systems dimensions have positive and significant effect on employee engagement, this study rejected the null hypothesis four (H_01) that hybrid work systems dimensions have no significant effect on employee engagement

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the effect of hybrid work systems on employee engagement in selected fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Empirical findings indicated that hybrid work systems have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. The findings showed that hybrid work system is being embraced in the Nigerian fast moving consumer goods industry in Nigeria to improve employee task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance and employee engagement. The findings also revealed that the studied fast moving consumer goods companies utilized policies that support and encourage hybrid work. Notwithstanding its contributions, the choice of data collection through a well-structured questionnaire also poses limitations due to low response rate and incomplete filling of the questionnaire. The researcher was however able to address these

challenges with repeated visits by the research assistants and constant dialogue with respondents via WhatsApp chats, e-mails and phone calls. The researcher also believed that the use of consent form and the guaranteed confidentiality/anonymity also helped to improve the completion of the questionnaire. Hence, Further research is needed around employee health and wellbeing in relation to remote work to ensure better understanding of the factors that contribute to maintaining healthy boundaries, supporting employee wellbeing, and dealing with loneliness in remote work environments. Further study should examine the nexus between hybrid work and remote leadership as understanding how leadership practices influence remote work effectiveness will help drive employee outcomes positively. Future research should explore other components of hybrid work systems to understand their effect on employee performance. Similarly, other research should explore the moderating effects of factors like servant leadership, organisation culture, digital capability or social support as these were extensively reported in literature as factors that may impact the dependent variable.

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