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WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION STRATEGIES AND CAREER SUCCESS IN THE NIGERIAN BANKING INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT:

This study examined the relationship between work-life integration strategies and career success in the Nigerian banking industry. The target population of the study comprise employees of deposit money banks (DMBs) in Rivers State, Nigeria; however the study was streamlined to ten biggest DMBs in Rivers State, Nigeria. Using purposive sampling techniques a sample of 250 respondents were drawn from the selected DMBs. A quasi-experimental research design was employed, and data was collected through a cross-sectional survey, and the researchers gathered their data from primary sources using a 5-point Likert-type validated questionnaire. The correlation analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 was used for data analysis as it allows the researcher to estimate relationship between two variables. The result illustrates that work-life integration strategies has a positive influence on career success in the Nigerian banking industry. Specifically, the dimensions of work-life integration such as flexible work arrangements, transparent/open communication, employees' training and development, wellness programmes, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours respectively, were revealed to have a positive and statistically significant correlation with career success in the Nigerian banking industry. Based on these findings above, this study concludes that flexible work arrangements, transparent/open communication, employees' training and development, wellness programmes, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours respectively, play significant roles in enhancing employees' career success in the Nigerian banking industry. This study therefore is a strategic imperative for top management and other decision makers in the Nigerian banking industry seeking to encourage career success of their employees and to foster a thriving and sustainable workplace by formulating suitable policies and guidelines to ensure the implementation of favourable work-life integration strategies. Other theoretical and practical implications for managing work life integration and promoting career success are also discussed.

KEYWORDS:

Border Theory, Career Success, Encouraging Time off/Leave policy, Flexible work arrangements, Measuring Work Results, Not Hours, Employees' Training and Development, Transparent/Open Communication, Wellness Programs, Work-life Integration



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CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Employee career success has received significant attention in recent research. This is unavoidable as a consequence of a paradigm shift and the realization that workers are one of the most important assets of any company organization because they coordinate all other assets that enable the firm to flourish in the business world (Odita, 2023). The growing awareness of the serious consequences that individuals and organizations face as a result of perceived career failures in the workplace cannot be ignored (Amakiri, 2023). To comprehend an employee's contribution to the achievement of an organization's goals and objectives, the idea of performance becomes critical. As a result, organizations have struggled to determine how to improve employee performance in the workplace. The reasonable answer for this dilemma is their professional achievement (Amakiri, 2023). Everyone, even bank personnel, wants to have a successful career (Corinne, 2012). Some people consider their profession to be a dream, a goal, or an achievement. While some perceive a profession as a means of generating daily cash, others see it as an identity and insight into what one hopes to accomplish in their lifetime. Career success is defined as the constructive emotional or job-related achievements acquired throughout years of work experience (Corinne, 2012); the average employee's desire for career success explains the persistent severe effort they put into their work (Amakiri, 2023). In contemporary workplaces, the management of human capital is undergoing significant transformation. This evolution is driven by a shift towards a more humane work culture, wherein employees are viewed holistically, considering factors beyond their productivity within the workplace. Recent trends highlight the increasing struggle of employees to balance competing demands from their professional and personal lives, stemming from globalisation, technological advancements, organisational changes, and demographic shifts (Siwale et al., 2021). Consequently, there is a growing recognition of the importance of incorporating work-life integration into business and human resource management strategies.

Work occupies a substantial portion of individuals' lives and is often regarded as essential for personal well-being and societal welfare (Ilies et al., 2007; Deacon, 1997; King & Wickham-Jones, 1999; Mead, 1997). However, many jobs are structured without considering employees' familial obligations, leading to conflicts between work and family roles, known as work-family conflict (Greenhaus&Beutell, 1985). This conflict not only affects individuals' health and well-being but also influences their quality of life and career longevity (Williams, 2004). For instance, the banking sector, known for its intensive human resource requirements, often imposes long hours and high-pressure work environments, adversely impacting employees' mental health and overall job performance (Bodibe, 2006). Despite the acknowledgment of employees' multifaceted roles beyond the workplace, such as family responsibilities, the Nigerian banking industry has yet to effectively address these challenges (Ogechi&Nwaeke, 2019; Odita, 2020).

Employees in the banking sector frequently face dilemmas between professional obligations and personal commitments, contributing to tensions and dissatisfaction in both domains

(Mmakwe&Ojiabo, 2018). This tension is exacerbated by institutional cultural expectations, further complicating the work-life balance dilemma (Odita, 2021). Moreover, the prevailing focus on meeting targets without considering employees' well-being exacerbates issues of career dissatisfaction and stagnation. In contrast to the traditional concept of work-life balance, which advocates for a clear separation between work and personal life, work-life integration promotes a seamless blending of these domains (The HR, 2024). It acknowledges the diverse responsibilities and interests of employees outside of work and advocates for flexibility in managing personal matters during traditional working hours. Work-life integration adopts a holistic approach to life, aiming to ensure the well-being and career success of employees beyond their professional roles (Amakiri, 2023; Siwale et al., 2021). Although scholarly and practical discussions have predominantly focused on work-life balance, there remains limited literature addressing work-life integration and its implications, particularly concerning employees' career success. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by examining the effects of work-life integration on employee career success within the Nigerian banking sector.

The primary concern of this investigation arises from the demanding nature of banking occupations in Nigeria, characterized by extended working hours, heavy workloads, and a lack of flexibility, leading to increased stress among bank employees (Bodibe, 2006; Amakiri, 2023; Siwale et al., 2021). Additionally, personal issues outside of work can demotivate employees, affecting their service delivery and overall job performance. The pervasive culture of long work hours often prevents bankers from achieving a balanced and holistic life, ultimately impacting their career fulfilment.

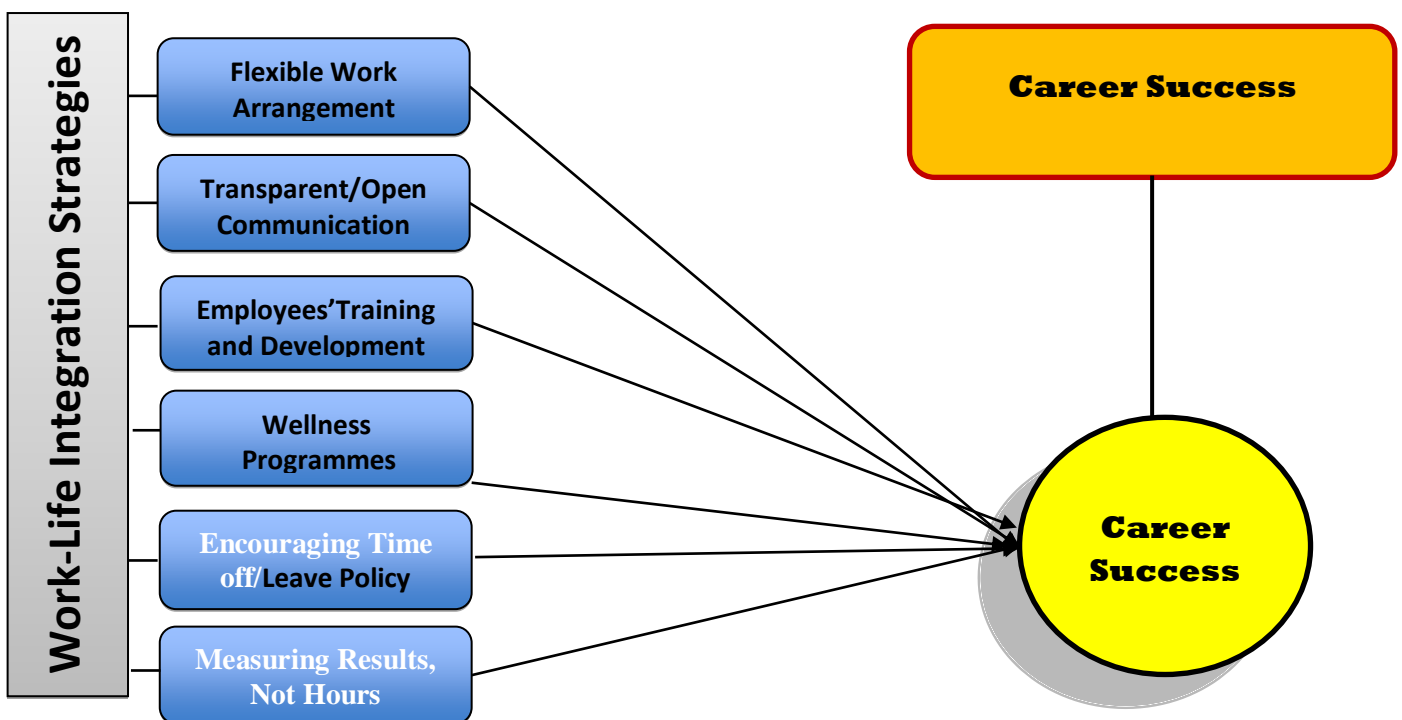
Furthermore, the evolving landscape of the banking sector, marked by strategic alliances, mergers, and acquisitions, has heightened managerial expectations for employee performance, potentially exacerbating the conflict between work and personal life priorities (Okeke et al., 2022). Technological advancements and the increasing importance of customer service quality have further intensified workplace pressures, leaving employees with limited time and attention for personal matters. Contemporary societal changes, including shifts in family structures and an increase in dual-career households, have compounded the challenges faced by bank employees in balancing work and personal responsibilities (Okeke et al., 2022). Consequently, there is a pressing need to reassess the prioritization of work and home responsibilities, particularly within the context of the banking industry.

The multifaceted nature of work and home duties has resurfaced as a concern for commercial bank workers. Due to demographic and workplace changes such as family structure alteration, increased reluctance to work long hours, accepting culture, an increase in the number of women in the workforce, and technology advancements. All of this has led in employees struggling to prioritize between their job duties and their home life, necessitating a thorough evaluation. However, in response to these problems, researchers (Amakiri, 2023; Siwali et al., 2021; Odita, 2021; Ogechi&Nwaeke, 2019; Okeke et al., 2022) have sought to

propose plausible solutions. However, these research centred on work-life balance and employee performance. None of these research examined work-life integration and its influence on career success. While these studies addressed the influence of work-life balance on employee performance, there remains a gap in understanding the implications of work-life integration for career success. A few other researches have sought to improve career success; notable studies include those by Abele et al. (2010) and Andrea (2009), who investigated how to effectively assess career success using job satisfaction, career satisfaction, promotion, compensation, status, and span of control. Riordan and Louw-Potgieter (2011) employed the ideas of work centrality and caring to help women achieve greater career success in academia. It is evident that there is need to understand how work-life integration could influence employees’ career success in the ingrain banking industry. This study would therefore sought achieve this purpose. In so doing it adopted flexible work arrangement, wellness programme and leave policy as dimensions of work-life integration to examine the influence of work-life integration on career success in the Nigerian banking sector.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is shown in figure1 below.



Source: Conceptualised by the Researcher

Figure 1: Conceptualised Showing the Hypothesized Relationship between Work-Life Integration Strategies and Career Success of employees in the Nigerian Banking industry.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine relationship between work-life integration strategies and career success of employees in the Nigerian Banking industry. The specific objectives of this study is to examine the relationship between;

- i. Flexible work arrangement and career success.
- ii. Transparent/Open communication and career success.
- iii. Employees' Training/development and career success.
- iv. Wellness programmes and career success.
- v. Encouraging Time off/Leave policy and career success.
- vi. Measuring work results, not hours and career success.

To achieve the outlined specific objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were put forward in their null form.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between Flexible work arrangement and career success.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Transparent/Open communication and career success.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between employees' Training/development and career success.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between Wellness programmes and career success.

Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between Encouraging Time off/Leave policy and career success.

Ho₆: There is no significant relationship between Measuring work results, not hours and career success.

Significance and Scope of the Study

Numerous studies have been conducted on work-life balance and employee performance in the Nigerian banking industry with varying outcomes. However this study shall be a complete departure from status quo: firstly the study is focused on work-life integration strategies and its influence on career success. Therefore it will provide insights into how effective work-life integration could influence the career success of employees in the Nigerian Banking industry. It would help top management in the banking industry to come up with formidable strategies to reduce employee's turnover and as well improve their personal success on the job. Secondly, the study will identify the factors that impede employee's career success and possible panacea to addressing these challenges. It would serve as a veritable feedback tool which would aid experts, top management and policy makers in making decisions and policies suitable for employees especially as regards to their career growth and personal development. Thirdly, insights from this study would be beneficial to researchers seeking to conduct studies in this area of discussion. This research could be a veritable tool and point of departure for future research endeavours.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature review for this study was conducted in accordance with three broad headings: conceptual, theoretical, and empirical review.

CONCEPT OF WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION

Work-life integration is a modern strategy to regulating the interaction between work and personal life that focuses on merging the two areas so that individuals may attain fulfillment and balance (Kossek et al, 2006). Unlike traditional concepts of work-life balance, which frequently assume a tight separation between work and personal life, work-life integration recognizes that the borders between these domains are becoming more flexible and porous (Work-Life Balance Centre, 2021). It recognizes that employees have a variety of duties and interests outside of work. The notion is intended to assist people in smoothly managing various areas in order to attain a more balanced and rewarding overall job experience.

One important part of work-life integration is acknowledging that people have various demands and goals that may extend beyond standard working hours. Instead of striving for a perfect balance between work and personal life, work-life integration encourages people to discover harmony by combining professional and personal activities in a flexible and comprehensive way (Kossek et al., 2006; The HR, 2024).

Through the use of a time and activity management system, work-life integration enables workers to complete a range of duties at different times of the day and week. professional-life integration is combining professional and personal activities whenever it is most convenient, as opposed to setting aside specific periods when people work for hours and then go home to engage in personal activities or spend time with their families. In contrast to the conventional notion of work-life balance, which suggests a division between the two, work-life integration aims to create a smooth fusion of professional and personal life, according to The HR (2024). It acknowledges that workers have a range of responsibilities and interests outside of the workplace.

Integrating work and personal life encourages individuals to be flexible and recognizes that personal issues may arise during normal business hours. Work-life integration enables a business to ensure that its workers' requirements are satisfied not only at work but also in other areas of their lives, such as professional development. A broad perspective on life is required (Amakiri, 2023; Siwali et al., 2021). Work-life integration has a number of acknowledged dimensions. However, flexible work arrangement, wellness programs, and leave policies would be established to achieve the study's objectives.

Flexible Work Arrangement

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are policies and practices that provide employees more control over when, where, and how they complete their job tasks (Golden et al., 2008). As a component of work-life integration, FWAs help individuals balance their professional and

personal lives by giving alternatives that meet their different requirements and preferences. It includes a variety of tactics, such as telecommuting or remote work, flexible scheduling, part-time employment, job sharing, and flexible leave policies. These techniques enable employees to tailor their work schedules to better fit their personal obligations, such as caregiving responsibilities, educational pursuits, or other non-work interests. Flexible schedule arrangements may allow employees to change their work hours to fulfill personal responsibilities, such as childcare or volunteer work, while still satisfying workplace standards. These methods may include part-time arrangements, remote work scheduling, and job sharing.

Employees' Training and Development

Training and development as a dimension of work-life integration refers to the process by which organizations invest in enhancing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of their employees while also acknowledging and accommodating their personal, family and career pursuit. This approach recognizes that employees' career success and personal well-being are interconnected, and aims to support individuals in balancing their work and non-work commitments effectively (Allen et al., 2013). One aspect of training and development within the context of work-life integration is providing flexible learning opportunities that accommodate employees' schedules and preferences. This may include offering online courses, self-paced modules, or evening classes that allow individuals to pursue professional development while managing their personal responsibilities. By providing flexibility in training programs, organizations empower employees to advance their careers without sacrificing their personal lives.

In addition, training and development initiatives can be tailored to address specific work-life challenges that employees may face. For example, organizations may offer workshops or seminars on time management, stress management, resilience, interpersonal and communication skills and other relevant work-life balance strategies to help employees navigate the demands of their professional and personal lives more effectively. By equipping employees with practical skills and resources, organizations demonstrate a commitment to supporting their holistic well-being. Research has shown that investing in training and development can have positive effects on both employee performance and work-life balance. For instance, a study by Allen et al. (2013) found that employees who participated in training programs reported higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of work-family conflict. Similarly, a study by Colquitt et al. (2000) revealed that training and development interventions were associated with improvements in job performance and organizational commitment. In addition to enhancing individual skills and well-being, training and development initiatives can also contribute to organizational success. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth, organizations can attract and retain top talent, improve employee engagement and morale, and ultimately drive business performance (Bates, 2014).

Transparent/Open Communication

Open communication, as a facet of work-life integration, is creating an atmosphere in which workers feel comfortable communicating openly and transparently about their work-related demands, personal responsibilities, and general well-being. This approach acknowledges the value of excellent communication in fostering cooperation, mutual understanding, and support between employees and their businesses, ultimately improving work-life integration and overall employee happiness (De Dreu & West, 2001). One aspect of open communication in the context of work-life integration is encouraging employees to express their work-related challenges, personal responsibilities, and preferences regarding work arrangements. This may include providing channels for employees to voice their concerns, share feedback, and request accommodations to better balance their professional and personal commitments. By creating a culture of open communication, organizations demonstrate their commitment to supporting employees' holistic well-being and fostering a positive work environment.

Furthermore, open communication encompasses transparency in organizational policies, decision-making processes, and expectations. This involves providing clear and consistent information to employees regarding company policies, procedures, and performance expectations. Transparent communication helps build trust and confidence among employees, enabling them to make informed decisions about their work and personal lives. It also reduces ambiguity and misunderstandings, fostering a sense of clarity and predictability in the workplace. Research has shown that open communication is associated with various positive outcomes for both employees and organizations. For instance, a study by Morrison and Milliken (2000) found that organizations characterized by open communication climates experienced higher levels of employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Similarly, a meta-analysis by De Dreu and West (2001) revealed that open communication was positively related to team effectiveness and innovation.

Wellness Programmes

In the context of work-life integration, a wellness program denotes initiatives devised by organizations to foster and uphold the physical, mental, and emotional health of their workforce (Danna & Griffin, 1999). These endeavors aspire to cultivate a comprehensive approach to employee well-being by addressing diverse facets of health and providing resources and activities aimed at aiding individuals in attaining optimal wellness both within and beyond the confines of the workplace. Typically, such programs encompass an array of activities and services tailored to augment employees' health and enhance their overall quality of life. These may include initiatives such as physical fitness regimens, educational sessions on nutrition, workshops for stress management, provision of mental health counselling services, programs to aid smoking cessation, evaluations of ergonomic setups, and facilitation of access to preventive healthcare services like vaccinations and health screenings (Danna & Griffin, 1999).

The incorporation of wellness programs into the work environment contributes to the overarching goal of work-life integration by acknowledging the direct influence of employees' personal well-being and health on their job performance and overall contentment. Through the provision of resources and support for employee well-being, organizations recognize the interplay between work and personal life and endeavour to establish a nurturing atmosphere conducive to achieving equilibrium and satisfaction (The HR, 2024). By investing in employee wellness, organizations underscore their dedication to fostering the holistic well-being of their workforce and affirm the significance of cultivating a workplace ethos that esteems work-life balance and facilitates employees' pursuit of personal and professional aspirations.

Encouraging Time off/Leave Policy

Encouraging Time off/Leave policy, within the context of work-life integration, delineates the organizational guidelines and procedures governing employees' time away from work for diverse reasons, encompassing vacation, sick leave, parental leave, and other personal or family-related obligations (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). It encompasses the regulations, processes, and benefits pertaining to taking leave from work while ensuring employees can adeptly manage their professional and personal duties. Typically, the leave policy delineates the eligibility prerequisites for different types of leave, including the accrual rates for vacation and sick days, the duration of parental leave, and any stipulations or prerequisites for requesting leave (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Kossek et al., 2006). Additionally, it addresses aspects such as scheduling, advance notice mandates, documentation, and the procedure for obtaining leave approval. A robust leave policy is indispensable for fostering work-life balance and aiding employees in navigating their work and personal commitments (Golden et al., 2008; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

Leave policy can be advantageous to employees in facilitating work-life integration by establishing a framework that enables them to effectively manage the demands of both their professional and personal lives while safeguarding their overall well-being. Flexible leave policies afford employees the leverage to take time off for various personal reasons, including personal development, educational pursuits, family caregiving responsibilities, personal health, or volunteer endeavours. These policies may incorporate provisions for paid time off, unpaid leave, or opportunities to accumulate additional leave time.

Measuring Results, Not Hours

Measuring results, not hours, within the context of work-life integration, refers to a shift from the traditional approach of tracking hours worked to a more effective, efficient and contemporary approach of assessing work outcomes. Focusing on work outcomes or results rather than the traditional approach of focusing on the number of hours worked will empower employees to manage time effectively and efficiently and in a way that suits them or helps them navigate the demands of their professional and personal lives more effectively while still delivering high-quality work. This approach recognizes that employees' professional and

personal well-being are interconnected, and aims to support individuals in balancing their work and non-work commitments effectively.

Measuring results rather than hours is a fundamental aspect of work-life integration that prioritizes outcomes and achievements over mere presence or time spent in the workplace. This approach emphasizes assessing employees based on the quality and impact of their work, rather than the quantity of hours they put in. By focusing on results, organizations aim to foster greater flexibility, autonomy, and efficiency, allowing employees to balance their professional and personal responsibilities more effectively. This concept aligns with the broader shift towards result-based performance management, which emphasizes setting clear objectives, measuring progress towards goals, and evaluating performance based on the attainment of those objectives (Grote, 2012). Instead of traditional methods of evaluating employees solely based on time spent at work, measuring results acknowledges that productivity and effectiveness can vary greatly among individuals and may not necessarily correlate with the number of hours worked. Measuring results instead of hours represents a key dimension of work-life integration that emphasizes flexibility, productivity, and accountability. By shifting the focus from time to outcomes, organizations can create a more supportive and empowering work environment that enables employees to achieve work-life balance while driving performance and success.

CONCEPT OF CAREER SUCCESS

Field et al. (2007) proposed a conceptualization of career as a continuum of relationships between individuals and their workplace, occupational, or organizational context. Collin (2006) suggested that individuals progress through various career stages, accumulating work-related experiences that contribute to the construction of personal narratives and meaning. Additionally, career encompasses both subjective (intrinsic) and objective (extrinsic) dimensions (Arthur et al., 1989). Career success, as defined by Corinne (2012), signifies the constructive cumulative outcome or perceived achievement of an employee over their years of work experience. It is a multifaceted concept that can be understood and evaluated in diverse ways, depending on individual aspirations, organizational context, and societal norms.

One prevalent explanation of career success involves the attainment of career-related goals or objectives, such as promotions, salary increments, job satisfaction, or significant contributions to one's field. Arthur et al. (1989) delineated two primary dimensions of career success: objective and subjective. Objective career success pertains to tangible outcomes like salary increases, promotions, and hierarchical advancements within an organization. In contrast, subjective career success refers to individual perceptions of accomplishment, job satisfaction, and fulfillment in one's career. Judge et al. (1999) highlighted the influence of factors like job satisfaction, work-life balance, and alignment with organizational values on subjective career success, underscoring the significance of considering individual perspectives and experiences in assessing career success.

Another influential framework for comprehending career success is the concept of boundary-less careers proposed by Arthur and Rousseau (1996). They posited that traditional career trajectories marked by linear progression within a single organization are becoming less prevalent, with individuals increasingly pursuing non-linear, boundary-less careers that transcend organizational and geographical confines. In this context, career success may be defined by adaptability, learning agility, and the ability to navigate diverse work environments. Additionally, the protean career perspective introduced by Hall (1996) emphasizes self-directed career management and continuous learning as pivotal elements of career success. According to this viewpoint, individuals actively shape their career trajectories based on personal values, interests, and competencies, rather than adhering to external expectations or organizational conventions. Consequently, employees evaluate their career accomplishments based on self-defined criteria, rather than comparing themselves to others.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

This study is underpinned by Border Theory, developed by Clark (2000), which posits that individuals' roles are situated within distinct life domains delineated by borders, which may be physical, temporal, or psychological. These borders serve as demarcation lines between domains, delineating the onset or conclusion of domain-relevant behaviors. The theory particularly addresses the notion of "crossing borders" between life domains, particularly the realms of home and work. It contends that while the work and family systems may differ, they are interconnected, and individuals often strive to integrate them to some extent (Clark, 2000). Accordingly, the theory advocates for achieving a balanced equilibrium between work and non-work activities such as social life, family life, and health.

The flexibility and permeability of boundaries between work and family lives, as posited by the theory, influence the degree of integration, ease of transitions, and level of conflict between these domains. Flexible and permeable boundaries facilitate integration, albeit potentially leading to work-family conflict, whereas segmented boundaries make transitions more challenging but reduce the likelihood of such conflict (Bellavia&Frone, 2005).

This theory, utilized by Oditia (2023) and Clark (2000), elucidates how individuals navigate and establish boundaries between their work and family spheres to maintain a reasonable balance. It underscores that an individual's life comprises interconnected facets, and if one aspect suffers, it can affect others. Effective boundary management, particularly between work and personal life, is essential to prevent such negative influences. Thus, maintaining appropriate stability between work and family life connections is crucial. Drawing from this theory's philosophy, it is imperative for employees in the Nigerian banking sector to devise suitable strategies for ensuring work-life integration amidst their demanding job responsibilities.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Salolomo and Agbaeze (2022) conducted a study to investigate the influence of work-life balance on the performance of money deposit banks in the south-south region of Nigeria. The study surveyed 485 respondents selected from a population of 2562 staff members across deposit money banks in Nigeria. Data was collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Simple Linear Regression and Pearson product moment correlation. The results revealed a significant positive effect of work-life balance on the performance of money deposit banks, particularly in dimensions such as flexible work arrangements (e.g., compressed work weeks, telecommuting, flexi-time, job sharing) and managerial support, which predicted employee goal attainment. The study recommended that management should adopt and implement alternative work arrangements judiciously to create a family-friendly environment, attract qualified employees, and enhance productivity.

Darko-Asumadu et al. (2021) conducted a study to explore the influence of work-life balance on employees' commitment among bankers in Accra, Ghana. Utilizing a descriptive cross-sectional survey design, the study collected data from 115 employees through questionnaires and conducted interviews with seven employees. Multiple regression was employed for data analysis. The findings indicated a weak positive relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment, with dissatisfaction noted regarding paternity leave, study leave, and part-time work. The study concluded that work-life balance policies had limited influence on employee commitment and recommended that bankers should benefit from additional provisions such as paternity leave, study leave, and part-time work to enhance work-life balance.

Okeya et al. (2020) investigated the effects of work-life balance on the health and wellbeing of employees in the Nigerian banking industry. The study collected primary data through a well-structured questionnaire administered at the headquarters of banks in Lagos state, using random sampling to select banks and employees. Multiple regression analysis was employed for data analysis. The findings revealed a significant relationship between work-life balance and employee health and wellbeing, suggesting a need for improvements in working conditions and welfare packages for employees in the Nigerian banking sector.

Osibanjo et al. (2019) explored the effect of quality of work life on employee commitment across Nigerian tech start-ups. Conducting surveys among staff from 10 selected tech start-ups in Lagos, the study developed four hypotheses and utilized structural equation modeling, moderating the relationship with gender and marital status. The findings indicated a substantial influence of quality of work life on employee commitment.

Mmakwe and Ukoha (2018) investigated the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance in the banking sector in Port Harcourt, Rivers state. The study surveyed 769 employees from five commercial banks, with a sample size of 400 derived from the Taro Yamene formula. Using the Spearman rank order correlation coefficient for data analysis, the study revealed a strong correlation between measures of work-life balance and employee performance. Consequently, the study recommended that organizations in the

banking sector should promote policies and structures fostering a balance between personal commitments and organizational duties to enhance employee performance effectively.

Furthermore, research has shown that adopting a results-oriented approach to work-life integration can lead to numerous benefits for both employees and organizations. For example, a study by Bloom et al. (2014) found that organizations that focus on outcomes rather than hours tend to experience higher levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Wrike (2018) revealed that organizations that prioritize results-based performance management tend to achieve better financial performance and competitiveness.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was focused on the Nigerian banking industry; therefore the survey approach of quasi-experimental research design was adopted. The population of the study consist of banks in Nigeria. However, the accessible population was streamlined to include deposit money banks in Nigeria. However it is not practically feasible for researchers to reach all these banks which are spread across the study area within the scheduled time frame. Therefore using cluster and convenient sampling techniques the sampled banks shall comprise the ten biggest commercial banks in Nigeria by assets; which according to Business Day (2023) include Access Bank, Ecobank, Zenith Bank, United Bank for Africa(UBA), Guaranty Trust Holding Company(GTCO), Stanbic IBTC, First City Monument Bank (FCMB), Union Bank, Sterling Bank and Wema Bank. The selection of these banks was based on their extensive network and the accessibility of their branches at strategic locations, facilitating the researcher's access. Accordingly, 25 copies of the research instrument (a questionnaire designed in a 5-point Likert format) were distributed to each of the banks, resulting in a total sample size of 250 respondents. The researcher visited five branches of each sampled bank and administered five copies of the survey in each branch.

Career Satisfaction was measured by a four-item scale adapted from Greenhaus et al., (1990). Sample items are: "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career" and "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward achieving my overall career goals;" "I am given the opportunity to develop my skills and activities," and "my work utilises my skills and abilities." A 5-point Likert-type response format was provided with response options ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The internal consistency reliability coefficient for the scale was 0.831.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, copies were submitted to experts in the field for feedback on various aspects of validity. Their suggestions were carefully evaluated and incorporated into the final draft, enhancing the instrument's face and content validity. The Cronbach's alpha test of internal consistency was employed to ascertain the study's reliability. The results indicated a reliability score exceeding 0.75 for each construct, ensuring the instrument's reliability. Data gathered for the study was analysed using the Pearson Moment Correlation Technique, a parametric statistical method used to test hypotheses at a 95% confidence level, with a significance level of 0.05. This analysis was facilitated through the utilization of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

A total of two hundred and fifty (250) copies of the questionnaire were administered; out of which two hundred and thirty-two (232) was retrieved; his gave rise to 92.8% response rate. Out of this number, only one hundred and ninety-three (193) was completely filled and found to be valid for the analyses. This resulted to 77.2% valid response rate which was consequently used for analysis. The demographic details of the respondents are presented thus;

Demographics of respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	60	31
	Female	133	69
Age	25-30 years	81	42
	31-35 Years	56	29
	36-40 Years	33	17
	40 Years and above	23	12
Department	Operations	95	49
	Marketing	62	32
	Treasury/Finance	14	7
	Human Resource	11	6
	IT Supports	11	6
Years of Experience	1-5 Years	79	41
	6-10 Years	56	29
	11-15 Years	35	18
	15 years and Above	23	12

Table 1: Demographic attributes of respondents
Source: Survey Result Computations, 2024

Table 1 above shows the demographic details of the respondents. It revealed that majority of the respondents were females accounting for about 61% of the entire sample size. The result also revealed other notable demographics notable amongst which is the respondents' years of

experience which showed that majority of the employees are have reasonable years of experience. Furthermore, result further revealed that most of the employees work in the operations and marketing units. The result form the demographic details of the respondents clearly assured the researcher the confidence that respondents have requisite knowledge and experience of the theme of discussion and would provide objective response to the questionnaire items.

Statistical Testing of the Hypotheses

Correlations

		Flexible Work Arrangement	Career Success
Flexible Work Arrangement	Pearson Correlation	1	.781*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.781*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis one. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship between flexible work arrangement and career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry. The correlation showed a statistics (P=0.781, p<0.005) which indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r²) value of .60.9 indicates about 60.9% predictive capacity of flexible work arrangement on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry; thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

Correlations

		Transparent/Open Communication	Career Success
Transparent/Open Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.900*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.617*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis two. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship exists between transparent/open communication and career success in the Nigerian banking industry. The correlation showed a statistics (P=0.617,

$p < 0.005$) which indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r^2) value of .38 indicates about 38% predictive capacity of transparent/open communication on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry. Thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

Correlations

		Training and Development	Career Success
Training and Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.900*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.704*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis three. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship exists between training/development and career success in the Nigerian banking industry. The correlation showed a statistic ($P=0.704$, $p < 0.005$) which indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r^2) value of .496 indicates about 49.6% predictive capacity of wellness programme on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry; thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

Correlations

		Wellness Programme	Career Success
Wellness Programs	Pearson Correlation	1	.900*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.900*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis four. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship exists between wellness programme and career success in the Nigerian banking industry. The correlation showed a statistics ($P=0.900$, $p < 0.005$) which indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r^2) value of .81 indicates about 81% predictive capacity of wellness programme on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry; thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

Correlations

		Encouraging Time- off/Leave Policy	Career Success
Encouraging Time-off/ Leave Policy	Pearson Correlation	1	.814*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.814*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis five. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship between leave policy and career success. The correlation showed a statistics ($P=0.814$, $p<0.005$) which indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r^2) value of .663 indicates about 66.3% predictive capacity of encouraging time-off/leave policy on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry; thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

		Measuring Result not Hours	Career Success
Measuring Results not Hours	Pearson Correlation	1	.692*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Career Success	Pearson Correlation	.692*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result showed the correlation result for hypothesis six. The result revealed that a strong positive and significant relationship between measuring results, not hours and career success. The correlation showed a statistics ($P=0.692$, $p<0.005$) which indicate that there is a strong positive and relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the (r^2) value of .479 indicates about 47.9% predictive capacity of measuring results, not hours on career success of employees in the Nigerian banking industry; thus the null hypothesis is not supported.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined the influence of work-life integration strategies on career success in the Nigerian banking industry. Work-life integration was operationalized with flexible work arrangement, wellness programme, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours, resulting to the formulation of six research hypotheses which were subjected to statistical analysis. The results and findings are discussed hereunder.

The findings of this study illustrates a strong positive and significant relationships between all the dimensions of work-life integration adopted in this study (flexible work arrangement, transparent/open communication, employees' training and development, well programmes, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours, respectively) and career success in the Nigerian banking industry with beta (β) coefficients of 0.781,0.617,0.704,0.900,0.814, and 0.692 respectively. These results clearly illustrate that work-life integration strategies such as flexible work arrangement, transparent/open communication, employees' training and development, well programmes, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours, respectively are strong predictors of career success in the Nigerian banking industry.

These result showed that the employees of banks that practice work-life integration have the likelihood to attain higher level of career success without impeding their performance on the job. The result is in line with previous empirical investigations. For instance, Amakiri (2023) found that career success is largely be influenced by flexible-time arrangement and job sharing. Similarly, Salolomo andAgbaeze (2022) found that work-life balance demonstrated a great significant effect on employee performance of deposit money banks as the dimensions flexible work arrangement such as compress work weeks, telecommuting, flexi time, job sharing and managerial supports predict employee goal attainment. In line with this study, Okeya et al. (2020) found that there is a significant relationship between work-life balance and employee health and wellbeing in the Nigerian banking industry. This was supported by (Mmakwe, &Ukoha, 2018); while Osibanjo et al. (2019) also had similar finding in Nigerian tech start-up firms. The findings of the present study however, contradicts the earlier findings of Darko-Asumadu et al. (2021) were a weak positive relationship was revealed between work-life balance and commitment among employees because they were not satisfied with paternity leave, study leave, and part-time work. Based on their findings, the researchers concluded that work-life balance policies did not influence employee commitment that much.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that work-life integration strategies such as flexible work arrangement, transparent/open communication, employees' training and development, well programmes, encouraging time-off/leave policy, and measuring work results, not hours, respectively play significant roles in enhancing employees' career success in the Nigerian banking industry. The findings of this study reveals that work-life integration strategies are sustainable practices that can engender career success in the Nigerian banking industry. This is imperative to management and policy makers in the banking industry because when employees have a sense of fulfilment and success in their career, they would certainly invest more efforts on their job performance. This study therefore is a strategic imperative for top management and other decision makers in the Nigerian banking industry seeking to encourage career success of their employees andto foster a thriving and sustainable workplaceby formulating suitable policies and guidelines to ensure the implementation of favourable work-life integration strategies. This underscores the necessity for implementing rigorous policies and create favourable organisational climate that would effectively guarantee work-life integration practices such as flexible work arrangement, wellness programmes and suitable leave policies. To this end, the following specific recommendations are suggested;

1. Wellness programmes such as physical fitness, nutritional orientation, stress management strategies, preventive healthcare facilities etc. should be embrace in

the Nigerian banking industry since this proved to have a positive influence on employees' career success. To achieve this management could include these arrangements in their health insurance package (HMO).

2. It is also essential for banking establishment to routinely plan and execute training and development programmes to sharpen the competences and skills of their employees. This would not only guarantee their career success but would as well contribute to their performance on the job.
3. In terms of flexibility in work arrangement, management of Nigerian banking institutions are urged to implement policies that would favour or encourage flexible work environments and schedules such as remote and hybrid job arrangement for their employees. They should adopt necessary modern tools and technology that would aid and encourage self-banking services and electronic channels.
4. The management of Nigerian banking institutions are urged to offer their employees customizable employee perks.
5. Management of banking establishment are also urged to develop a culture of open communication within their organisations to enable employees constructively share opinions and feedback.
6. Managers of banking institutions are encouraged to emphasise the measurement of work outcomes or results, not number of hours worked. A shift from the traditional approach of tracking hours worked to a more effective, efficient and contemporary approach of assessing work outcomes or results will empower employees to manage time effectively and efficiently and in a way that suits them or helps them navigate the demands of their professional and personal lives more effectively while still delivering high-quality work. This approach recognizes that employees' professional and personal well-being are interconnected, and aims to support employees in balancing their work and non-work commitments effectively.
7. Lastly, this study recommends that leave policies should give room for the diverse needs of employees in the banking industry. Top management should consider leave policies that would make time for employees to engage in personal and professional development programmes.

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