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## Relationship between Work Flexibility, Work-from-Home Practices, and Job Satisfaction among Freelancers in Lagos State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study explores the relationship between work flexibility, work-from-home practices, and job satisfaction among freelancers in Lagos State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 293 freelancers across various sectors, including graphic design, writing, programming, and consulting. A purposive sampling technique ensured the selection of participants with relevant experiences in flexible work arrangements. Three validated instruments were employed: the Flexible Work Options Questionnaire (FWOQ), the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS), and the Work from Home Scale, which assessed attitudes toward flexible work practices, job satisfaction levels, and competencies in managing remote work. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients, were conducted using SPSS. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between work flexibility and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.789$ ), as well as between work-from-home practices and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.831$ ). These results emphasize the vital role of flexible work arrangements in enhancing job satisfaction among freelancers. The study offers original insights into the often-overlooked freelance workforce, indicating that increased flexibility and effective work from home practices can lead to higher job satisfaction and engagement.

**Keywords:** Work Flexibility, Work-from-Home Practices, Job Satisfaction, Freelancers, Lagos State.

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## Introduction

Globally, employers recognise that employment is a key means of addressing their employees' fundamental needs (Mungania, Waiganjo, & Kihoro, 2020). In major economies such as the United States and Germany, employers increasingly view job satisfaction as essential to meeting emotional needs like love, respect, and self-validation, extending beyond mere monetary compensation (Pogan, 2019). Employees actively seek attributes in their jobs that enhance their social status, recognition, and the optimisation of their skills (Pogan, 2019). In Africa, job satisfaction is shaped by various factors, including job security, stability, positive relationships with colleagues, acknowledgement, motivation, and involvement in decision-making (Zeffane & Melhem, 2017; Agba et al. 2024).

The COVID-19 pandemic has propelled workforce flexibility to the forefront of employment practices globally. Advances in technology and a heightened focus on work-life balance have led to widespread adoption of flexible work arrangements (Agbanu, Tsetim, & Suleman, 2020). Research indicates that employees experience higher job satisfaction levels when their work arrangements are flexible (Shu, Chiang, & Lu, 2020). The contemporary work environment demands adaptability and continuous professional development in response to rapid technological advancements and global integration (Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2020).

The implementation of work-from-home (WFH) policies is a significant expression of work flexibility, largely driven by advancements in information and communication technology (Smite et al., 2023). This system enables employees to perform their tasks remotely without being physically present in the office (Kaiser et al., 2022). Widely adopted during the pandemic, the WFH model provides secure and adaptable work environments through digital platforms, reducing commuting needs and offering increased independence (Susilo, 2020). Although a relatively new concept, Mukherjee and Narang (2023) demonstrate that WFH benefits both corporate and public sectors, including IT, telecommunications, and education, ensuring continuity during pandemic restrictions.

Contemporary literature increasingly identifies work flexibility as a critical factor influencing job satisfaction. Flexible arrangements, including telecommuting and adjustable schedules, significantly enhance employee well-being and job satisfaction. Studies in the UAE highlight that flexibility allows employees to balance work and personal life, reduce stress, and improve job satisfaction by addressing their specific needs (Saxena, 2018; Gudep, 2019). Additionally, the 2015 Working Time Survey in Germany found that remote work can decrease commuting time and costs while enhancing employee autonomy and job satisfaction (Wohrmann, Dilchert, & Michel,

2020). Furthermore, flexible work practices have been shown to attract and retain skilled individuals by creating a supportive and adaptable work environment (Davidescu et al., 2020).

While numerous studies have explored the relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction, there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific effects of work-from-home arrangements (Agbanu et al. 2021; Seeber & Erhardt, 2023; Jaafar & Rahim, 2024; Sundermeyer, 2025). Much of the existing research focuses on organisational settings (Davidescu et al., 2020; Wöhrmann et al., 2020; Al-Swidi et al., 2021; Guo et al., 2025), resulting in a lack of evidence regarding freelance workers who face unique challenges and benefits. This research gap is particularly significant given the rise of freelancing, highlighting the need to investigate how work-from-home practices impact job satisfaction in this context.

To address this gap, Ray and Pana-Cryan (2021) highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of workplace flexibility across various employment contexts. This study aims to explore the relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction, with a particular focus on work-from-home practices among freelance workers in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, it examines the relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction, as well as the impact of work-from-home arrangements on job satisfaction. The research contributes to the field in three key ways: first, by analysing the link between work flexibility and job satisfaction; second, by assessing how work-from-home practices influence job satisfaction; and finally, by applying the Flexible Firm Theory to provide a theoretical perspective on the implications of work flexibility and work-from-home job satisfaction.

## **Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

### ***Work Flexibility***

Work flexibility is generally defined as an arrangement that allows employees to choose when and where they complete their tasks, facilitating a balance between work and family responsibilities (Baeza, Gonzalez, & Wang, 2018). Hashim et al. (2017) highlight that this flexibility grants employees greater autonomy in managing their schedules, which can boost morale, reduce work-related stress, and enhance engagement. This autonomy also enables employees to adapt to changing organisational needs, underscoring its importance for enhancing human resource quality (Kabalina et al., 2019).

Cañibano (2019) argues that job flexibility extends beyond traditional definitions, encompassing a broader spectrum of interpretations and applications. It involves not only individuals and organisations but also job attributes, such as flexible

employment and career paths (Tomlinson et al., 2018). Raya and Pana-Cryan (2021) examined job flexibility from two perspectives: employee flexibility and flexibility for the employee. Employee flexibility refers to an individual's adaptability and versatility, which can be a competitive advantage for organisations. In contrast, flexibility for the employee relates to flexible work arrangements that offer workers increased autonomy and support a balance between their professional and personal lives (Raya & Pana-Cryan, 2021). This dual nature creates some ambiguity, as job flexibility can simultaneously address organisational and employee interests, serving as a strategic necessity for organisations and also providing advantages that align with their goals.

### ***Job Satisfaction***

Job satisfaction, as defined by Dziuba et al. (2020), refers to the level of contentment employees feel regarding their work duties, environment, and overall employment conditions. This concept encompasses several factors, including the nature of the work, compensation, working conditions, opportunities for advancement, recognition, and relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Inayat and Jahanzeb-Khan (2021) emphasise that higher job satisfaction is linked to increased motivation, productivity, and organisational commitment. Conversely, a decline in job satisfaction can result in lower performance, higher turnover rates, and increased absenteeism (Werang et al. 2024).

Idris et al. (2020) argue that job satisfaction helps employees meet their personal needs and aspirations. Sembiring et al. (2022) outline job satisfaction as incorporating emotional, situational, and cognitive dimensions, reflecting how employees perceive their work environment and respond emotionally to it (Adamopoulos, 2022). Employees characterised by job satisfaction often take pride in their achievements and feel positive emotions about their job attributes, which can lead to increased motivation, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced productivity.

### ***Work-from-Home***

Danilova et al. (2023) define work-from-home (WFH) as a flexible employment model where employees perform their tasks from home or other remote locations instead of a centralized workplace. According to Aksoy et al. (2022), this setup leverages digital technologies like video conferencing, cloud computing, and communication platforms to maintain connectivity and productivity outside the traditional office environment. WFH gained significant traction during the COVID-19 pandemic as companies adapted to social distancing measures, highlighting its potential to enhance work-life balance, reduce commuting stress, and give employees more control over their schedules (Fahrani, 2022).

Heidt et al. (2023) emphasise that WFH allows employees to manage both professional and personal responsibilities with greater flexibility. Dicu et al. (2023) note that this arrangement is not limited to specific industries, making it applicable across various sectors such as IT, education, and professional services. Furthermore, remote work enables organisations to tap into a broader talent pool, reduce overhead costs associated with office space, and create a more sustainable work environment by lessening daily commuting needs (Zito et al., 2021).

### ***Relationship Between Work Flexibility and Job Satisfaction***

Work flexibility allows employees to better manage their professional and personal responsibilities, leading to increased job satisfaction (Davidescu et al., 2020). This flexibility helps reduce stress and improve work-life balance by granting individuals more control over their schedules and work environments (Yaghi, 2021). As a result, employees often demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction and commitment to their organisations. Additionally, flexibility can boost productivity and lower absenteeism, as employees are more capable of balancing their obligations (Susanto et al., 2022).

Empirical evidence shows a strong link between work flexibility and work-family dynamics, indicating that flexible arrangements effectively decrease work-family conflict while enhancing work-family enrichment (Baeza et al., 2018; Tomlinson et al., 2018; Hsu et al. 2024). Moreover, research that examines the relationship between work flexibility and various work-related factors reveals significant correlations with job satisfaction (Hui et al., 2021), work stress (Fanda & Slamet, 2019; Agha et al. 2024), and employee turnover rates (Findriyani & Parmin, 2021). Therefore, flexible work arrangements are essential for cultivating a more adaptive, satisfied, and high-performing workforce. This leads to the formulation of the research hypothesis:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction

### ***Work-from-Home and its Impact on Job Satisfaction***

Neidlinger et al. (2022) highlight that remote work increases autonomy, reduces commuting stress, and helps employees achieve a better balance between their professional and personal lives, often leading to improved job satisfaction. A tailored and flexible work environment can enhance both well-being and productivity (Limanta et al., 2023). However, the impact of remote work on job satisfaction is not uniform; it can also present challenges such as feelings of isolation, difficulties in separating work from home life, and communication issues (Kim et al., 2019).

While research suggests that remote work can enhance job satisfaction (Contreras et al., 2020; Buonomo et al. 2024) and support work-life balance

(Fedakova & Istonova, 2017), it may also have adverse effects (Wessels et al., 2019; Novianti & Roz, 2020). Additionally, remote work has been linked to increased stress levels (Gálvez et al., 2020), although flexible schedules can help alleviate this stress (Kim et al., 2019; Alam & Dewi, 2024). When managed effectively, remote work can significantly boost employee satisfaction by providing the flexibility needed for a better work-life balance. The hypothesis for the study is as follows:

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between work-from-home and job satisfaction

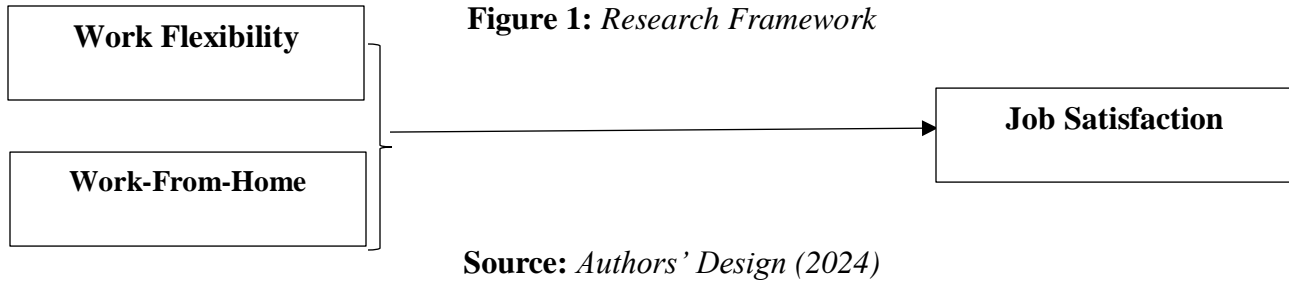
### **Role of Flexible Firm Theory and its Implications for Job Satisfaction**

Atkinson's (1984) Flexible Firm Theory offers valuable insights into the relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction. According to Ibironke (2021), the theory posits that organisations can boost productivity and adaptability by maintaining a dual structure comprising core and peripheral workforces. The core workforce consists of highly skilled employees, such as managers and technical experts, who are crucial to the organisation's success. These individuals typically receive competitive compensation, participate in decision-making, and have access to career development opportunities, which contributes to their job satisfaction through a sense of value and prospects for advancement (Ghimire et al., 2023).

In contrast, the peripheral workforce is characterized by lower pay and job security, often working under temporary or casual contracts. Zhao (2020) notes that these employees experience reduced autonomy and are often viewed as interchangeable. While the peripheral labor force provides organisational flexibility and cost savings, their job satisfaction tends to suffer due to limited security, benefits, and career growth opportunities (Atkinson, 2020; Wu & Huang, 2024). This division creates a complex dynamic, where the core workforce enjoys higher job satisfaction and engagement, while the peripheral workforce may grapple with discontent and instability (McGrath-Champ et al., 2023).

Kotey and Koomson (2021) emphasise that while flexibility can enhance organisational efficiency, it may also result in disparities in job satisfaction between core and peripheral staff. Therefore, effective management strategies are essential to address these differences, aiming to improve overall employee satisfaction and maintain a balanced, productive workforce.





## Research Methodology

### *Research Design*

In this study, the research design employed was a descriptive survey. The choice of a descriptive survey research design in this study is justified by its effectiveness in capturing and describing the characteristics, behaviours, and perceptions of the study population (Sovacool, Aksen, & Sorrell et. al. 2018). This design is particularly effective for collecting quantifiable data from large samples, allowing findings to be generalized facilitating a deep understanding of respondents' views (Doyle et. al. 2020; Siedlecki, 2020), making it suitable for examining job satisfaction and work flexibility, thus supporting evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

### *Participants*

The study focused on freelancers in Lagos State, Nigeria, particularly those engaged in diverse freelance roles, such as graphic design, writing, programming, and consulting. A purposive sampling technique was employed, selecting participants based on specific criteria, such as their involvement in freelance work-from-home practices. This approach ensured that the sample was relevant to the study's objectives, capturing the unique experiences of freelancers who navigate flexible work arrangements.

Out of 369 freelancers approached, 293 responded, resulting in a response rate of approximately 79%. The difference in participation numbers is attributed to reasons like time constraints, disinterest, or technical difficulties. Nevertheless, the sample size was sufficient to provide meaningful insights into the freelancers' work experiences. The study adhered to strict ethical standards. Participants were informed about the research purpose, assured of confidentiality, and provided informed consent. They were guaranteed anonymity to protect their privacy, and their participation was voluntary, with the freedom to withdraw at any time without any consequences, ensuring their comfort and autonomy throughout the research process.

## *Instruments*

The study employed a questionnaire with three sections focusing on work flexibility, job satisfaction, and work-from-home practices. The Flexible Work Options Questionnaire (FWOQ), developed by Majella J. Albion, assessed attitudes toward flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flexible hours. This 20-item scale, rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), effectively captured freelancers' perceptions of non-traditional work setups. The FWOQ demonstrated reliable measurement, with a Cronbach's alpha above 0.70, confirming its consistency.

The Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS), developed by Çalışkan and Koroğlu (2023), measured job satisfaction among participants. This 13-item scale, divided into Internal Satisfaction (intrinsic factors) and External Satisfaction (extrinsic factors), used a 5-point Likert scale to assess various aspects of job satisfaction. The scale was validated through reliability analyses and achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, indicating it reliably measures job satisfaction.

The Work from Home Scale, developed by Miranda et al. (2024), evaluated competencies related to work-from-home. With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91, the scale showed excellent reliability and was validated through CFA. This scale was particularly relevant for understanding the skills needed to manage remote work effectively (Shanock et al. 2019), enhancing the study's exploration of flexible work dynamics among freelancers.

## *Procedure*

In this study, descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis are employed to investigate the relationships among work flexibility, job satisfaction, and work-from-home practices among freelancers, utilising SPSS for our data analysis.

The first phase involved descriptive statistics, which offered a clear overview of the sample demographics and key variables. After administering the questionnaires, the study organized the responses in SPSS, conducting a rigorous data cleaning process to identify and address any missing values or outliers, thereby ensuring the integrity of the dataset. The descriptive statistics was calculated focusing on socio-demographic data of respondents.

Subsequently, the performed correlation analysis aimed to evaluate the relationships between job satisfaction (the dependent variable) and the independent variables, specifically work flexibility and work-from-home practices. The analysis was conducted using SPSS, focusing on determining the strength and direction of the



associations between these variables. The correlation coefficients obtained provided insights into the degree to which work flexibility and work-from-home are related to job satisfaction. Additionally, the significance levels indicated whether the observed correlations were statistically meaningful.

## Research Results

This section focuses on the research results and discussions regarding the relationships among work flexibility, work-from-home practices, and job satisfaction among freelancers. It interprets findings and their implications while connecting them to existing literature in the field.

**Table 1:** *Respondents Socio-Demographics Data*

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age Distribution	18 to 24 years	41	14.0%
	25 to 34 years	119	40.6%
	35 to 44 years	87	29.7%
	45 years and above	46	15.7%
Gender	Female	151	51.5%
	Male	142	48.5%
Educational Qualifications	Bachelor's Degree	111	37.9%
	Master's Degree	84	28.7%
	Diploma	48	16.4%
	Other Qualifications	50	17.1%
Employment Sectors	Creative Industry	116	39.6%
	Consulting	88	30.1%
	Marketing	61	20.8%
	Information	28	9.6%
	Technology		
Total		293	100

**Source:** *Authors' Fieldwork (2024)*

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic analysis of the 293 respondents, showing a diverse age distribution, with the largest group being aged 25 to 34 years (119 respondents, 40.6%). Respondents aged 35 to 44 comprised 87 respondents (29.7%), followed by those aged 18 to 24 (41 respondents, 14.0%), and 45 and above (46 respondents, 15.7%). Gender representation was fairly balanced, with 151 females (51.5%) and 142 males (48.5%). In terms of education, 111 respondents (37.9%) held a bachelor's degree, while 84 (28.7%) had a master's degree. Additionally, 48 respondents (16.4%) reported a diploma, and 50 participants (17.1%) possessed other qualifications. Regarding employment sectors, the creative industry was the most represented, with 116 respondents (39.6%), followed by consulting (88 respondents,

30.1%), marketing (61 respondents, 20.8%), and information technology (28 respondents, 9.6%), reflecting a well-rounded freelance workforce.

**Table 2:** A Pearson *r* Correlation Showing the Relationship between Work Flexibility, Work-from-Home Practice and Job Satisfaction

		Work Flexibility	Work-from-Home	Job Satisfaction
Work Flexibility	Pearson Correlation	1	.465**	.789**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	293	293	293
Work-from-Home	Pearson Correlation	.465**	1	.831**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	293	293	293
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.789**	.831**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	293	293	293

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source:** Authors' Fieldwork (2024)

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients that assess the relationships among work flexibility, work-from-home practices, and job satisfaction. The values in the table indicate strong positive correlations between each pair of variables.

Firstly, the correlation between work flexibility and work-from-home practices is significant, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.465. This indicates a moderate positive relationship, suggesting that as employees perceive greater flexibility in their work arrangements, their ability to work from home effectively also increases. The significance level ( $p < 0.01$ ) further affirms that this relationship is statistically significant.

Secondly, the relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction is particularly strong, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.789. This value suggests a high positive correlation, meaning that individuals who enjoy more flexible work arrangements tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction. The significance level ( $p < 0.01$ ) confirms that this finding is robust and not due to chance.

Lastly, the correlation between work-from-home practices and job satisfaction is also strong, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.831. This indicates that better work-from-home practices are closely associated with increased job satisfaction among

freelancers. The significance level ( $p < 0.01$ ) reinforces the reliability of this correlation.

These results suggest that both work flexibility and effective work-from-home practice are closely linked to higher job satisfaction. The strong correlations highlight the importance of these factors in enhancing the overall work experience for freelancers, indicating that organisations should prioritise flexible working arrangements and support for remote work to boost employee satisfaction.

## Discussion of Findings

This result corresponds with previous research which demonstrates how flexible work schedules and work-from-home policies improve workers satisfaction (Yu & Wu, 2021; Corral, 2024). Mandal et al. (2023), for instance, demonstrated that work flexibility dramatically raises job satisfaction and lowers working stress. Additionally, Marasigan (2020) noted that working from home enables workers to more skilfully manage their personal and professional obligations. Furthermore, Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) found a connection between higher employee engagement and perceived productivity with the option to work from home, particularly when workers feel trusted to manage their time on their own (Pass & Ridgway, 2022; Wu & Huang, 2024). This positive association also reflects the increasing importance of workplace autonomy.

Flexible work arrangements are associated with increased psychological well-being and higher job satisfaction among employees (Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021; Grund & Tilkes, 2023). Research by Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) and Baeza et al. (2018) supports this finding, indicating that flexibility helps workers better balance work and personal obligations. Moreover, Dima et al. (2020) observed a positive correlation between increased employee morale and retention levels and flexibility in schedules and settings. This adaptation fosters a sense of autonomy and control, essential elements of job satisfaction (Atkinson, 2020; Agbanu et al., 2023).

Despite the correlation pointing to a positive association, it is important to take into account any confounding variables that can affect these results. According to Davidescu et al. (2020), individual variations, such as personality traits and outside life situations, may have an impact on perceived flexibility and job satisfaction. Furthermore, management practices and workplace culture significantly shape these interactions (Li et al., 2018; Al-Swidi et al., 2021).

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored the relationship between work flexibility, work-from-home practices, and job satisfaction among freelance workers in Lagos State, Nigeria. The motivation for this research stemmed from the increasing prevalence of freelance work and the need to understand how flexible working arrangements impact job satisfaction, particularly in the absence of traditional organisational structures. While previous studies have examined work flexibility and job satisfaction in formal employment settings, limited attention has been given to freelancers, who face unique challenges and benefits in remote work environments.

The study's findings reveal a strong positive relationship between work flexibility and job satisfaction, demonstrating that freelancers who can control their schedules and work environments report higher levels of job satisfaction. Additionally, the ability to effectively manage tasks while working from home is a significant determinant of job satisfaction, reinforcing the importance of equipping freelancers with the necessary skills and resources to navigate remote work successfully. These results align with Flexible Firm Theory, which emphasises the role of work arrangements in shaping employee experiences.

From a practical standpoint, the findings have several implications for freelancers, organisations, and policymakers. Freelancers should invest in time management and productivity tools to maximise the benefits of flexible work arrangements. Organisations and digital platforms that engage freelancers can enhance job satisfaction by providing training, access to co-working spaces, and networking opportunities to mitigate the isolation that often comes with remote work. Policymakers should also consider implementing initiatives that support freelancers, such as policies that ensure fair pay, access to health benefits, and legal protections similar to those available to traditional employees.

Despite these contributions, the study has some limitations. The research was focused exclusively on freelancers in Lagos State, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other regions or industries. Additionally, while the study employed a quantitative approach, future research could benefit from qualitative methods to gain more profound insights into freelancers' experiences. Future studies should also explore the long-term effects of work flexibility on career growth and financial stability among freelancers, considering the evolving nature of the gig economy.

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