

Original Research Article

Work Balance in the Phase of a Depressed Economy and Employees Job Satisfaction in Selected Organizations in Rivers State

Lawretta Adaobi Onyekwere^{1*} 

¹Department of Sociology, Rivers State University, Nigeria

***Corresponding Author:** Lawretta Adaobi Onyekwere
Department of Sociology, Rivers State University, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employee's job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state, Nigeria. The research aim to determine the extent to which strategies to maintain work balance impact job satisfaction in the face of economic challenges. The study employed a correlational research design to explore this relationship, focusing on organizations in Rivers State. The population of the study consists of employees in selected organizations, with a sample size of 76 employees determined through a stratified random sampling technique. Data is collected using a self-structured questionnaire titled: Work Balance in a Depressed Economy Questionnaire (WBDEQ) and Employees' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (EJSQ). The questionnaire distribution and collection to selected employees took place over a period of four months ranging from October 2023 to February 2024. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. During this period, the 76 copies of the instrument were distributed, only 69 were returned. Of these, 4 were not correctly filled out, leaving the researcher with only 65 valid copies that were used for data analysis. To ensure content validity, a pilot study was conducted with a subset of participants to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire to make necessary adjustments. Thereafter, a reliability index of .87 was calculated using Cronbach Alpha method based on the outcomes of this analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, was used to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics, such as Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC), was utilized to test hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23.0 software. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction. This suggested that organizations implementing effective strategies to address work balance in challenging economic times are likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction among their employees. The study concluded that by addressing work balance issues, organizations can improve employee job satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and a more positive organizational culture. Recommendations are made for organizations in Rivers State to focus on developing and implementing strategies that support work balance to improve overall employee job satisfaction.

Keywords: Work Balance, Depressed Economy, Job Satisfaction, Strategies, Organizational Management, Rivers State, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

In a depressed economy, organizations in Rivers State face challenges related to work balance and employees' job satisfaction. Job security, income levels, and career advancement opportunities can be significantly affected, leading to increased stress and pressure on employees. For example, employees may face the risk of job losses due to budget cuts or downsizing, which can create uncertainty and insecurity. In such economic conditions, employees may feel compelled to work longer hours or take on additional responsibilities to secure their positions or make ends meet, leading to increased stress and reduced work-life balance (Amadi, 2023). The implications of a depressed economy on work-life balance are significant for employees' well-being and job satisfaction.

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Employees who are unable to maintain a balance between their work and personal lives may experience burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased productivity (Jones & Brown, 2018). This can have a negative impact on their mental and physical health, as well as their relationships with colleagues and families. Therefore, addressing the challenges of work-life balance in a depressed economy is crucial for ensuring the overall well-being and job satisfaction of employees. For instance, a study conducted by the Rivers State Ministry of Commerce (2022) found that employees in economically depressed areas reported higher levels of stress and burnout, which affected their ability to maintain work-life balance. Similarly, a survey of employees in similar contexts found that economic challenges, such as low salaries and limited job security, contributed to increased work hours and decreased job satisfaction (Okafor, 2017).

Government policies and organizational management can play a crucial role in mitigating the impact of economic challenges on work balance for employees. Government policies that provide financial support to organizations and employees, such as salary subsidies or housing allowances, can help alleviate some of the financial pressures that contribute to work-life imbalance (Adeleke, 2020). Similarly, organizational management can implement policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements or wellness programs, to support employees in managing their workload and personal responsibilities (Chukwuemeka, 2020). These factors can contribute to decreased job satisfaction and increased turnover rates among employees. In addition to salary, job security, and career development opportunities, job enrichment can also play a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction for employees facing economic challenges. Job enrichment involves enhancing job content and responsibilities to make them more challenging and rewarding. Amadi (2023) found that employees who were given more autonomy in the workplace and opportunities to participate in decision-making processes reported higher levels of job satisfaction.

Brigue (2021) noted that employees who are able to achieve a balance between their professional responsibilities and personal lives are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction and overall well-being. In a depressed economy, where employees may face increased stress and pressure due to economic challenges, maintaining work-life balance becomes even more critical. Organizations can implement various strategies to support employees in maintaining work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements, such as flexible hours or telecommuting, can allow employees to better manage their work schedules and personal responsibilities (Onwuka, 2021). Wellness programs that promote physical and mental health can also be beneficial, as they can help employees reduce stress and improve their overall well-being.

To boost staff job satisfaction in a depressed economy, organizations need to focus on recognizing and rewarding employee efforts, providing opportunities for skill development and career advancement, fostering a positive workplace culture, and offering competitive compensation packages. Flexible work arrangements are one effective strategy that organizations can use to help employees manage their work schedules and personal responsibilities (Okafor, 2018). By allowing employees to have flexibility in their working hours or the option to telecommute, organizations can help reduce stress and improve work-life balance. Wellness programs are another valuable strategy for supporting employees' well-being in a depressed economy. These programs can promote physical and mental health, helping employees cope with the challenges of a depressed economy and maintain a better work-life balance (Okonkwo & Eze, 2018).

Maintaining work balance and enhancing staff job satisfaction are critical aspects for organizations operating in a depressed economy. By prioritizing employee well-being, fostering a supportive work environment, and implementing strategies to boost job satisfaction, businesses can navigate through challenging economic times while ensuring the engagement and retention of their valuable workforce. This initiative resulted in increased job satisfaction and retention rates among employees. Leadership also plays a crucial role in promoting work-life balance and supporting employees in managing their workload. Leaders can lead by example and prioritize work-life balance in their own lives, setting a positive example for their teams (Ololube, 2018). Additionally, leaders can provide resources and support to help employees manage their workload effectively, such as providing adequate staffing levels and professional development opportunities.

Organizations face challenges related to maintaining work-life balance and enhancing employees' job satisfaction. One effective strategy is to provide opportunities for career advancement and professional development. By offering training programs or workshops, organizations can help employees develop new skills and advance their careers, which can lead to increased job satisfaction (Okonkwo & Eze, 2018). Another strategy is to provide recognition and rewards for employees' contributions. Additionally, organizations can provide opportunities for employees to participate in decision-making processes. Giving employees a voice in organizational decisions can help increase their sense of ownership and job satisfaction (Adeleke, 2020). Furthermore, organizations can implement policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements or wellness programs. These programs can help employees manage their workload and personal responsibilities, leading to improved job satisfaction (Emenike, 2020).

These program helped improve job satisfaction and retention rates among employees. By providing opportunities for career advancement, recognition, and work-life balance, organizations can create a more positive work environment that supports employees' well-being and productivity. This study, the seeks to unravel the impact of a depressed economy

on work-life balance and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. The researcher intends to provide valuable insights for organizations in Rivers State to support their employees in navigating through challenging economic times and ultimately improve their well-being and productivity.

Statement of the Problem

The study "Work Balance in a Depressed Economy and Employee's Job Satisfaction in Selected Organizations in Rivers State" aims to investigate the impact of a depressed economy on work balance and job satisfaction among employees in selected organizations in Rivers State, Nigeria. The problem statement focuses on understanding how economic challenges, such as budget cuts, downsizing, and limited resources, affect employees' ability to balance their work responsibilities with their personal lives. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the level of job satisfaction among employees during a depressed economy, considering factors such as salary, job security, career development opportunities, and the perceived fairness of reward systems. It also aims to identify and analyze the strategies used by organizations in Rivers State to maintain work balance and enhance job satisfaction among employees amid economic challenges. By addressing these issues, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how organizations can support their employees and improve work balance and job satisfaction in a depressed economy.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study is aimed at examining work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Specifically study's main objectives are:

- To examine the impact of work balance in a depressed economy on employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.
- To examine staff work balance in a depressed economy employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.
- To ascertain the strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy in selected organizations in Rivers State.
- To assess the strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction amid economic challenges in selected organizations in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to guide this study:

- How does the impact of work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?
- How does staff work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?
- How do the strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?
- How do the strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy affect their job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

To further guide this study, the following hypotheses were raised:

- The impact of work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State
- The work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State
- The strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State
- The strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy do not significantly affect their job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State

Theoretical Framework

Equity Theory, as conceptualized by Adams in 1965 as cited in Kpee (2019), offers a profound understanding of how individuals perceive fairness within organizational contexts. This theory posits that individuals constantly strive to maintain a perceived balance between the inputs they contribute to their work (such as effort, time, and skills) and the outcomes they receive (such as rewards and recognition), relative to the inputs and outcomes of their peers. It suggests that employees engage in a comparative process, assessing their own input-outcome ratio against that of their colleagues to determine fairness. In cases where employees perceive an imbalance, either in their favor (overpayment inequity) or in favor of their colleagues (underpayment inequity), they are likely to experience feelings of distress or unfairness.

In a recent investigation by Adegoke (2016), equity theory was employed to explore employees' perceptions of fairness regarding the distribution of resources and rewards within organizational settings. The study revealed that employees often evaluate their workload, salary, and benefits in comparison to those of their colleagues, with the aim of maintaining a sense of equity. When employees perceive that they are exerting more effort than their colleagues but receiving fewer rewards, they tend to experience diminished job satisfaction and motivation. Conversely, if employees believe they are receiving more rewards than their colleagues for the same level of effort, they may feel guilty or uncomfortable, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction (Kpee, 2019). The application of equity theory in organizational settings has significant implications for management practices. Firstly, it gives emphasis to the critical importance of establishing fair and transparent reward systems.

Organizations must ensure that their reward structures are perceived as fair by employees to uphold high levels of motivation and job satisfaction. This necessitates the periodic review and adjustment of salary scales, benefits packages, and promotion criteria to align with employees' perceptions of equity. Secondly, equity theory emphasizes the pivotal role of open communication and feedback mechanisms within organizations. Managers are encouraged to provide regular and constructive feedback to employees regarding their performance and reward decisions. This approach helps employees comprehend the rationale behind these decisions, thereby reducing feelings of inequity and fostering a sense of fairness in the workplace. Moreover, equity theory suggests that employees' perceptions of fairness are not solely influenced by their own outcomes but also by the outcomes of others.

This implies that organizations need to consider the broader organizational context and the impact of their policies on employees' perceptions of equity. For instance, policies that promote diversity and inclusion can help mitigate perceptions of inequity among employees from different backgrounds. Additionally, equity theory underscores the significance of involving employees in decision-making processes that affect them. When employees are given a voice in decisions related to work allocation or performance evaluations, they are more likely to perceive these decisions as fair (Adegoke, 2016). This can lead to enhanced job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.

The Equity theory holds significant relevance to the study of work balance and employee job satisfaction in organizations, particularly in a depressed economy. By understanding employees' perceptions of fairness and equity in the workplace, organizations can better address the challenges posed by economic downturns and support their workforce more effectively. In a depressed economy, where resources may be limited and job security is risky, employees' perceptions of fairness become even more critical. Through applying equity theory, organizations can identify areas where employees may feel underpaid or undervalued, and take steps to rectify these perceptions. This can help boost employee morale and job satisfaction, even in challenging economic times.

Furthermore, the benefit of equity theory lies in its role of employee involvement in decision-making processes. In a depressed economy, where job security and career advancement opportunities may be limited, involving employees in decisions that affect them can help mitigate feelings of powerlessness and enhance their sense of control over their work lives. Notwithstanding, Adegoke (2016) emphasized that insights gained from the equity theory can lead to increased job satisfaction and commitment to the organization, even in challenging economic conditions. Largely, equity theory offers valuable insights into how organizations can support their employees in maintaining work-life balance and job satisfaction in a depressed economy. By understanding and addressing employees' perceptions of fairness and equity, organizations can create a more supportive and rewarding work environment, leading to higher levels of motivation, productivity, and employee retention.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Work Balance

Work-life balance is a concept that has gained significant attention in recent years, particularly in the context of organizational psychology and human resource management. It refers to the equilibrium individuals seek to achieve between their professional responsibilities and personal lives. The concept recognizes that employees have various roles and responsibilities outside of work, such as family, social, and personal pursuits, which require time and attention (Amadi, 2023). Achieving work-life balance is crucial for employees' overall well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity. It is also important for organizations, as employees who feel balanced are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to their work.

Achieving work-life balance involves effectively managing one's time and energy to meet both work-related and personal responsibilities. It requires individuals to prioritize tasks, set boundaries, and make choices that allow them to fulfill their professional duties while also maintaining a fulfilling personal life. This balance is essential for maintaining physical and mental health, reducing stress, and preventing burnout. Research has shown that employees who experience a better balance between their work and personal lives are more satisfied with their jobs and are more likely to stay with

their organizations (Adewale, 2019). In today's fast-paced and competitive work environments, achieving work-life balance can be challenging.

Factors such as increased workloads, tight deadlines, and the pressure to constantly be available due to technological advancements can make it difficult for employees to disconnect from work. However, organizations play a crucial role in promoting work-life balance by implementing policies and practices that support employees in managing their work and personal lives effectively (Jones & Brown, 2018). One of the key aspects of work-life balance is flexibility: flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting, flexible hours, and compressed workweeks, helps employees' to better manage their work schedules and commitments. These arrangements allow employees to work at times that are most convenient for them, reducing the conflict between work and personal life. For example, a study by Okonkwo and Eze (2018) found that employees who were able to telecommute reported higher levels of work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Another important factor in achieving work-life balance is the organizational culture. A supportive and understanding work environment that values work-life balance can significantly impact employees' well-being. Organizations can create a culture that promotes work-life balance by encouraging employees to take breaks, use their vacation time, and prioritize their health and well-being. By promoting a healthy work-life balance, organizations can improve employee morale, engagement, and productivity (Ejiroghene, 2023). Additionally, work-life balance is not just about the number of hours worked but also about the quality of those hours. Employees who are able to focus on their work during work hours and disconnect when they are off duty are more likely to experience a better work-life balance. This requires individuals to set boundaries and manage their time effectively to avoid work-related stress spilling over into their personal lives (Nwabueze, 2021). Therefore, achieving work-life balance is a continuous process that requires effort from both individuals and organizations.

Depressed Economy and Employees' Job Satisfaction

A depressed economy, characterized by low economic growth, high unemployment rates, and reduced business activity, can have a significant impact on employees' job satisfaction. In such economic conditions, organizations often face financial constraints, leading to cost-cutting measures, downsizing, and limited resources. This can create uncertainty and insecurity among employees, affecting their morale and job satisfaction. Additionally, employees may feel pressured to work longer hours or take on additional responsibilities to secure their positions, leading to increased stress and reduced work-life balance (Nwosu *et al.*, 2016). In a depressed economy, employees' job satisfaction is often negatively affected by various factors related to the economic downturn. One of the key factors is job insecurity, as organizations may be forced to downsize or implement layoffs to reduce costs.

Employees who fear losing their jobs or are uncertain about their future employment prospects are likely to experience higher levels of stress and lower job satisfaction (Amadi, 2023). Furthermore, in a depressed economy, organizations may freeze or reduce salaries, limit bonuses and benefits, and cut back on training and development opportunities, all of which can contribute to decreased job satisfaction among employees (Obioma, 2018). Moreover, the overall economic uncertainty and instability in a depressed economy can create a sense of pessimism and dissatisfaction among employees. The lack of growth opportunities and the feeling of being stuck in a job without prospects for advancement can lead to feelings of frustration and disengagement (Brigue, 2021). Additionally, employees may feel undervalued and unappreciated, especially if their efforts are not recognized or rewarded appropriately. This can further contribute to lower job satisfaction and motivation (Adegoke, 2016).

Furthermore, the impact of a depressed economy on employees' job satisfaction can also be influenced by external factors such as inflation, rising cost of living, and limited job prospects. Employees who are struggling to make ends meet or who are facing financial difficulties are likely to experience higher levels of stress and dissatisfaction with their jobs (Ejiroghene, 2023). Additionally, limited job prospects and lack of career advancement opportunities in a depressed economy can lead to feelings of stagnation and lack of fulfillment in employees, further reducing their job satisfaction (Adeleke, 2020). However, it is essential to note that not all employees may experience the same level of job dissatisfaction in a depressed economy. Some individuals may be more resilient and able to cope with the challenges posed by economic downturns, while others may struggle more. Organizations can play a crucial role in mitigating the negative impact of a depressed economy on employees' job satisfaction by implementing supportive policies and practices.

Flexible work arrangements, employee assistance programs, and opportunities for skill development and career advancement can help employees cope with the challenges of a depressed economy and maintain higher levels of job satisfaction (Chukwuemeka, 2020). Generally, a depressed economy can have a significant impact on employees' job satisfaction, leading to increased stress, lower morale, and reduced motivation. Organizations need to be aware of these challenges and take proactive measures to support their employees during economic downturns. Implementing supportive policies and practices, organizations can help employees cope with the challenges of a depressed economy and maintain higher levels of job satisfaction.

The Impact of a Depressed Economy on Work Balance and Job Satisfaction

In a depressed economy, employees may face challenges in maintaining work-life balance due to increased work demands, financial pressures, and job insecurity. Budget cuts and downsizing in organizations can lead to increased workloads and longer hours for employees, making it difficult for them to balance their professional responsibilities with their personal lives. This can result in heightened stress levels, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased productivity. Furthermore, the high cost of living and limited job prospects in a depressed economy can add to employees' financial stress, further impacting their work-life balance (Okon, 2018). The impact of a depressed economy on work-life balance can also be influenced by organizational culture and policies. In times of economic downturn, organizations may prioritize cost-cutting measures and productivity, leading to a culture that emphasizes long working hours and limited flexibility.

This can make it challenging for employees to maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal lives, contributing to feelings of burnout and dissatisfaction (Okonkwo & Eze, 2018). Additionally, limited resources and financial constraints may limit the availability of support services and programs that promote work-life balance, further exacerbating the situation. Moreover, the impact of a depressed economy on work-life balance can vary depending on the industry and type of work. For example, employees in industries that are heavily impacted by economic downturns, such as manufacturing or construction, may face greater challenges in maintaining work-life balance compared to those in more stable industries. Similarly, employees in high-stress or demanding roles may find it harder to achieve work-life balance during economic downturns, as the pressure to perform and meet targets increases (Ejiroghene, 2023).

Furthermore, the impact of a depressed economy on work-life balance can have long-term effects on employees' job satisfaction and overall well-being. Employees who are unable to maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal lives are more likely to experience burnout, fatigue, and reduced job satisfaction (Adeleke, 2020). This can lead to higher turnover rates, increased absenteeism, and lower productivity, ultimately impacting the organization's performance and bottom line. However, despite these challenges, there are strategies that organizations can implement to support employees in maintaining work-life balance during economic downturns. Telecommuting or flexible hours, can allow employees to better manage their work schedules and personal responsibilities (Oluwaseyi, 2017).

Wellness programs that promote physical and mental health can also be beneficial, as they can help employees reduce stress and improve their overall well-being (Amadi, 2023). The impact of a depressed economy on work-life balance and job satisfaction is significant and multifaceted. Employees may face challenges in maintaining work-life balance due to increased work demands, financial pressures, and job insecurity. However, organizations can mitigate these challenges by implementing supportive policies and programs that promote work-life balance and employee well-being.

Measuring job satisfaction among employees in a depressed economy requires a comprehensive approach that considers various factors influencing satisfaction levels. Surveys and questionnaires can be used to gather employees' perceptions of their job satisfaction, focusing on aspects such as salary, job security, career development opportunities, work-life balance, and the overall work environment. Additionally, interviews and focus groups can provide qualitative insights into employees' experiences and perceptions of job satisfaction. By measuring staff job satisfaction in a depressed economy, organizations can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to enhance employee satisfaction and well-being (Rivers State Ministry of Commerce, 2022). Job satisfaction can be measured using various instruments, such as the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) or the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), which assess different facets of job satisfaction, including pay, promotions, supervision, benefits, and working conditions (Nwabueze, 2021).

These instruments provide a quantitative assessment of employees' satisfaction levels, allowing organizations to identify specific areas of concern and prioritize interventions. Additionally, organizations can use qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, to gain a deeper understanding of employees' job satisfaction and the underlying reasons behind their satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Jones & Brown, 2018).

In a depressed economy, measuring staff job satisfaction is particularly important due to the increased stress and uncertainty employees may experience. Employees may be more likely to experience job dissatisfaction during economic downturns, as they may feel insecure about their job prospects or dissatisfied with their current working conditions (Amadi, 2023). By measuring job satisfaction, organizations can identify areas where employees may be struggling and take proactive steps to address these issues.

Moreover, measuring staff job satisfaction in a depressed economy can help organizations understand the impact of economic conditions on employee morale and motivation. Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to be less productive and engaged, leading to lower overall organizational performance (Okonkwo *et al.*, 2018). By measuring job satisfaction, organizations can identify employees who may be at risk of leaving and implement strategies to retain them, such as offering additional training or development opportunities.

Furthermore, measuring staff job satisfaction in a depressed economy can help organizations benchmark their performance against industry standards and identify best practices for improving employee satisfaction. By comparing their satisfaction levels with those of other organizations in similar economic conditions, organizations can identify areas where they may be lagging and take corrective action (Ejiroghene, 2023). In addition, measuring job satisfaction over time helps organizations track changes in employee satisfaction and assess the effectiveness of interventions implemented to improve satisfaction levels. Measuring staff job satisfaction in a depressed economy is essential for organizations to understand the impact of economic conditions on employee morale and motivation.

Work Balance in a Depressed Economy and Employees' Job Satisfaction

Maintaining work-life balance and enhancing job satisfaction among employees in a depressed economy are critical challenges for organizations. By implementing strategies to support employees' work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements and wellness programs, organizations can improve employee satisfaction and well-being. Additionally, offering opportunities for career development and advancement, recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions, and fostering a positive work environment can further enhance job satisfaction. Ultimately, by prioritizing employee well-being and job satisfaction, organizations can navigate through challenging economic times while ensuring the engagement and retention of their valuable workforce (Emenike, 2020).

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A depressed economy can significantly impact employees' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Economic downturns often lead to increased workloads, reduced job security, and financial stress, all of which can affect employees' well-being and job satisfaction. In such challenging times, organizations need to be proactive in supporting their employees' work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, can help employees manage their workloads and personal responsibilities, reducing stress and improving job satisfaction (Okon, 2018).

Moreover, offering wellness programs that promote physical and mental health can also be beneficial. These programs can include access to counseling services, stress management workshops, and fitness classes, all of which can help employees cope with the challenges of a depressed economy and maintain a healthy work-life balance (Chukwuemeka, 2020). Additionally, providing resources and support for employees, such as employee assistance programs or financial planning services, can help alleviate some of the financial pressures that contribute to work-life imbalance (Jones *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, offering opportunities for career development and advancement can also enhance employees' job satisfaction. Employees who see a clear path for growth within the organization are more likely to be engaged and satisfied with their jobs. Providing training programs, mentorship opportunities, and career counseling can help employees develop their skills and advance their careers, leading to increased job satisfaction (Nwabueze, 2021). Additionally, recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions can boost morale and job satisfaction. This can include both monetary rewards, such as bonuses or salary increases, and non-monetary rewards, such as public recognition or extra time off (Ejiroghene, 2023).

Fostering a positive work environment is also crucial for enhancing job satisfaction in a depressed economy. This includes promoting a culture of respect, open communication, and teamwork. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Additionally, creating opportunities for social interaction, such as team-building activities or company events, can help employees feel connected to their colleagues and the organization, further enhancing job satisfaction (Adeleke, 2020). Ultimately, by prioritizing employee well-being and job satisfaction, organizations can navigate through challenging economic times while ensuring the engagement and retention of their valuable workforce.

Strategies to Maintain Work Balance in a Depressed Economy

Organizations can implement several strategies to help employees maintain work-life balance in a depressed economy. Flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, can allow employees to better manage their work schedules and personal responsibilities. Wellness programs that promote physical and mental health can also be beneficial, as they can help employees reduce stress and improve their overall well-being. Additionally, providing resources

and support for employees, such as employee assistance programs or counseling services, can help them cope with the challenges of a depressed economy and maintain a healthy work-life balance (Okonkwo *et al.*, 2017).

Flexible work arrangements can be particularly useful in a depressed economy, as they allow employees to adjust their schedules to accommodate personal obligations or unforeseen circumstances. For example, employees may need to care for a sick family member or attend to personal errands during traditional working hours. By allowing employees to work from home or adjust their hours, organizations can help employees manage these responsibilities without sacrificing their work commitments (Emenike, 2020). Another strategy to maintain work-life balance in a depressed economy is to promote a culture of understanding and empathy within the organization. Managers and colleagues can be encouraged to support each other and be flexible with deadlines and workloads when necessary. This can help reduce stress and pressure on employees, allowing them to better manage their work-life balance (Brigue, 2021).

Furthermore, organizations can provide training and development opportunities for employees to help them manage their time more effectively and prioritize tasks. Time management skills are essential for maintaining work-life balance, especially in a depressed economy where employees may be facing increased workloads or time pressures (Amadi, 2023). By providing employees with the tools and skills they need to manage their time effectively, organizations can help them achieve a better balance between their professional and personal lives. Additionally, organizations can implement policies that promote work-life balance, such as paid time off, parental leave, and flexible work schedules. These policies can help employees feel supported and valued, leading to increased job satisfaction and productivity (Ololube, 2018).

Strategies of Enhancing Employees' Job Satisfaction in Economic Challenged Organization

Enhancing employees' job satisfaction in an economically challenged organization requires a strategic approach that addresses the factors influencing satisfaction levels. Providing competitive salaries and benefits packages can help attract and retain talented employees, enhancing job satisfaction. Additionally, offering opportunities for career development and advancement can motivate employees and increase their job satisfaction. Recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions can also boost morale and job satisfaction. Moreover, creating a positive work environment that promotes open communication, teamwork, and work-life balance can contribute to enhancing employees' job satisfaction in an economically challenged organization (Ejiroghene, 2023).

One effective strategy for enhancing employees' job satisfaction in an economically challenged organization is to provide ample opportunities for skill development and training. Employees who perceive that they are growing and advancing in their roles are more likely to feel satisfied with their jobs. Offering various training programs, workshops, and seminars can help employees acquire new skills and stay abreast of industry trends, thereby contributing to their job satisfaction (Chukwuemeka, 2020). Another valuable strategy is to foster a culture of recognition and appreciation within the organization. Acknowledging employees' efforts and contributions, whether through verbal commendation, awards, or bonuses, can make them feel valued and recognized, ultimately leading to increased job satisfaction (Ejiroghene, 2023). Additionally, involving employees in decision-making processes can also positively impact their job satisfaction. When employees believe that their opinions are valued and that they have a say in organizational matters, they are more likely to be content with their jobs (Adebayo, 2018).

Moreover, creating a supportive work environment is essential for enhancing employees' job satisfaction. This includes ensuring that employees have access to the necessary resources and support to perform their jobs effectively, as well as promoting work-life balance. Implementing flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, can help employees manage their workloads and personal responsibilities, leading to increased job satisfaction (Nwosu *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among employees can significantly enhance their job satisfaction. Organizing team-building activities, social events, and community service initiatives can help employees feel connected to their colleagues and the organization, which can positively impact their job satisfaction (Jones & Brown, 2018).

Therefore, enhancing employees' job satisfaction in an economically challenged organization requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various factors influencing satisfaction levels. By providing competitive salaries and benefits packages, offering opportunities for skill development and training, promoting a culture of recognition and appreciation, involving employees in decision-making processes, providing a supportive work environment, and fostering a sense of community and camaraderie, organizations can enhance employees' job satisfaction and contribute to their overall well-being and success.

METHODS

The research design for this study adopts a correlation design to investigate the relationship between work balance and employees job satisfaction in the context of a depressed economy. The target population comprises employees from various sectors in Rivers State, including manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, and technology. A stratified random

sampling technique was used to select a representative sample size of 76 employees from various sectors in Rivers State. A self-structured questionnaire titled: Work Balance in a Depressed Economy Questionnaire (WBDEQ) and Employees' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (EJSQ). The questionnaire utilized a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). The questionnaire was distributed and collection took place over a period of four months October 2023 to February 2024, during which the questionnaire was distributed to selected employees. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. During this period, 76 copies were distributed, but only 69 were returned. Of these, 4 were not correctly filled out, leaving the researcher with only 65 valid copies that were used for data analysis. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire by experts in the field of organizational behaviour and human resource management to ensure content validity. A pilot study was conducted with a subset of participants to test the reliability of the questionnaire and make necessary adjustments. A reliability index of .87 was calculated based on the outcomes of this analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, was used to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics, such as Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC), was utilized to test hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23.0 software. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by employees in maintaining work-life balance in a depressed economy and the strategies that organizations can employ to enhance job satisfaction and well-being.

RESULTS

The following research questions that guided the study was answered using mean and standard deviation responses. Where a mean score of 2.5 was considered a high extent, while a mean score of 2.49 or lower was regarded as a low extent in the context of this research analysis.

Research Question One: How does the impact of work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses to impact of work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction

S/N	Impact of Work Balance on Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD.	Remark
1.	Rate the current work balance in your organization as it job satisfaction	2.6784	1.11589	Agree
2.	How often do you experience work-related stress due to economic challenges	2.6952	1.12812	Agree
3.	How satisfied are you with your current work-life balance	2.7163	1.08868	Agree
4.	Improvements in work balance would lead to higher job satisfaction	2.6868	1.07729	Agree
5.	How do you noticed any changes in job satisfaction due to changes in work balance	2.7612	1.13468	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.7263	1.11563	Agree

Researcher's Data Output (2024)

The Table 1 above presents the mean and standard deviation responses regarding the impact of work balance in a depressed economy on employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. All items demonstrate mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. With a grand mean of 2.7263 and a standard deviation of 1.11563, there is a strong agreement among employees that work balance significantly affects job satisfaction. Respondents emphasize the importance of work balance in reducing work-related stress and improving overall job satisfaction, highlighting the value of maintaining a healthy work-life balance in a depressed economy. The findings suggest that investing in strategies to improve work balance can positively impact employees' job satisfaction in organizations facing economic challenges.

Research Question Two: How does work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses to how work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction

S/N	Work Balance in a Depressed Economy	Mean	SD.	Remark
6.	Do you believe achieving work-life balance is more challenging in a depressed economy	2.6180	1.13386	Agree
7.	How do you think work-life balance contributes to overall job satisfaction	2.6390	1.15970	Agree
8.	I have experienced some negative effects on job satisfaction due to work-life balance issues	2.5197	1.09321	Agree
9.	How important is having a good work-life balance to you	2.6264	1.10911	Agree
10.	Do you feel job satisfaction would improve with better work-life balance	2.5478	1.10132	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.5831	1.10431	Agree

Researcher's Data Output (2024)

The Table 2 above presents the mean and standard deviation responses regarding how work balance in a depressed economy affects employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. All items demonstrate mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. With a grand mean of 2.5831 and a standard deviation of 1.10431, there is a strong agreement among employees that work balance in a depressed economy significantly affects job satisfaction. Respondents believe that achieving work-life balance is more challenging in a depressed economy but emphasize the importance of work-life balance in contributing to overall job satisfaction. Despite experiencing some negative effects on job satisfaction due to work-life balance issues, respondents still believe that having a good work-life balance is crucial and that their job satisfaction would improve with better work-life balance. These findings highlight the significance of work-life balance in influencing employees' job satisfaction in organizations facing economic challenges.

Research Question Three: How do the strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation responses to strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction

S/N	Strategies to maintain work balance	Mean	SD.	Remark
11.	Strategies organization has implemented to maintain work-life balance determines extent employee attain job satisfaction	2.5983	1.10307	Agree
12.	Have you noticed any improvements in job satisfaction as a result of these strategies	2.6404	1.12756	Agree
13.	How satisfied are you with the support provided by your organization to help you maintain work-life balance	2.6025	1.12291	Agree
14.	Do you feel these strategies have a positive impact on overall job satisfaction	2.5534	1.14367	Agree
15.	How do you see additional strategies implemented to help maintain work-life balance	2.5899	1.12524	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.5925	1.0931	Agree

Researcher's Data Output (2024)

The Table 3 above presents the mean and standard deviation responses regarding how the strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. All items demonstrate mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. With a grand mean of 2.5925 and a standard deviation of 1.0931, there is a strong consensus among employees that the strategies implemented by organizations to maintain work-life balance significantly affect job satisfaction. Respondents believe that these strategies determine the extent to which employees attain job satisfaction and have noticed improvements in job satisfaction as a result of these strategies. They are generally satisfied with the support provided by their organization to help maintain work-life balance and feel that these strategies have a positive impact on overall job satisfaction. Respondents also express openness to additional strategies implemented to help maintain work-life balance. These findings underscore the importance of organizational strategies in maintaining work-life balance and their impact on employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy.

Research Question Four: How do the strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy affect their job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation responses to strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy affect their job satisfaction

S/N	Strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction	Mean	SD.	Remark
16.	Employees improvements in work balance and job satisfaction would lead to better performance at work	2.7303	1.12773	Agree
17.	To what extent are you satisfied with the overall work environment in the organization	2.6657	1.16708	Agree
18.	The organization I'm working with values my contributions which gives satisfaction in carrying out my job	2.6854	1.11601	Agree
19.	Receiving recognition or rewards for your work performance enhances job satisfaction	2.6770	1.12114	Agree
20.	I am satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement in my organization	2.6966	1.11786	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.6914	1.13451	Agree

Researcher's Data Output (2024)

The Table 4 presents the mean and standard deviation responses regarding how the strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy affect their job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.

All items demonstrate mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. With a grand mean of 2.6914 and a standard deviation of 1.13451, there is a strong consensus among employees that these strategies significantly enhance job satisfaction. Employees believe that improvements in work balance and job satisfaction would lead to better performance at work. They are satisfied with the overall work environment in the organization and feel that the organization values their contributions, which gives satisfaction in carrying out their jobs. Employees also believe that receiving recognition or rewards for their work performance enhances job satisfaction. Additionally, they are satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement in their organization. These findings highlight the importance of implementing strategies to enhance job satisfaction in a depressed economy and their positive impact on employees' overall satisfaction and performance at work.

Test of Hypotheses

To further guide this study, the following hypotheses were raised:

H₀₁: The impact of work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State

Table 5: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between the impact of work balance in a depressed economy and how employees' job satisfaction

	Impact of Work Balance		Employee's Job Satisfaction	Remark
Impact of Work Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.817	Ho1: Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	65	65	
Employee's Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.817	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	65	65	

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The Table 5 above presents the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of respondents' answers. The correlation analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.000 < 0.05$), indicating a very strong and positive relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) of no significant relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The positive correlation of .817 further supports this result ($P=.000 < 0.05$), indicating a strong relationship between the impact of work balance in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction.

H₀₂: The work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State

Table 6: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between work balance in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction

	Work Balance in a Depressed Economy		Employee's Job Satisfaction	Remark
Work Balance in a Depressed Economy	Pearson Correlation	1	.712	Ho2: Rejected.
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	
	N	65	65	
Employee's Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.712	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	65	65	

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The Table 6 above presents the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of respondents' answers. The correlation analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .001 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.001 < 0.05$), indicating a strong and positive relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) of no significant relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between work balance in the phase of a

depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The positive correlation of .712 further supports this result ($P=.001 < .05$), indicating a strong relationship between work balance in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction.

H03: The strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy does not significantly affect employees’ job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.

Table 7: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction

	Strategies to Maintain Work Balance		Employees’ Job Satisfaction	Remark
Strategies to Maintain Work Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.679	H03: Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	
	N	65	65	
Employees’ Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.679	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		
	N	65	65	

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The Table 7 presents the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of respondents’ answers. The correlation analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .003 is less than the .05 level of significance ($P=.003 < .05$), indicating a strong and positive relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) of no significant relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The positive correlation of 0.679 further supports this result ($P=.003 < 0.05$), indicating a strong relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction.

H04: The strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy do not significantly affect their job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.

Table 8: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employee’s job satisfaction

	Strategies to Enhance Job Satisfaction		Employee’s Job Satisfaction	Remark
Strategies to Enhance Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.815	H04: Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	65	65	
Employee’s Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.815	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	65	65	

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

The Table 8 above presents the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of respondents’ answers. The correlation analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .000 is less than the .05 level of significance ($P=.000 < 0.05$), indicating a very strong and positive relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) of no significant relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. The positive correlation of .815 further supports this result ($P=.000 < .05$), indicating a very strong relationship between strategies of enhancing employees’ job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees’ job satisfaction.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Impact of Work Balance in a Depressed Economy and Employee's Job Satisfaction

The findings regarding the relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state, result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.000 < 0.05$), indicating a very strong and positive relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) of no significant relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between the impact of work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state.

These findings align with existing scholarly literature of Bariara (2022) where the impact of work-life balance affects organizational productivity, aligning closely with the current study. They underscored the importance of organizations in Rivers State, Nigeria, and beyond to implement effective strategies to improve work balance, particularly in economically challenging times, to foster job satisfaction and overall well-being in the organization. Despite the regional difference, Adewale (2019) findings resonated with the current study, highlighting the adverse effects of economic downturns on work-life balance and subsequently job satisfaction. They contributed valuable insights into the strategies employed by organizations in Nigeria to maintain work balance during economic downturns.

Similarly Adewale (2019) provided insights into the broader impact of economic challenges on employees' job satisfaction, focusing on Lagos, Nigeria. This underscores the relevance of the current study's findings beyond Rivers State, suggesting a commonality in the challenges faced by employees in different Nigerian regions. The importance of organizational support and flexible work arrangements in enhancing work-life balance and, consequently, job satisfaction align with the current study's emphasis on the need for organizations to implement effective strategies to mitigate the negative impact of a depressed economy on employees' job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of proactive measures in organizational settings (Onwuka, 2021). This highlights the significance of addressing work balance issues, particularly in economically challenging times, to maintain high levels of job satisfaction and, subsequently, organizational performance.

Work Balance in a Depressed Economy and Employee's Job Satisfaction

The findings regarding the relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .001 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.001 < 0.05$), indicating a strong and positive relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) of no significant relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state.

The findings align with existing scholarly literature of Oluwaseyi (2017) study on the relationship between economic downturns and job satisfaction among Nigerian employees. their findings revealed the profound impact of economic challenges on job satisfaction, particularly evident in sectors highly susceptible to economic fluctuations, such as the public sector. Employees in these sectors experienced heightened job insecurity and increased workloads, contributing to lower levels of job satisfaction. Oluwaseyi (2017) study highlighted the pressing need for organizations to implement proactive strategies to mitigate these negative effects. By addressing the root causes of job dissatisfaction exacerbated by economic downturns, organizations can foster a more supportive and engaging work environment, ultimately enhancing employees' job satisfaction.

Adebayo's (2018) research centered on the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among employees in Lagos, Nigeria. His findings revealed a significant and positive correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction, suggesting that employees who achieve a better balance between their professional and personal lives tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction. Their findings emphasized the importance of organizations in fostering work-life balance among employees, particularly in the context of a depressed economy. By implementing policies and practices that support work-life balance, organizations can enhance employees' overall job satisfaction, even amidst economic challenges.

Emenike (2020) research focused on the influence of leadership styles on job satisfaction among employees in Nigerian organizations. While not directly related to the impact of work balance in a depressed economy, his findings are pertinent. They identified transformational leadership styles as being positively associated with job satisfaction,

highlighting the significant impact of leadership on employee satisfaction. His study emphasized the importance of effective leadership in creating a conducive work environment that can buffer the effects of economic challenges on job satisfaction. By providing adequate support and resources to employees, organizations can foster a positive work environment that enhances job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to employee well-being and organizational success.

Strategies to Maintain Work Balance in a Depressed Economy and Employee's Job Satisfaction

The findings regarding the relationship between the strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. The result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .003 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.003 < 0.05$), indicating a strong and positive relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) of no significant relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.

In a study conducted by Adegoke (2016) found that employees who perceived higher levels of organizational support for work-life balance reported greater job satisfaction. This suggests that organizational strategies aimed at supporting work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements, childcare facilities, and employee assistance programs, can positively influence employees' job satisfaction. They call attention to the importance of organizational support in enhancing work-life balance and ultimately improving job satisfaction among employees in Nigeria. The findings imply that organizations should prioritize the implementation of supportive policies and programs to enhance employees' work-life balance, which in turn can lead to higher job satisfaction and increased organizational commitment.

Obioma (2018) examined the relationship between job autonomy and job satisfaction among employees in Nigerian organizations. The study found a significant positive correlation between job autonomy and job satisfaction, indicating that employees with higher levels of job autonomy tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction. This suggests that allowing employees more control over their work schedules, decision-making processes, and task assignments can contribute to higher job satisfaction. Obioma (2018) study highlighted the importance of job autonomy as a factor in enhancing job satisfaction and implies that organizations should consider empowering their employees by granting them more autonomy in their work roles. This approach could lead to increased job satisfaction, higher motivation, and improved overall performance.

Chukwuemeka (2020) conducted research on the role of job enrichment in enhancing job satisfaction among employees in Nigerian organizations. The study found that job enrichment, which involves enhancing the scope and depth of employees' responsibilities, was positively related to job satisfaction. This suggests that providing employees with more challenging and meaningful work can lead to higher job satisfaction. Chukwuemeka (2020) study emphasizes the importance of offering employees opportunities for growth and development within their roles to enhance job satisfaction. The findings imply that organizations should consider implementing job enrichment strategies, such as job rotation, skill variety, and task significance, to improve employees' job satisfaction and overall well-being.

Nwabueze (2021) investigated the impact of flexible work arrangements on job satisfaction among employees in Nigerian organizations. The study found a significant positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction, indicating that employees who have the flexibility to manage their work schedules report higher levels of job satisfaction. This suggests that offering flexible work options, such as telecommuting, flexible hours, and compressed workweeks, can contribute to higher job satisfaction among employees. Nwabueze (2021) study highlights the importance of providing employees with flexibility in their work arrangements to enhance job satisfaction and improve work-life balance. The findings imply that organizations should consider adopting flexible work policies to meet the diverse needs of their employees and promote a positive work environment.

Strategies to Enhance Job Satisfaction in a Depressed Economy and Employee's Job Satisfaction

The findings regarding the relationship between the strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State, result shows that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant because the p-value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance ($P=.000 < 0.05$), indicating a very strong and positive relationship between strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) of no significant relationship between strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there is a significant relationship between strategies of enhancing employees' job satisfaction in a depressed economy and employees' job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State.

The findings of this study is in line with Adewale (2021) study examines the intricate relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction within the context of Nigerian manufacturing companies. Through a comprehensive survey and analysis, Adewale (2021) found a significant positive correlation between employee motivation and job satisfaction. This implies that employees who feel motivated in their work tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction. The study underscores the importance of implementing strategies to motivate employees, such as recognition programs, career development opportunities, and a conducive work environment. They suggest that fostering motivation among employees can lead to improved job satisfaction, which in turn can positively impact organizational performance and employee retention. These insights are particularly relevant in a depressed economy where maintaining high levels of job satisfaction can be challenging but crucial for organizational success.

Okafor (2018) research delved into the impact of organizational support on job satisfaction within the Nigerian banking sector. The study reveals a significant positive relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction, indicating that employees who perceive higher levels of support from their organizations tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. This highlights the importance of organizational support in enhancing job satisfaction, especially in a depressed economy where job security and support become even more critical. They suggest that organizations should prioritize providing support to employees to maintain high levels of job satisfaction, even amidst economic challenges. These insights can guide organizations in the banking sector and beyond in fostering a supportive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction and well-being.

Emeka (2021) study investigated the relationship between job security and job satisfaction among public sector employees in Nigeria. The research reveals a significant influence of job security on job satisfaction, with employees feeling more satisfied when they perceive higher levels of job security. This underscores the importance of job security in fostering job satisfaction, particularly in a depressed economy where job security can be uncertain. Emeka (2021) findings emphasize the need for organizations, especially in the public sector, to provide employees with a sense of security to enhance job satisfaction. These insights are crucial for policymakers and organizational leaders in ensuring the well-being and satisfaction of public sector employees, ultimately contributing to organizational effectiveness and employee retention.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed a significant positive relationship between strategies to maintain work balance in the phase of a depressed economy and employees job satisfaction in selected organizations in rivers state. The findings underscore the importance of organizations implementing effective strategies to support work balance, particularly during challenging economic times. The rejection of the null hypothesis suggests that prioritizing work balance initiatives can enhance job satisfaction levels among employees. These results have practical implications for organizations, highlighting the need to adopt policies and practices that promote work balance, such as flexible work arrangements and employee support programs. By addressing work balance issues, organizations can improve employee job satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and a more positive organizational culture. Future research could explore additional factors influencing job satisfaction in depressed economies and investigate how job satisfaction and work balance evolve over time. Overall, this study contributes valuable insights for organizational practice and suggests avenues for further research in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study on work balance in a depressed economy and employee's job satisfaction in selected organizations in Rivers State, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Implement Strategies to Enhance Work Balance:** Organizations should implement strategies to enhance work balance, such as offering flexible work arrangements and promoting work-life balance initiatives. This can help employees better manage their workloads and reduce stress, leading to increased job satisfaction.
- **Provide Support for Job Autonomy:** Employers should provide employees with job autonomy, allowing them more control over how they complete their tasks. This can increase job satisfaction by giving employees a sense of ownership and responsibility in their work.
- **Enhance Job Enrichment Programmes:** Organizations should enhance job enrichment programs to provide employees with more challenging and meaningful work. This can lead to increased job satisfaction by providing employees with opportunities for growth and development.
- **Implement Flexible Work Arrangements:** Employers should consider implementing flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, to allow employees to better balance their work and personal lives. This can help reduce stress and improve job satisfaction.

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