

# WORK FLEXIBILITY AND EMPLOYEES CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRES IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

UJAH Thaddeus Orlaade, Prof. (Mrs.) M. E. UMOGBAI., Dr (Mrs.) N, KWAHAR; Dr S.I. UCHERWUHE; UJAH, F.A & AGWA, T. R

Department of Business Administration  
Joseph Sarwuan Tarka, Makurdi-Nigeria

**Abstract:** *The study examined the effect of work flexibility on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. The study specifically examined the effect of telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and overtime work on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. The study adopts a correlational research design. The population of the study consists of 6,869 staff of five Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. A sample size of 378 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Primary data for the study were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the instrument was carried out and data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and percentages and regression analysis. Findings of the study reveal that telecommuting work have significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria ( $\beta = 0.181$ ;  $t=3.552$ ;  $p=0.000$ ); job sharing has significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria ( $\beta=0.144$ ;  $t=1.957$ ;  $p=0.039$ ); shift duty has significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria ( $\beta = 0.139$ ;  $t=2.762$ ;  $p=0.006$ ); part-time work has significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria ( $\beta = 0.248$   $t=5.185$ ;  $p=0.000$ ); and overtime work has significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria ( $\beta = 0.246$ ;  $t=4.729$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). The study concluded that work flexibility significantly affects employees' career development in Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. The study recommends amongst others that Federal Medical Centres should continue to encourage employees to work remotely from different locations using available technologies to help improve their productivity and career development of these employees.*

**Keywords:** *Work Flexibility, Employees' career development, Telecommuting, Job Sharing, Shift Duty, Part-Time Work and Overtime Work*

## 1.1 Background to the Study

Employees are an organization's most important and valuable asset, and they play a critical role in its performance. There are growing concerns that the quality of work and the performance of employees has declined as the result of lack of work flexibility and career development of employees of federal medical centres in North Central Nigeria. As a result, many organizations are striving to adapt to a variety of changes in today's global turbulent business environment in order to survive and achieve competitive advantage over their competitors. They're figuring out

how to enhance productivity by improving employee performance. Motivation of employees by acknowledging the importance of balancing their work, family life and career development has continued to gain ground (Beauregard and Henry, 2009; Akpa, *et al*, 2020). Work flexibility refers to those programmes designed by employers to allow employees have scheduling freedom to enable them perform their obligations better so as to achieve employees work life balance and improved organizational service delivery (Austin *et. al.*, 2020). These programmes include; telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work. Abdullah and Wan (2019), viewed work flexibility as the practice that empower employees to have some level of control over, how, where and when they work. By implication, this definition prioritizes adaptability and individual needs over a rigid, one- size fits all approach.

According to Giannikis and Mihail (2011), work flexibility is one of the Work-Life initiatives being advanced by many organizations today as they seek to enable their employees reconcile their work life and family responsibilities Mungania *et al.* (2016), as a result, employees now have a way to balance their employment with home duties such as taking children to school, childcare, and even caring for the elderly in the family and community (Idowu, 2020; Mweresa and Mwandihji, 2015). Flexible work arrangements, according to Hildebrandt (2006), is when an employee's job begins and ends, allowing the employee to work within certain parameters. He continued, organizations that engage in such activities will ensure that employees perform their tasks during the core time, but will offer them the freedom to determine their work schedules on the other side of the core period. According to Fall (2016), effective implementation of flexible work policies will enhance employee performance.

Career development is one of the work life balance strategies used by organizations to achieve the performance needed by the employees. Employee career development is a priority for firms that want to get the most out of their employees because it fosters mutual understanding and relationships (i.e., the employer-employee relationship) and drives attempts to improve performance (Oduma *et al.*, 2014; Nasution *et al*, 2018). According to Ikechukwu and Paschal (2017), research has shown career development as an important determinant of employee and organizational relationship and that organization that provides mechanism for employee career development creates a mutual investment of the relationship with their employees which can lead to rewards and promotion. Investing in career development is essential for continuous productivity especially in the manufacturing firms (Yukhtharamani *et al.*, 2014). Khan *et al* (2016) assert that by giving employee appropriate career development encourages them to improve their skills and have impacts on their jobs performance. Armstrong (2009), affirm that career development is the work life process of managing learning, work, leisure and changes in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving favored future (Katharina and Dewi 2020, Nasution *et al*, 2018, Ikechukwu and Paschal, 2017).The varying perspectives of career development serves as an impediment to researchers seeking the relationship between career development and employee performance (Oduma, Caroline and Were, 2014).

Mgbemena *et al.* (2022), reviewed that work flexibility is an internationally recognized best practice used by health organizations to address various challenges resulting from changes at the workplace, societal values, environment changes, demographic changes and technological

changes. Bukola *et al.* (2023), posits that work flexibility practices such as telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part time work and over-time work has significant correlation with employees' career development. This is because the practice of work flexibility has enabled the health sector to adapt to new changes in the environment thereby improving employees' and employers' work relationships, reduced work pressure, fatigue, stress, and equally helped to achieve competitiveness as well as cost efficiency in operations in the workplace (Mgbemena *et al.*, 2022). In support of the above, Chiekezie *et al.* (2024), revealed that adequate and consistent improved work flexibility strategies are needed to enhance quality service delivery in tertiary health institutions.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The provision of quality employees' career development remains integral to the sustainability of lives especially in the health sector; this is because when health is lost, everything is lost in a nation. Many nations are determined to keep pace with employees' quality service delivery since the sustainability and capability of any nation's economic and social growth is dependent on the human beings in the healthcare sector. This is because a nation of sick people would certainly not live up to its basic responsibilities since there is sufficient evidence associating productivity with well-being. However, it has been observed that healthcare provision in public hospitals in Nigeria especially Federal Medical Centres are not of and far from the desired quality. Concerns have been raised about quality of work, timeliness of staff and employee commitment which could have various implications on patients in the health sector. Medical employees have also raised concerns over inflexible working hours, overwhelming workload, and burnout among others.

More so, evidence from the studies of Ugba *et al.* (2021); Victor (2023), and Dzurgba (2024), indicated that the health sector has over the years been experiencing emigration of medical experts to greener jobs abroad, unconducive work environment, lack of effective drugs, inadequate of quality medical equipment and lack of medical professionals to handle such excess workloads, more particularly in government health institutions, of which the Federal Medical Centres are germane. Observations are that these Federal Medical Centres are continuously experiencing much influx of patients from diverse locations, and most of which are referrals from several health centres in rural areas and some within urban centres for specialized treatments. This has also placed much burden on the employees thereby making them to be so stressed, thus the need to sustain work flexibility to enhance employees' career development. The response to above calls for need for a study in the area of work flexibility and employees' career development in the Nigerian health service sector, particularly the Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of work flexibility on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to;

- i. determine the effect of telecommuting on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

- ii. assess the effect of job sharing on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.
- iii. ascertain the effect of shift duty on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.
- iv. investigate the effect of part-time work on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.
- v. examine the effect of over-time work on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

The findings from a study on the effect of work flexibility on employee service delivery would be very significant to key players such as the government, policy makers, health institutions, academicians, stakeholders and students in a good number of ways: This study would equally contribute to the health sector by unveiling the overall outcome of the effect of work flexibility practices on employees' career development (in terms of job satisfaction, quality of work, and career progression) which is invariably expected to lead to increase in productivity, goal achievement and competitive advantage. The result of the study would enable Government of Nigeria to be better informed in terms of designing and implementing appropriate relevant policies that would promote efficient and effective health sector so as to that of world class standard. The study would also offer the prospect of creating a reservoir of literature in the field of study for policy makers. Finally, this study is equally set to add to the inadequate knowledge on the remote causes of work flexibility, their effects on employees' career development resulting to organizational outcomes and the relationship between the causes of work flexibility and employees' career development.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This sections houses the theoretical foundation of the study, the conceptual review as well as the review of related empirical studies.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

This study was fortified by the Spillover theory

#### **2.2.1 Spillover Theory**

According to lakshmypriya and Rama (2016), spillover theory describes the situations that could lead in either negative or positive spill over work in small organization or the family (Hill et al., 2003). Spillover concept investigates the impact of the work sphere on family domain as well as the transfer of work related emotion from one domain to the family. That is, the behavior, emotions, skills and standards of one domain can overspill to the second domain (Powell and Greenhaus, 2010). Bakker et al (2009), asserted that spillover has to do with the transfer of the conditions of wellbeing from one sphere of life to another. Edwards and Rothbard, (2000), Schultz, (2009) identify two types of spillover which are positive and negative that can be transferred from one domain to the other. Positive spill over denotes that satisfaction and achievement in a domain may result to the satisfaction and achievement in another domain whereas the negative spillover means that complication and despair in one domain may result to the similar feeling in another domain.

The factors that can end in negative work life spill over are work overload, unfriendly work schedules and emotional job demands whereas domestic problems, absence of support from

spouse and sickness leads to family work overspill. If work family interplay are not flexibly organized within a period and space, then spillover in terms of time, vigor and conduct is usually negative. Nevertheless, work resilience, helps to integrate numerous factors of time and space amid work and family resulting in positive spillover. Which is very useful in attaining robust work and family equilibrium (Rodriguez-Mounz et al, 2013, Akpa et al., 2020). According to Tamunomiebi and Oyibo (2020), numerous authors posit that experience gained in an individual activities in one domain could benefits his or her activities in another domain (Grywacz et al., 2007).

Spillover theory acknowledges the influence of the work and family on each other and how the experience in one part will affect the experiences in the second part. A spillover concept also posits that upsurge in satisfaction or dissatisfaction at workplace could result to upsurge satisfaction or dissatisfaction at home. This could mean that the conduct, expertise, mood and standards from work can spill over to the family (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). Spillover theory is necessary for this research as it elucidate the correlation between flexible work arrangement, career development and employee performance which has to do with employees personal lives and how their roles affects their performance either in positive or negative ways (Schultz, 2009, Akpa et al 2020).

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

This section deals with the concept of workplace flexibility and its dimensions as well as the concept of career development and its associated measures.

### **2.2.1 Workplace Flexibility**

Work flexibility practices according to Golden (2020), are not a novel concept and have been employed by many other organizations. It is common practice in European Union countries used to balance employees' working hours and personal lives (Jones and Jones, 2019). Employees with flexible work practices have the opportunity to work outside of regular work schedules (Hill *et al.*, 2021). Hertz and Franklin (2020), averred that when an employee work from home, he or she is able to save money on transportation and this allows them to combine work and family life while also engaging in non-work-related activities. Work flexibility is useful for achieving the optimal result from human resources because it provides an opportunity to allocate employees with reasonable time depending on the nature of work that has to be done. Giannikis and Mihail, (2018), asserts that work flexibility is among many Work-Life Balance (WLB) initiatives being advanced by many organizations as they seek to enable their employees reconcile their work life and family responsibilities. Hill, *et al.* (2019) argue that work flexibility enable employees to manage their work and family responsibilities harmoniously.

### **2.2.2 Dimensions of Workplace Flexibility**

Variables of work flexibility have been supported by studies of (Tavares *et al.*, 2017; 2021; Chiekieze *et al.*, 2024). The reasons for using dimensions of work flexibility such as (telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over time work) is on ground that its more applicable in the health sector.

**i. Telecommuting:** Uchenna *et al.* (2020), defined telecommuting as a work practice that allows employees to perform their assigned responsibilities from any location other than the tradition

office space from some portion of their official working hours. The location could be employees home, or other location outside the traditional office space (e.g. while on the road or from client site). The term telecommuting was first coined by Nilles in (1972). He was known as the Father of telecommuting. Nilles worked remotely as a complex national Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) communication system located in Washington DC USA (Gordon, 2017; Bukola *et al.*, 2023).

**ii. Job sharing:** Job sharing is a type of flexible working arrangement that an organization embraces for efficiency and effectiveness at work (Austin, 2020). Job sharing was introduced by organizations for greater employees work life balance and subsequently employee service delivery. Job sharing is an innovation method of work arrangement that allows two or more employees jointly fill one full time job (Bukola *et al.*, 2023). Job sharing increases flexibility, motivation as well as satisfaction and this leads to employees service delivery. Major flaw from management perspectives about job sharing is finding a compatible pairs of employees who can successfully coordinate the intricacies of one job. Japan is well known for this work practice (Bukola *et al.*, 2023).

**iii. Shift duty:** Kazemi (2016), defined shift duty as working plan where working hours are divided into groups that cover the time required to execute a desired output or performance. Shift workers are those employees schedule to work on hours between 6pm and 7am usually in a seamless handover and rotation within working hours (Kazemi, 2016). Shift duty work enhanced employees skill mix, good supervision, productivity, effectiveness, efficiency, employer and employees positive relationship (Durairaj, 2017). Shift duty work are basically practiced in sectors such as emergency services (e.g. ambulance, fire, hospital, police, prisons), security service, utility services (e.g. electricity, gas, water), production (chemicals, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing), leisure and entertainment activities (e.g. bars, hotels, concerts, discos) etc.

**iv. Part-time work:** Isabel *et al.* (2022), described part-time work or employment as a fundamental tool for retaining older workers in the labour market and simultaneously prolonging their working lives in order to avoid labour for exit before the Statutory Eligibility Age (SEA). When part time work is offered as an employment option, it is objectively done to contribute to the organizations' strategic goals. Part-time work have become a prominent feature of many structural labour market changes in Europe and North America as well as African countries which Nigeria is inclusive, and different scholars have identified part-time employment as one of the main factors underpinning processes of work flexibility (Edwards and Robinson, 2019).

**v. Over-time work:** Over-time is simply explained as work practice where employees willingly stayed and perform their assigned responsibilities beyond normal working hours (i.e. 8am-4pm). High achievement oriented employees regard over time as opportunity for growth and are more likely to work over time for expected benefits. Overtime enhanced employees' happiness. Factors that encouraged employees to work overtime include; challenge of the work, the responsibilities undertaken, value of the work content to the organization, the sense of accomplishment brought by the work results (Jinke and Zhengyang, 2023). Over-time work is influenced by; corporate policies, physical working environment, supervision, corporate culture of the organization and salary.



### **2.2.3 Career Development**

According to Yukhtharamani et al (2014), career development is an integrated collection of organized programmes delivered throughout time to ensure that employees have all necessary competence to perform to their full capacity in support of the organization's goals (Abdul et al., 2015). Career development as a scheme embarked on by the organization in creating a pathway for their employees to match individual objective with organization needs in order to integrate commitment thus, resulting to increased performance and productivity (Zhou and Li 2008). Armstrong (2009), affirmed that career development is the work life process of managing learning, work, leisure and changes in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving favored future (Katharina and Dewi 2020). According to Tobing (2016), career development as an organized planning method used to match employee's goals with the business needs of the organization. He highlighted the benefits of career development scheme for organization and individual employee as loyalty, increased productivity, low turnover, high competence, job commitment, effective service delivery, clear targets for employees, acquisition of knowledge, talent development, job security, recognition and enhanced self-awareness (Zulkarnain, 2014).

### **2.2.4 Measures of Career Development**

**i. Job satisfaction:** According to (Singh and Jain 2013), job satisfaction is the positive and negative feelings of an employee towards his job or it is the amount of happiness connected with the job. Job satisfaction refers to the level of fulfilment, happiness, and contentment that an individual experiences in their work. It reflects how well a person's job aligns with their personal values, needs, and expectations, as well as the conditions of their work environment. Organizations and individuals can both play a role in improving job satisfaction by focusing on clear communication, personal development, and creating a rewarding and supportive work environment. Many studies confirmed that higher job satisfaction can only lead towards higher performance (Balouch, 2009; Salimand Imran, 2014).

**ii. Quality of work:** Quality work refers to the consistent production of tasks, products, or services that meet or exceed expectations in terms of reliability, performance, and excellence. It reflects a high level of skill, attention to detail, and a commitment to standards that satisfy stakeholders, whether they are clients, employers, or end users. One of the hallmark of health institutions globally is to achieve quality service, this is because when quality work is compromised by health practitioners, the consequences are usually fatal particularly as it relates to human lives and well-beings of patients in the society (Israel and Chukwuemeka, 2024). Studies of Israel and Emma, 2024; Kwahar; 2022; Sev, 2022; indicated that employees with much stress have difficulty managing and this in turn affects their mental being which also contributes to physical and behavioural problems. Quality work is not only about meeting the technical or procedural standards but also about leaving a positive impression, solving problems effectively, and fostering trust and reliability. It often involves continuous improvement and a proactive approach to anticipating challenges and overcoming them.

**iii. Career progression:** Merchant (2012), defined career progression as getting to be the best an individual can be and finding a place in an organization where they can express excellence and

contribute to the goals of the organization. Career progression refers to the advancement and development of an individual's career over time. It involves achieving higher levels of responsibility, acquiring new skills, improving professional expertise, and often earning increased recognition, rewards, and influence within one's chosen field or industry. Career progression has become one of the reward systems organization use to motivate their employees (Oduma and Were, 2014). Career progression is not always linear; it can involve taking calculated risks, exploring diverse paths, or even stepping back temporarily to prepare for a leap forward. The ultimate goal is achieving a career that aligns with personal aspirations, professional goals, and market opportunities.

### **2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies**

Magaji *et al.* (2021), investigated the effect of flexible work arrangement and career development on employee performance of selected manufacturing firms in Ogun state. A survey research design was used. The population was 26754. The sample size was 520. Data were analyzed using descriptive and simple linear regression. The findings revealed that flexible work arrangement ( $\beta = .954$ ,  $t = 24.087$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and career development ( $\beta = 1.036$ ,  $t = 19.800$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) have a statistically significant positive effect on employee performance. The study concluded that flexible work arrangement and career development have effect on employee performance of the selected manufacturing firms. The study recommends that the management of these manufacturing firms should ensure that employees are given flexible work arrangement freedom to perform their work and opportunities for career development so as to improve their performance. Career development is one of the work life balance strategies used by organizations to achieve the performance needed by the employees. Employee career development is a priority for firms that want to get the most out of their employees because it fosters mutual understanding and relationships (i.e., the employer-employee relationship) and drives attempts to improve performance (Oduma, Caroline and Were, 2014; Nasution *et al.*, 2018) According to Ikechukwu and Paschal (2017), research has shown career development as an important determinant of employee and organizational relationship and that organization that provides mechanism for employee career development creates a mutual investment of the relationship with their employees which can lead to rewards and promotion. Khan *et al.* (2016), asserted that by giving employee appropriate career development encourages them to improve their skills and have impacts on their jobs performance. Investing in career development is essential for continuous productivity especially in the manufacturing firms (Yukhtharamani *et al.*, 2014). Khan *et al.* (2016) assert that by giving employee appropriate career development encourages them to improve their skills and have impacts on their jobs performance.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

In this study, the researcher adopted a correlation design. Correlation design refers to the type of study that seeks to establish relationship that exists between two or more variables. This study focuses on determining the effect of work flexibility on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centre's in Nigeria. Federal Medical Centres within North Central Nigeria comprises of FMC Benue, FMC Niger, FMC Nasarawa, FMC Kogi, Kwara and FMC Jabi Abuja FCT, with exception of Plateau State because of the absence of FMC there. The population of the study comprised of six thousand, eight hundred and sixty-nine (6,869) with a sample size of 378 staff from five



Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. The medical employees shall comprised of the following; Medical Directors, Medical Consultants, Doctors, Pharmacist, Nurses, Midwives, Medical Laboratory Technicians, Medical Record personnel and Radiologists among others. This choice of employees was considered because they have adequate knowledge and experience about operations of the hospital over time to provide objectivity response on the variables of work flexibility and employees' career development. The sample size was distributed purposively to the management and other employees of FMCs across North Central Nigeria. The data for this study were collected through questionnaire administration. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect responses from the respondents with a validity index of .871 and average reliability of .825

The study adopted the multiple regression model analysis. The implicit model specification to test the designed hypothesis as presented below as thus:

$$ECD = f(WKF) \tag{3}$$

Where;

ECD= Employees' career development

WKFE= Work flexibility

$f$ = Functional relationship

The explicit form of the model is thus presented as follows;

$$ECD = f(TCM, JBS, STD, PTW, OTW) \tag{4}$$

ECD= Employees' career development

TCM= Telecommuting

JBS = Job sharing

STD= Shift duty

PTW= Part time work

OTW=Over time work

Thus, the regression model built as follows:

$$ECD = \beta_0 + \beta_1TCM + \beta_2JBS + \beta_3STD + \beta_4PTW + \beta_5OTW + \mu \tag{5}$$

Where;

ECD = Employees' career development

TCM = Telecommuting

JBS = Job sharing

STD = shift duty

PTW = part time work

OTW = over time work

$\mu$  = error term

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and percentage analysis were used to analyze the personal profile of the respondents. In addition to the descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, including correlation and multiple regression were used to analyze the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25). Regression was used to assess the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, considering that the model is a multivariate one. The T-test for significance was used to test the formulated hypotheses. If p-value is greater than 5% level of significance, we accept the null hypothesis; that is, we accept that the estimate  $b_i$  is not statistically significant at 5% (0.05) level of significance. If p-value is less than the 5% level

of significance, we reject the null hypothesis; in other words, we accept that the estimate  $b_i$  is statistically significant at 5% (0.05) level of significance.

#### **4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the result of data collected from the respondents based on research questions, test of hypotheses and discussion of findings.

##### **4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents were analysed and presented in the tables below:

###### **4.1.1 Response rate**

The response rate shows the total copies of questionnaire distributed, the number returned and number not returned.

**Table 1: Response Rate of the Questionnaire**

Questionnaire issued	416	100%
Questionnaire not returned	38	9%
Questionnaire returned	378	91%

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The result in Table 1 shows that a total of 416 copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher to the respondents out of which 378 were correctly filled and returned giving a response rate of 91 % while 9 % copies of the questionnaire were not usable. The answers supplied by the respondents according to the questionnaire were presented in tables and subsequently analyzed as follows:

###### **4.1.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents**

The data collected on demographic characteristics of respondents such as age, gender, marital status, educational level, working experience and position in the organization are presented in this sub-section.

**Table 1: Demographic Attributes of Respondents**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	219	58.0
Female	159	42.0
<b>Age</b>		
18-27	47	12.4
28-37	100	26.5
38-47	143	37.8
48-57	50	13.2
58 years and above	38	10.1
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	299	79.1
Single	79	20.9
<b>Educational Level</b>		
O Level	29	7.7
OND/NCE	65	17.2
HND/Degree	129	34.1
M.Sc/Ph.D	105	27.8
Others	50	13.2
<b>Working Experience</b>		
1-3 years	43	11.0
4-6 years	81	21.0
7-9 years	133	36.0
10 years and above	121	32.0
<b>Position</b>		
Management	50	13.2
HOD	85	22.5
Unit head	96	25.4
Others	147	38.9

**Source:** Author’s Field Work, 2024

The result in table 1 shows that result of demographic characteristics of respondents. It shows that majority of the respondents 58 % were males while 42 % were females. This shows that both genders were fully represented in the survey but most of them were males. It also implies that there are more male health workers working in the health institutions surveyed. The age distribution of the participants shows that majority (37.8%) were of average age while only 10 % of the respondents were above 58 years. The result also shows that 26.5 % fall within the age of 28-37 and 13.2. % from 48-57 while 12.4 % belong to the young category. The implication of the result is that majority of the health workers in middle aged fall still within the working class. The distribution of the respondents by marital status indicates that majority of the respondents, 79.1 % were married while 20.9 % were single, indicating that most staff of health institutions surveyed are married and stable in their homes. The educational qualification of the respondents shows that, 34.1 % who are the majority have HND/Degree qualifications, those with higher

qualifications represented 27.8 %, 7.7 % have O’ Level qualifications, 17.2 % of the respondents have ND and NCE qualifications while 13.2 % have other professional qualifications. This result implies that the respondents were well educated and have knowledge about flexible working arrangements and implications on employee performance. The distribution of respondents based on working experience shows that, 11.0 % of the respondents had worked from 1-3 years, majority (36 %) have worked from 7-9 years and 32 % worked from 10 years and above while 21 % have experience from 4-6 years. The result clearly demonstrates that most health workers have worked for many years with good knowledge of flexible working arrangement in tertiary health institutions. Finally, the distribution of the respondents based on their positions in their organizations shows that, majority (38.9 %) were junior staff, 25.4 % were unit heads, 22.5 % were Heads of Departments and 13.2% were management staff. This implies that all categories of staff participated in the survey though majority were lower level employees.

**4.1.3 Descriptive Statistics**

The descriptive measures used in this study included the mean, standard deviation, and tests of skewness and kurtosis.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Telecommuting	378	1	5	4.10	.900
Job Sharing	378	1	5	4.03	.948
Shift Duty	378	1	5	4.12	.840
Part-time work	378	1	5	4.13	.887
Over-time work	378	1	5	4.11	.845
Employee Career Dev.	378	1	5	4.06	.893

**Source:** Author’s Computation from SPSS 25 Output, 2024

The result in Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the dependent variable (employee service delivery) and the predictor variables telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work. The mean and standard deviation scores for the variables were as follows: Telecommuting (M=4.10, SD=0.900), job sharing (M=4.03, SD=0.948), shift duty (M=4.12, SD=0.840), part-time work (M=4.13, SD=0.887) and over-time work (M=4.11, SD=0.845) as well as employee service delivery (M=4.06, SD=0.893). The mean scores and standard deviation indicate the level of agreement of respondents with the questions.

**4.1.3 Diagnostic Tests**

Before carrying out a regression test, certain assumptions must be met to ensure that the results are not spurious. The normality and multicollinearity tests are conducted in this section. Normality test was conducted using skewness, and kurtosis while the test of multicollinearity was carried out using a correlation matrix and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).

**Table 3: Test for Normality using Skewness/Kurtosis**

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Telecommuting	378	-1.058	.125	3.260	.249
Job Sharing	378	-1.134	.125	2.050	.249
Shift Duty	378	-1.890	.125	3.683	.249
Part-time Work	378	-1.954	.125	3.730	.249
Over-time Leave	378	-1.083	.125	3.594	.249
Employee Career Dev.	378	-1.462	.125	3.692	.249

**Source:** Author’s Computation from SPSS 25 Output, 2024

The result in Table 3 shows the test of normality based on Skewness Statistic and Kurtosis Statistic. To check the level of skewness and kurtosis for the variables, if skewness is less than -1 or greater than 1, the distribution is highly skewed. If skewness is between -1 and -0.5 or between 0.5 and 1, the distribution is moderately skewed. If skewness is between -0.5 and 0.5, the distribution is approximately symmetric. In Table 17 the skewness value for telecommuting is -1.058; for job sharing is -1.134; for shift duty, the skewness value is -1.890; for part-time work the value is -1.954 while for over-time work, the skewness value is -1.083 while the skewness value for employees’ career development is -1.462. From the result, all the skewness ideals fall within the range of -1 to +1, hence there is no case of extreme skewness from the data. Kurtosis was used as a measure of whether the data are heavy-tailed or light-tailed relative to a normal distribution. The assumption is that kurtosis values should be within range of  $\pm 7$  and therefore fail to display excessive kurtosis.

**Table 4: Correlation Matrix**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Telecommuting	1					
Job Sharing (2)	.307**	1				
Shift Duty (3)	.323**	.572**	1			
Part-Time Work (4)	.201**	.590**	.550**	1		
Overtime Work (5)	.378**	.491**	.533**	.539**	1	
Employee Career Dev (6)	.482**	.412**	.493**	.462**	.407**	1
N	378	378	378	378	378	378

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

**Source:** Author’s Computation from SPSS 25 Output, 2024

A correlation matrix and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were used to test for multicollinearity among the independent variables used in the study. The outcomes as presented in Table 4 found no issue of collinearity among variables since the values of correlation were not above 5. The study found positive correlation between telecommuting and employees’ career development ( $r=.482$ ;  $p<.01$ ) and a positive correlation between job sharing and employees’ career development ( $r=.412$ ;  $p<.01$ ). The study further

found a positive relationship between shift duty and employees’ career development ( $r=.493; p<.01$ ) while part-time work and employees’ career development are also correlated ( $r=.462; p<.01$ ). The result further found a positive link between over-time work and employees’ career development ( $r=.407; p<.01$ )

**Table 5: Test of Tolerance and VIF**

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Telecommuting	.560	1.787
Job Sharing	.525	1.905
Shift Duty	.570	1.755
Part-time Work	.632	1.582
Over-time Work	.535	1.870

**Source:** Author’s Computation from SPSS 25 Output, 2024

The result in Table 5 shows that VIF confirms the result of the correlation matrix that there are no problems of multicollinearity amongst the independent variables (telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work) used in the model because the values are less than 5. According to Field (2009) VIF values in excess of 10 and tolerance value less than 0.2 are an indication of the presence of multicollinearity.

**4.1.4 Regression analysis**

This sub-section presents the results of regression analysis of the model used in the study. The regression model explains the degree of effect of the predictor variables namely, telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work on the dependent variable (employees’ career development). Multiple regression analysis was conducted at a 95 percent. This study was designed to examine the effect of work flexibility on employees’ career development of Federal Medical Centers in North Central Nigeria. Five hypotheses were therefore, tested in this study; hence employees’ career development was regressed against telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work.

**Table 6: Model Summary**

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimates	Sig.
1	.680 <sup>a</sup>	.462	.455	.696	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant): Over-time, part-time, shift duty, telecommuting, job sharing

b. Dependent Variable: Employees’ career development

**Source:** Author’s Computation using SPSS Version 25 (2024).

To explore the coefficient of determination, the  $R^2$  was calculated and presented as Table 6. The  $R^2$  in this study shows that 46.2 % of the variation in employees’ career development was attributed to telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time leave. This implies that work flexibility practices contribute 46.2 % to employees’ career development while the remaining 53.8 % is attributable to other factors outside the model



**Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	154.733	5	30.947	63.941	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	180.042	372	.484		
	Total	334.775	377			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees’ career development

b. Predictors: (Constant): Over-time, part-time, shift duty, telecommuting, job sharing

**Source:** Author’s Computation using SPSS Version 25 (2024)

Prior to testing the hypotheses, model fit was assessed by way of the F-statistic and its significant value as shown in Table 7. As the regression result indicates, the model was significant [F = 63.941, df = (5, 372), p < 0.001]. This implies that the data fit the model as expected further confirming the appropriateness of the implementation of multiple regression analysis in this study.

**Table 8: Regression Coefficients**

Hypotheses	Variable	B	S.E.	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	Decision
	Constant	0.752	0.196		3.836	0.000	
<i>H<sub>01</sub></i>	Telecommuting	0.179	0.050	0.181	3.552	0.000	Reject
<i>H<sub>02</sub></i>	Job Sharing	0.150	0.052	0.144	1.957	0.039	Reject
<i>H<sub>03</sub></i>	Shift Duty	0.172	0.044	0.139	2.762	0.006	Reject
<i>H<sub>04</sub></i>	Part-time work	0.239	0.046	0.248	5.185	0.000	Reject
<i>H<sub>05</sub></i>	Over-time work	0.221	0.047	0.246	4.729	0.000	Reject

a. Dependent Variable: Employees’ Career Development

**Source:** Author’s Computation using SPSS Version 25 (2024)

The regression coefficient in Table 8 shows that for telecommuting (B= 0.179) which implies that one percent increase in telecommuting will result to 17.9 % change in employees’ career development if other variables are kept controlled. The regression coefficient for job sharing (B= 0.150) which means that one percent increase in job sharing results to 15.0 % increase in employees’ career development. The regression coefficient for shift duty (B=0.172) which means that one percent increase in shift duty increases employees’ career development by 17.2 % if other variables are kept constant. For part-time work (B=0.239) implying that a one percent change in part-time work will result to 23.9 % change in employees’ career development while for over-time work (B=0.221) indicating that a change in overtime will result to 22.1% improvement in employees’ career development. Based on the results over time work has more significant effect on employees’ career development in Federal Medical Centres surveyed.

**4.2. Test of Hypotheses**

The five hypotheses formulated in this study were tested as follows:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Telecommuting has no significant effect on employees’ career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, the strength of the effect of telecommuting on employees’ career development was measured by the calculated (p-value = 0.000;  $\beta$ = 0.181; t=3.552) at a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0. 05. Since the computed p-value is less than the 5% level of significance for a two tailed test, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative

hypothesis accepted. This implies that telecommuting has a significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** Job sharing has no significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, given that  $p\text{-value} = 0.039$ ;  $\beta = 0.144$ ;  $t = 1.957$  at a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Since the computed  $p\text{-value}$  is less than the significance level of 0.05 ( $p\text{ value } .039 < \alpha 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted, thus the study concludes that job sharing has a significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** Shift duty has no significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, the strength of the effect of shift duty on employees' career development was measured by as  $p\text{-value} = 0.06$ ;  $\beta = 0.139$ ;  $t = 2.762$  at a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Since the computed  $p\text{-value}$  is less than the significance level of 0.05 ( $p\text{ value } .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. This implies that shift duty has a significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

**H0<sub>4</sub>:** Part-time work has no significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, the strength of the effect of part-time work on employees' career development was measured as  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ;  $\beta = 0.248$ ;  $t = 5.185$  at a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Since the computed  $p\text{-value}$  is less than the significance level of 0.05 ( $p\text{ value } .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. This implies that part-time work has a significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

**H0<sub>5</sub>:** Over-time work has no significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, the strength of the effect of over-time work on employees' career development was measured as  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ;  $\beta = 0.246$ ;  $t = 4.729$  at a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Since the computed  $p\text{-value}$  is less than the significance level of 0.05 ( $p\text{ value } .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. This implies that over-time work has a significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria.

### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

The results collected from the participants and analysed are discussed in line with the research objectives and hypotheses:

The test of hypothesis one revealed a positive significant effect of telecommuting on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the  $p\text{-value}$  (.000) was less than the level of significance. This can be statistically given as  $P\text{-value } .000 < \alpha = 0.05$ . The result is in agreement with Wuhan (2019), who agreed that telecommuting has a positive significant effect on organizational performance. Gajendran and Harrison (2018), in support of the finding asserted that telecommuting is a significant predictor of employee job performance.

Job sharing has a positive significant on employees' career development in Federal Medical Centers in North Central Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (.039) was less than the level of significance. This can be statistically given as  $P\text{-value } .039 < \alpha = 0.05$ . The finding is in line with Kangogo and Wanambiro (2019), who affirmed the significant effect of flexible working schedules such as job sharing on the commitment of employees in the health services in Kenya. The result agrees with Ambreen and Siddiqui (2018), who averred that job sharing is significantly correlated with employee performance in the health sector in Pakistan. A study by Ngambi (2021), revealed that job sharing allow employees more balanced life in terms of giving time to family thus enhancing team skills and leadership skills. Bliss and Thornton (2020) also found a positive relationship between job sharing and employee performance. The implication of the finding is that job-sharing gives employees the opportunity to keep their careers on track while allowing more time for family responsibilities or other activities, and this invariably improves their career development. The result of hypothesis three showed a positive significant effect of shift duty on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centers in North Central Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (.006) was lower than the level of significance. This can be statistically given as  $P\text{-value } .006 < \alpha = 0.05$ . This result is corroborated by Divya and Shankar (2023), in their study on flexible working hours and the work-life balance of nurses in Private Hospitals in Bangalore. Kitonyi (2023), postulated that shift duty plans significantly affect employee performance. Kessy and Mseti (2023), reported that work flexibility practices such as shift duty positively affects the performance of employees working in the private hospitals in Tanzania. The implication of the finding is that shift work create an avenue where employees can have time for themselves and their family thereby improving productivity.

The test of hypothesis four revealed a positive significant effect of part-time work on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centers in North Central Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (.000) was less than the level of significance. This can be statistically given as  $P\text{-value } .000 < \alpha = 0.05$ . In agreement with this result, Ambreen and Siddiqui (2018), found a significant effect of part-time work on performance of health workers in Pakistan. Innocent *et al.* (2019), postulated that part-time work significantly and positively affects performance of sales persons in the publishing industry. Divya and Shankar (2023), also found a positive significant relationship between part-time work and performance of nurses in Private Hospitals in Bangalore, India. However, Nasimajaa and Ulmeter (2022), found a negative and insignificant relationship between part-time and employee service delivery in public healthcare organizations in southern India. The implication of the result to organizations is that working on part-time gives employees enough time to engage in other activities that help to improve their productivity at work.

The test of hypothesis five indicated that there is a significant effect of over-time work on employees' career development in Federal Medical Centres in North Central Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (.000) was lower than the level of significance. This can be statistically given as  $P\text{-value } .000 < \alpha = 0.05$ . In support of the result, Collewet and Sauermann (2017), established a significant effect of over-time work on employee performance. They stated that overtime work could result to fatigue at work but results to higher performance if there is better utilization of opportunities and human capital. This result

also agrees with Ugbonhe and Ishaq (2023), who reported a significant effect of overtime work on the productivity of health workers. On the contrary, Kiiru (2022), reported an insignificant relationship between overtime work and employee performance in the public health sector. The implication of the result is that organizations should not always encourage over-time work since it may lead to poor work quality in the long-run because of work fatigue.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section covers the conclusion and recommendations, limitations and suggestion for further study.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study added to the body of knowledge about how work flexibility affects the career development of Federal Medical Center staff in North Central Nigeria. The study gave a general overview of the possible patterns of the interaction between employees' career development and characteristics such job sharing, shift duty, telecommuting, and part-time and overtime work. In government medical centers in north central Nigeria, work flexibility has been found to be a significant factor that influences employees' career development. The study concludes that work flexibility (telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time and over-time) can be considered an essential and viable strategy in propelling employees career development in federal medical centres. (in terms of job sharing, quality of work and career progression) as they have potentials for enhancing employees career development of the federal medical centres through creating an atmosphere that makes the organization to stay healthy and competitive thereby adjusting to the environmental dynamics of the health sector. Work flexibility can be seen to have implication for retention of existing competent employees as well as attracting new ones through the various techniques available. Hence, work flexibility have positive significant effect on employees' career development of Federal Medical centres in North central Nigeria.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Since telecommuting has demonstrated to be an integral strategy to enhance career development while supporting organizational goals, management of Federal Medical Centres in Nigeria should continue to encourage implementing telecommuting options across the organization to support career development for employees. This is because, providing flexibility in work arrangements, allowing employees to balance personal and professional growth.
- ii. Since job sharing as a viable option for employees seeking career development, skill enhancement, and work-life balance, management of Federal Medical Centres in Nigeria should focus on expanding and optimizing this practice to benefit both employees and the organization. This is because, developing and implementing formal job sharing policies that clearly outline roles, responsibilities, and expectations for employees who participate in job sharing arrangements leads to better organizational performance and career development of employees in an organization.

- iii. Management of Federal Medical Centres in Nigeria should focus on enhancing the effectiveness of shift duties while ensuring they continue to support employees' career growth and organizational objectives. This is because, designing shift schedules that balance employees' workload, personal well-being, and opportunities for professional growth as well as implement a rotation system to expose employees to different shifts, ensuring equitable access to career-enhancing experiences.
- iv. Management of Federal Medical Centres in Nigeria should focus on leveraging part-time work as a tool for enhancing employees' career growth while supporting organizational goals. This can be done by developing and implementing clear policies for part-time work, outlining eligibility, roles, responsibilities, and expectations for both employees and management.
- v. Management of Federal Medical Centres in Nigeria should focus on ensuring that overtime work is structured, rewarding, and conducive to professional growth while avoiding burnout by assign overtime work that provides employees with opportunities to acquire new skills, tackle challenging tasks, or work on critical projects that contribute to their career growth.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited to work flexibility practices and employees' career development of North Central Nigeria. Another limitation is that the study relied on the use of questionnaire with close-ended questions for data collection hence respondents were constrained to all the options provided. The researcher however, ensured that the questions reflect all issues relating to the topic were captured on each of the variables.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study attempts to fill the research gap in terms of understanding how work flexibility practices affect employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North-Central Nigeria. The research was able to establish the predictive role of telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work on employees' career development. Further studies could explore other aspects of work flexibility practices that were not considered in this study as the research was limited to exploring the effect of telecommuting, job sharing, shift duty, part-time work and over-time work on employees' career development of Federal Medical Centres in North-Central Nigeria. Future studies could explore these relationships using a sample of teaching hospitals in North Central Nigeria. Also, future studies could explore these relationships using a larger scope rather than limiting it to North Central Nigeria. In addition, further research studies could use longitudinal research designs rather than cross-sectional research designs. Longitudinal research is capable of establishing causality, a quality that cross-sectional research designs fail to attain. Scholars that want to explore the relationship between work flexibility practice and employees' career development or performance could include mediating or moderating variables to better illuminate and present a better understanding of the phenomena. The inclusion of these variables would help contribute to the theoretical debate and empirical evidence of the work flexibility practices on the performance of employees.

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