



Work-Life-Balance and Performance among Female Employees in Law Firms in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract. Grounded in Border Theory, Boundary Theory, Spill-over Theory, and Inter-role Conflict Theory, this study examined the impact of work-life balance practices (leave policy, welfare policies, family responsibilities, and flexible working arrangements) on the performance of female lawyers in selected law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria. Adopting a positivist philosophy and survey research design, data were collected from 226 female legal practitioners drawn from a target population of 520 across eight purposively selected firms using proportionate sampling. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and simple linear regression analyses were employed to test the hypothesized relationships. The findings revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between work-life balance practices and employee performance ($R^2 = .844$; Adjusted $R^2 = .839$; $F = 166.040$, $p < .05$), indicating that the model explained over 84% of the variation in performance. Leave policy ($\beta = .691$, $p < .001$), welfare policies ($\beta = .327$, $p < .001$), and family responsibilities ($\beta = .217$, $p < .001$) exerted positive and significant effects on performance, whereas flexible working arrangements were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). The Durbin-Watson statistic (2.871) confirmed the absence of serial correlation. The study recommends automation of leave administration, equitable and performance-linked welfare packages, and the design of context-sensitive work-family policies that accommodate diverse family systems rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

Keywords: Employee performance, female lawyers, legal firms, work-life balance practices, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Work and family represent two fundamental and interconnected domains in individuals' lives, and the

ability to manage responsibilities in these domains has become an important concern for employees and organizations alike. Rapid changes in the nature of work, technological connectivity, and evolving social expectations have intensified the difficulty of balancing professional and personal roles. As a result, work-life balance (WLB) has gained increasing attention in human resource management research and practice. Scholars argue that effective work-life balance policies help employees harmonize their work and personal responsibilities, thereby enhancing psychological wellbeing, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Allen *et al.*, 2024). Empirical evidence also suggests that organizations that implement supportive work-life initiatives experience improved employee performance and reduced turnover intentions (Pujowati & Aswan, 2025).

The challenge of maintaining work-life balance is particularly evident in professional service sectors such as the legal profession. Legal practice is typically characterized by long working hours, demanding workloads, strict deadlines, and high expectations for productivity. These pressures often create significant work-family conflict and occupational stress among legal professionals. Research indicates that excessive job demands and time pressure are among the strongest predictors of employee burnout and reduced wellbeing in knowledge-intensive occupations (Kasperczuk *et al.*, 2025). Within the legal profession, such pressures may contribute to high attrition rates, especially among female professionals who frequently experience additional family and caregiving responsibilities. Consequently, organizations are increasingly encouraged to adopt supportive work policies that enable employees to better manage the interface between their work and family roles.

In response to these challenges, organizations have adopted various work-life balance initiatives aimed at supporting employees' personal and professional needs. Contemporary literature identifies several key mechanisms through which organizations promote work-life balance, including flexible working arrangements, leave policies, dependent-care assistance, and employee welfare programmes (Alsulami *et al.*, 2022). However, scholars note that many organizations still implement these practices in a limited or fragmented manner, often focusing mainly on flexible scheduling while neglecting broader welfare and family-supportive initiatives that are essential for sustainable work-life integration.

Recent studies conducted in Africa and Nigeria have begun to highlight the growing importance of work-life balance initiatives in shaping employee outcomes. For example, Akinwale and George (2022) found that flexible work arrangements significantly improved job satisfaction and performance among employees in Nigerian service organizations. Similarly, Olatunji *et al.* (2023) reported that family-supportive organizational practices were positively associated with employee engagement and reduced work-family conflict among professionals in Nigeria. In another study, Okeke and Onyekwelu (2024) observed that welfare policies and supportive workplace practices significantly enhanced employee commitment and productivity within Nigerian organizations. These findings suggest that work-life balance initiatives can play a crucial role in improving both employee wellbeing and organizational effectiveness in developing economies.

Despite these growing insights, empirical research on work-life balance within the Nigerian legal profession remains limited. Much of the existing literature on work-life balance, particularly studies focusing on female legal professionals, has been conducted in Western contexts. Consequently, there is insufficient empirical evidence explaining how specific work-life balance initiatives influence employee performance within Nigerian legal firms. Given the demanding nature of legal practice and the increasing participation of women in the profession, there is a need to examine how structured work-life balance initiatives affect female employees' performance. Accordingly, the following questions are posed with the aim of providing practical recommendations for improving human resource practices in the sector: *What is the effect of leave policy on the performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria? To what extent does flexi-time affect the performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria? How do welfare policies impact the*

performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria? What is the effect of family responsibilities on the performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Employee Performance

Employee performance has continuously gained immense attention since a few decades ago and is frequently highlighted in society. Performance is a metric used by successful businesses to measure their work accomplishments. An organization's performance could be viewed from quality-of-service delivery, level of productivity, internal business process in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in the utilization of resources, employee job satisfaction, and motivation. According to Silitonga and Sadeli (2020), employee performance is frequently interpreted as representative of the organization's performance and has a direct impact on the organization's image. Khan and Mashikhi (2017) stated that performance has been considered as the ultimate outcome of an organization as well as an employee. Creativity, innovation, and a higher level of commitment among employees are the sources of organizational success and glory. A study by Prange and Pinho (2017) mentioned that, since human resources are an important factor in any organization, organizational productivity and efficiency depend on the performance of its employees. Enhanced capabilities, knowledge, and skills are the foundation for the organization's competitive advantage in today's global market (Rodriguez & Walters, 2017). Since the survival of the organization will depend on their ability to provide the employees with the necessary actions, managers of organizations should consider meeting employees' mental and physical requirements and enhancing employees' personal and occupational performance using a variety of means and methods (Abdulkhaliq & Mohammadali, 2019).

2.2 Work-life Balance (WLB)

Work-life balance (WLB) has evolved from being viewed primarily as an individual effort to manage competing responsibilities to a strategic organizational practice that supports employee wellbeing and administrative effectiveness. In this context, *work* refers to activities requiring physical or cognitive effort performed to achieve organizational objectives, while *balance* denotes the ability to maintain stability between professional and personal life domains (Allen *et al.*, 2024). In recent years, balancing work and family demands has become increasingly challenging

due to demographic and workplace changes such as rising workforce participation, particularly among women, the growth of dual-earner households, and longer working hours. These changes have intensified role pressures and increased concerns about managing competing work and family responsibilities (Kossek & Lee, 2022). Consequently, organizations are increasingly encouraged to adopt supportive work-life balance practices to help employees effectively integrate their professional and personal roles while enhancing job satisfaction, wellbeing, and performance (Pujowati & Aswan, 2025).

2.3 Work-Life Balance Practices

While there are many definitions as to what creates a work-life balance practice, the word ordinarily represents one of the following: administrative provision for indigent care, personal or family leave and supple work options. Hence, these practices encompass family leave plans (adoption, compassionate and parental leave), on-site crèche and eldercare facilities, work from home identified as telework, compressed work week, which include working four days' worth of hours, while the fifth day is taken as off day, division of a full time job between employees (job sharing), flexible work hours (flexi-time), which empowers employees to vary their commencement of work and when they are going to finish, provided a certain number of hours is worked (Abioro *et al.*, 2018). This study, however, focuses on the impact of these work-life balance practices (specifically leave policy, flexi-time, welfare policies, and family responsibilities) on female employees' performance in law firms in Nigeria.

Leave Management

Leave management is the process involved in the requisitioning, granting or denying staff time off from work taken into consideration the effects on the institution and also ensure that records on same are kept (Bourdeau *et al.*, 2019; Kim & Ryu, 2017). This may include managing leave related to annual leave, personal or family member sickness, childbirth, and any other event that could give rise to the absence of the employee. Organizations sometimes underrate the effect that employee absence from work can have on productivity. As inferred by (Kocak *et al.*, 2018) and (Zhang *et al.*, 2017) the average cost of staff absenteeism is estimated at 36% of employees' salary, while absenteeism may give rise to 19% daily net lost in productivity. The indirect cost of employee absenteeism includes the interruption of work, overtime payments, engagement of temporary or casual workers, stakeholder's dissatisfaction, as well

as employee turnover (Memon *et al.*, 2020). Based on the foregoing, the study hypothesizes that:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between leave policy and performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Flexible Working Arrangements

Flexible working arrangements relates to an organization working arrangement in terms of working time, working location and pattern of working (Chukwudi *et al.*, 2022). Flexible working arrangements like flexible part time, shift work, compressed work hours and job sharing are often used to help employees in balancing their family and work-life during 'core hours' which is usually fixed or a period between the latest permissible starting time and earliest permissible finishing time (Kipkoech, 2017). Recent studies indicate that contemporary flexible and hybrid work arrangements increasingly grant employees greater autonomy over when and where they perform their tasks, replacing rigid work schedules with flexible systems that allow work to be carried out from multiple locations such as home, co-working spaces, cafés, or shared office environments like hot-desking (van der Lippe, den Dulk, & Begall, 2024; Wontorczyk & Roznowski, 2022). Sometimes, flexible working arrangements help to increase job satisfaction and maintain work-life balance but often contribute to work augmentation and work-life conflicts (Chukwudi *et al.*, 2022). In light of this, the study hypothesizes that:

H₀₂: Flexible working arrangements have no significant effect on performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Welfare Policies

Employee welfare refers to organizational efforts aimed at improving the overall wellbeing and quality of life of employees within and beyond the workplace. It encompasses a broad range of provisions designed to create favourable working and living conditions for employees in relation to their economic, social, and work environments. In modern human resource management, welfare programmes constitute an important component of the total reward system alongside basic pay and performance incentives, and may include both legally mandated benefits and voluntary organizational initiatives such as health services, safety measures, and social security provisions. Adequate earnings, safe and humane working conditions, and access to welfare benefits are widely recognized as critical factors that enhance employees' quality of work life, job satisfaction, and productivity (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023; Dessler,

2024). The desire for better employees' performances is what prompted their hiring in the first place. As a result, it is in any organization's best interest to shape the appropriate methods to increase employees' performances by the thoughtfulness of incentives owing to employees in the form of welfare packages (Akintoye & Ofobruku, 2022). On this basis, the study hypothesizes that:

H₀₃: Welfare policies have no significant impact on performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Family Responsibilities

Increasing workforce participation among women, the rise of dual-earner households, single-parent families, and growing elder-care responsibilities have significantly reshaped the work-family interface in contemporary societies. These demographic changes mean that many employees simultaneously manage multiple caregiving roles alongside their professional responsibilities, which can intensify work-family conflict or, in some cases, create positive spillover between the two domains because work and family boundaries are often flexible and interconnected (Allen *et al.*, 2024; Kossek & Lee, 2022). Empirical studies also indicate that factors such as heavy workloads, cultural expectations, family obligations, and organizational support systems strongly influence employees' ability - particularly that of women professionals - to balance work and family responsibilities, with important implications for job performance and overall wellbeing (Adisa *et al.*, 2023; Shockley *et al.*, 2023). In line with the foregoing, the study hypothesizes that:

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between family responsibilities and performance of female employees in law firms in Lagos State, Nigeria.

3. Empirical Review on Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

Empirical research consistently demonstrates that specific work-life balance initiatives influence employee performance, although effects are often context-dependent. Regarding leave policies, recent studies indicate that access to structured leave arrangements, such as parental and family leave, reduces burnout, enhances wellbeing, and improves job commitment and productivity. For instance, Adisa *et al.* (2023) found that employees with supportive leave provisions exhibit higher engagement and better task performance, while Allen *et al.* (2024) emphasized that leave policies contribute significantly to organizational commitment and reduced absenteeism.

Flexible work arrangements, including flextime and hybrid schedules, are also positively associated with employee performance. Shockley *et al.* (2023) reported that flexible scheduling reduces work-family conflict and improves employee engagement and productivity, while Pujowati and Aswan (2025) found that hybrid and remote work models allow employees to manage competing work and family demands more efficiently, enhancing overall performance.

Welfare policies remain another significant determinant of employee performance. Comprehensive welfare initiatives, including health benefits, employee assistance programs, and safe working condition, have been shown to improve job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment. In the Nigerian context, Okeke and Onyekwelu (2024) found that organizations providing robust welfare support experience higher employee productivity and reduced turnover. Similarly, Kasperczuk *et al.* (2025) emphasized that welfare programs contribute to sustainable employee performance by addressing both social and psychological needs.

Lastly, family responsibilities continue to shape work outcomes, especially for female employees. The increasing participation of women in the workforce, coupled with dual-earner households and caregiving duties, intensifies the challenges of balancing work and family roles. Kossek and Lee (2022) note that supportive organizational policies can mitigate the negative effects of family demands on job performance, and Shockley *et al.* (2023) confirm that family-supportive practices significantly reduce work-family conflict and enhance employee engagement.

4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored on Border Theory, Boundary Theory, Spill-over Theory, and Inter-role Conflict Theory, which collectively explain the dynamics between work and family domains and their implications for employee outcomes. Border Theory, advanced by Sue Campbell Clark (2000), conceptualizes work and family as distinct domains separated by temporal, physical, and psychological borders, arguing that the permeability and flexibility of these borders determine the ease with which individuals transition between roles. Complementing this perspective, Boundary Theory, associated with Zerubavel (1996) and further developed by Ashforth *et al.* (2000), emphasizes how individuals cognitively construct and manage boundaries between life spheres, influencing role segmentation or integration. While Border Theory focuses specifically on work-family interfaces, Boundary Theory provides a broader cognitive lens for

understanding how individuals categorize and navigate social roles. Spill-over Theory, articulated by scholars such as Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Gary N. Powell and elaborated by Arnold B. Bakker and others in later literature, posits that experiences, emotions, skills, and behaviors in one domain transfer to another, either positively or negatively, thereby linking satisfaction or strain across work and family spheres. In contrast, Inter-role Conflict Theory, originally conceptualized by Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Nicholas J. Beutell (1985), explains work-family tension as arising from incompatible role demands, particularly where time, strain, or behavioral expectations in one role hinder performance in another. Synthesized together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for this study by explaining how structural boundaries, cognitive categorizations, emotional transfers, and incompatible role pressures interact to shape work-life balance and, ultimately, employee performance.

5. Research Methodology

This study adopted a positivist philosophy and a deductive approach, employing a survey research design. The population comprised all female legal practitioners in eight purposively selected private law firms (Wale Babalakin & Co, Aluko & Oyebo, Templars, Banwo & Ighodalo, G. Elias, George Etomi & Partners, Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, and Aelx Legal) selected based on staff strength and accessibility. From a total workforce of 1,272 employees, an estimated 520 were female lawyers, forming the target population. Using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, a sample size of 226 was derived and proportionately allocated across the firms. Respondents were randomly selected within each firm based on gender. Data were collected through a structured 39-item questionnaire divided into two

sections: demographic characteristics (gender, age, experience, educational qualification, and status) and study variables. The independent variables (leave policy, flexible work arrangements, welfare policy, and family responsibilities) were measured on five-point Likert scales, while employee performance (dependent variable) was adapted from Kasau (2017) and similarly measured.

Instrument validity was ensured through expert review to establish internal and content validity. Reliability was tested using Cronbach’s alpha, with all constructs exceeding the 0.70 threshold (leave policy = 0.801; flexible work arrangements = 0.854; welfare policy = 0.775; family responsibilities = 0.911; employee performance = 0.865), confirming internal consistency. A pilot study involving five law firms preceded the main survey. Primary data were collected over a two-week period, with the assistance of research aides and in collaboration with HR and administrative heads of the firms. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize sample characteristics, correlational analysis to determine the strength and direction of relationships, and simple linear regression to test the functional relationship between work-life balance practices and employee performance. The results are presented in the next section.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Descriptive Results

Of the 226 questionnaires administered, only 128 (57% response rate) were retrieved and used for analyses. This section provides descriptive analyses of the study’s sample. The demographic variables of respondents examined in this study include age, years of experience, highest educational qualification, and hierarchical level. The result is as presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Respondents’ Demographic Distribution

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age	16 - 25	80	62.5	62.5
	26 - 35	44	34.4	96.9
	36 - 45	4	3.1	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	
Years of Experience	1 – 5	80	62.5	62.5
	6 - 10	48	37.5	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	
Highest Educational Qualification	BL	105	82.0	82.0
	LL.M	23	18.0	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	
Hierarchical Level	Associate	124	96.9	96.9
	Senior Associate	4	3.1	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	

Source: Researchers’ Fieldwork (2025)

6.2 Descriptive Statistics of Employee Performance

Each item in the variables presented in Table 4.3 was structured in 5-point Likert scale of 1-5 with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 is Disagree, 3 represents Neutral, 4 is Agree, and 5 is Strongly Agree. Responses on each item on the questionnaire are based on a midpoint average of 3.0 at which response would be regarded as agreement or disagreement. A mean score of magnitude above 3.0 would therefore indicate agreement while a mean score of below 3.0 signifies disagreement. The calculated values are scored as follows: between 1.0 – 1.4 is scored as very low, 1.5- 2.4 is low, 2.5 – 3.4 is moderately high, 3.5 – 4.4 is high, and 4.5 and above is very high (SERAP, 2018). The results are shown as follows:

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Employee Performance

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
6	I have absolute understanding of my roles and responsibilities in this firm.	70 (54.7%)	58 (45.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.55
7	I am able to carry out my responsibilities and tasks effectively and efficiently.	70 (54.7%)	58 (45.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.55
8	My performance is often affected by multiple family responsibilities.	23 (18%)	65 (50.8%)	18 (14.1%)	22 (17.2%)	0 (0%)	3.70
9	I feel motivated to render more services to this firm after I return from every leave	23 (18%)	83 (64.8%)	22 (17.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.01
10	I come up with creative solutions to new problems at work	23 (18%)	88 (68.8%)	17 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.05
11	I usually feel efficient every time I am allowed the flexibility of deciding my work schedule.	42 (32.8%)	86 (67.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.33
12	I am able to set priorities at work	68 (53.1%)	60 (46.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.53
13	I continually seek new challenges at work	63 (49.2%)	65 (50.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.49
14	I find myself often complaining about non-work and work related issues at work	23 (18%)	0 (0%)	25 (19.5%)	63 (49.2%)	17 (13.3%)	2.60
Overall mean							4.09

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

Table 2 above shows the performance of employees in the sampled law firms in the following order: I have absolute understanding of my roles and responsibilities in this firm ($\bar{X} = 4.55$); I am able to carry out my responsibilities and tasks effectively and efficiently ($\bar{X} = 4.55$); I am able to set priorities at work ($\bar{X} = 4.53$); I continually seek new challenges at work ($\bar{X} = 4.49$); I usually feel efficient every time I am allowed the flexibility of deciding my work schedule ($\bar{X} = 4.33$); I come up with creative solutions to new problems at work ($\bar{X} = 4.05$); I feel motivated to render more services to this firm after I return from every leave ($\bar{X} = 4.01$); My performance is often affected by multiple family responsibilities ($\bar{X} = 3.70$); and I find myself often complaining about non-work and work related issues at work ($\bar{X} = 2.60$). The overall mean score of 4.09 shows that there is high level of employee performance in these law firms.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Leave Policy

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
15	My firm observes the leave policy in the employment agreement.	110 (85.9%)	18 (14.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.86
16	There is paid maternity/paternity leave in this firm.	88 (68.8%)	18 (14.1%)	17 (13.3%)	5 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	4.48
17	This firm allows me to take time off for further studies	88 (68.8%)	40 (31.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.69
18	This firm offers sick leave which helps me to take care of my emotional, mental, and physical health.	88 (68.8%)	35 (27.3%)	0 (0%)	5 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	4.61
19	This firm offers annual leave which helps me in reducing work-induced stress.	93 (72.7%)	35 (27.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.73
20	My firm usually gives me additional leave to prolong my annual leave.	46 (35.9%)	17 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	18 (14.1%)	47 (36.7%)	2.98
Overall mean							4.39

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

The overall mean score of 4.39 shows that the leave policy rate of these law firms is high. Meaning that leave policy is given top priority at these law firms.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Flexible Work Arrangements

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
21	In this firm, employees who use flex-time are as much likely to advance their careers as those who do not use flex time.	9 (7%)	66 (51.6%)	36 (28.1%)	0 (0%)	17 (13.3%)	3.39
22	My work schedule mostly allows me opportunities to attend appointment and special events in my family.	9 (7%)	58 (45.3%)	61 (47.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.59
23	Sometimes I can work while at home through telecommunication	5 (3.9%)	88 (68.8%)	35 (27.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.77
24	I can decide the start and finish times for specific tasks assigned	5 (3.9%)	59 (46.1%)	47 (36.7%)	17 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	3.41
25	In this firm, it is quite easy to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters	4 (3.1%)	37 (28.9%)	48 (37.5%)	39 (30.5%)	0 (0%)	3.05
26	Employees are often expected to take work home at night and/or on weekends.	47 (36.7%)	59 (46.1%)	0 (0%)	22 (17.2%)	0 (0%)	4.02
Overall mean							3.54

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

The overall mean score of 3.54 shows that flexible work arrangements is perceived as high in these law firms.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Welfare Policy

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
27	My firm makes available childcare facilities for nursing mothers.	0 (0%)	4 (3.1%)	17 (13.3%)	67 (52.3%)	40 (31.3%)	1.88
28	My firm makes regular (yearly/biannually) arrangements for holiday (fully or partly paid).	4 (3.1%)	0 (0%)	107 (83.6%)	0 (0%)	17 (13.3%)	2.80
29	Professional counseling services are available to employees.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	106 (82.8%)	22 (17.2%)	0 (0%)	2.83
30	My firm ensures that breastfeeding mothers enjoy flexible working arrangements to take care of their babies.	0 (0%)	64 (50%)	47 (36.7%)	17 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	3.37
31	Management in this firm are sympathetic toward employees' child care responsibilities	0 (0%)	106 (82.8%)	5 (3.9%)	17 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	3.70
32	In this firm, employees who participate in available work-family programs (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are viewed as less serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs.	0 (0%)	27 (21.1%)	101 (78.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.21
Overall mean							2.96

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2023)

With an overall mean score of 2.96, welfare policies in these law firms can be considered moderately high.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Family Responsibilities

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
33	In my firm, employees are encouraged to strike a balance between their work and family lives.	0 (0%)	45 (35.2%)	36 (28.1%)	47 (36.7%)	0 (0%)	2.98
34	This firm is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for family reasons.	0 (0%)	22 (17.2%)	106 (82.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.17
35	In this firm, there is hardly any resentful when women take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children.	0 (0%)	27 (21.1%)	101 (78.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.21
36	In the event of a conflict, management of this firm understands when employees have to put their family first.	0 (0%)	44 (34.4%)	66 (51.6%)	18 (14.1%)	0 (0%)	3.20
37	Executives of this firm are sensitive to employees' family and personal concerns.	0 (0%)	44 (34.4%)	37 (28.9%)	47 (36.7%)	0 (0%)	2.98

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
38	My firm makes provision for family leaves to attend to family issues.	0 (0%)	44 (34.4%)	84 (65.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.34
							3.15

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

Table 6 shows that the overall mean score for family responsibility is perceived as moderately high at 3.15. Estimation and Interpretation of Research Model

Correlation Analysis

The background behavioural pattern in the data generated for the study was examined using the bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients which were conducted on the data for all variables in the study. Table 7 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients among study variables.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Coefficients among the Study Variables

Variables	EPRF	LPOL	FLWK	WPOL	FRES
Employee Performance (EPRF)	Pearson Correlation 1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	128			
Leave Policy (LPOL)	Pearson Correlation .649**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	128	128		
Flexible Working Arrangements (FLWK)	Pearson Correlation .664**	.577**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	128	128	128	
Welfare Policy (WPOL)	Pearson Correlation .652**	.374**	.752**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	128	128	128	128
Family Responsibilities (FRES)	Pearson Correlation .073	.285**	.153	.083	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.411	.001	.085	.352
	N	128	128	128	128

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

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

Table 7 above shows the Pearson's correlation coefficients between each pair of variables. According to Bryman and Cramer (1997), the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) should not be more than 0.80; otherwise the independent variables that show a relationship in excess of 0.80 may be suspected of having multicollinearity. However, Table 7 revealed that none of the correlation coefficients is up to 0.80.

Table 8: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.919 ^a	.844	.839	.1919293	2.871

a. Predictors: (Constant), FRES, WPOL, LPOL, FLWK

b. Dependent Variable: EPRF

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)

Table 9: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	24.466	4	6.116	166.040	.000 ^b
Residual	4.531	123	.037		
Total	28.997	127			

a. Dependent Variable: EPRF

b. Predictors: (Constant), FRES, WPOL, LPOL, FLWK

Source: *Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)*

Table 10: Regression Table
Coefficients^a

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.437	.188		2.329	.022		
LPOL	.691	.050	.691	13.882	.000	.513	1.950
FLWK	.099	.058	.113	1.708	.090	.288	3.475
WPOL	.327	.062	.289	5.268	.000	.423	2.362
FRES	.217	.039	.229	5.592	.000	.758	1.319

a. Dependent Variable: EPRF

Source: *Researchers' Fieldwork (2025)*

7. Discussion of Findings

By developing a conceptual model based on boundary theory, border theory, spill-over theory, and inter-role conflict theory, this study found that work-life balance practices (leave policy, welfare policies, and family responsibilities) can be linked to female employees' performance in law firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the leave policy, welfare policies, and family responsibilities were found to have significant impact on female employees' performance in law firms in Nigeria. The R-squared value of 0.844 is the strength of the model. It indicates a goodness of fit since it indicated all the elements of work-life balance (leave policy, flexi-time, welfare policy, and family responsibilities) jointly explained over 84.4% of the systematic variation in female employees' performance. The R-squared value after adjustment for the degree of freedom was 0.839 in the regression model. This indicates that work-life balance practices when grouped together explained approximately 84% of systematic variations of female employees' performance at law firms in Nigeria. The Durban-Watson statistics of 2.871 reveals the absence of first order serial correlation. The F-statistic of 166.040 is significant at $p < 0.05$ ($p = 0.000$). These results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables of the study. Based on the regression analysis, when all factors of work-life balance (leave policies, flexible work arrangements, welfare policies, and family responsibilities) are held constant at zero, female employees' performance would be 437.

The results also indicate that when all other independent variables are held at zero, a unit increase in leave policies will lead to a .691 increase in female employees' performance; a unit increase in flexible

working arrangements will not affect female employees' performance, a unit increase in welfare policies will lead to a .327 increase in female employees' performance, and a unit increase in family responsibilities will lead to a .217 increase in female employees' performance. This infers that leave policy contributes most to the female employees' performance followed by welfare policies. At 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence, leave policies had a 0.000 level of significance, flexible working arrangements showed a 0.090 level of significance, welfare policies showed a 0.000 level of significance and family responsibilities showed a 0.000 level of significance; thus, the most significant factors are leave policy, welfare policies, and family responsibilities.

The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Adisa, Aiyenitaju, and Adekoya (2023); Allen et al. (2024); and Raj (2017) whose studies reported a positive relationship between leave policy and employees' performance. However, the findings of this study are in disagreement with the findings of Kasau (2017) whose study revealed a negative relationship between leave policy and employees' performance. In addition, the result showed that there is no significant relationship between flexible working arrangements and female employees' performance. The findings of this study disagree with the findings of Pujowati and Aswan (2025) and Shockley et al. (2023) whose studies showed that there exists a positive correlation between FWAs and individual employee performance. Also, this study revealed a positive significant relationship between welfare policies and female employees' performance. This result agrees with the findings of Kasperczuk et al. (2025) and Okeke and Onyekwelu (2024) whose studies found that organizations providing robust welfare support

experience higher employee productivity and reduced turnover. However, the findings of this study are in disagreement with the findings of Kasau (2017) whose study revealed a negative relationship between welfare policies and employees' performance. Lastly, the results of this study revealed a positive relationship between family responsibilities and female employee's performance. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Kossek and Lee (2022) and Shockley et al. (2023) whose studies affirm that family-supportive practices significantly reduce work-family conflict and enhance employee engagement.

The significant relationship between work-life balance practices and female employees' performance can be explained by a number of theories as stated in the theoretical framework of this study. According to the border theory, the ease and limit in which people switch between family lives and work lives can affect the degree of synthesis and regulate the ease of conversions between the family and work resulting in situations where experiences in one domain significantly affects experiences in the other. The spill-over theory further explains the results of this study. As Bello and Ibrahim (2020) stated, family and work functions as an entity in spill over theory. The authors believe that what happens at home affects the happenings at work. Individuals transfer skills, emotions, attitudes, and behaviours that they form in their family role into work roles and vice versa.

The insignificant relationship found between flexible working arrangements and female employees' performance may be because in Nigeria, and especially for law firms, employers hardly practice flexible work arrangements. Lawyers in Nigeria often face demanding work schedules and long working hours. They are expected to dedicate a significant amount of time and effort to their cases, clients, and profession. Also, the nature of the legal profession requires lawyers to meet strict deadlines, conduct extensive legal research, draft legal documents, and represent their clients in court. These demands can result in lawyers working late nights, weekends, and even sacrificing their personal lives for the sake of their careers. This blur between work time and home time in the legal profession may be the cause of the insignificant relationship between flexible work arrangements and female employees' performance because whether there is flexible working arrangement or not, their performance is not affected.

8. Conclusion and Recommendation

Every individual is an integral part of the family in particular and the society in general. Work and family

are commonly regarded as the two most important and closely intertwined domains in people's lives. This study established a strong and statistically significant relationship between work-life balance practices and the performance of female employees in selected Nigerian law firms. With an R^2 of 0.844 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.839$), the study demonstrated substantial explanatory power, indicating that leave policy, welfare policies, flexible work arrangements, and family responsibilities jointly accounted for over 84% of the variation in performance. Theoretically, the results are consistent with propositions from Border Theory and Spill-over Theory, which explain how permeability between work and family domains allows experiences in one sphere to influence outcomes in the other. The insignificance of flexible working arrangements appears context-specific, reflecting the demanding structure of the Nigerian legal profession where long hours and rigid deadlines limit the practical impact of flexible scheduling on performance.

Below are the study's recommendations:

Employers need to pay more attention to the bottlenecks associated with the administration of leave. One of the obvious ways to enhance the leave management practices is to invest in automation. That way, it reduces bureaucracies, errors and speeds up the processing of staff leave. Again, a well-structured leave roster that evenly distributes staff leave over the twelve months of the year will be useful to ensure that the work of the institution runs smoothly throughout the year and also avoid work overload on the remaining staff.

Employers of law firms should grant welfare package of value. This will go a long way in motivating the employees to get committed, because it is found that it is not just about welfare package, but a package that means something to the prospective recipient. As such, employers must follow the tenets of equity and fair welfare. If the welfare package is transparently structured in such a way that your level of output determines how bumper your package will be, it will go a long way in motivating the employees to put more effort in their work. It is also necessary for the employees to know that they deserve their welfare. When employees are aware of what is due to them as welfare package, they can press for it and peacefully get it without necessarily begging for it.

As the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates vividly, work-family conflicts affect the well-being of everyone. A key implication from this study is that, when designing work-life balance policies and procedures to ease

employees' work-family conflict, it is important to consider the employees' specific family contexts, since these contextual factors from the family system affect employees' performance. It requires that managers recognize the relevance and impact of the family system so that they could better understand the potential family issues of their employees and better assist them. For example, the birth of a child may not only mean that the employee may need more time at home, or that it may distract the employee from work, but also that the new addition to the family could change the family's bonds between members and the family values, which could affect female workers' career aspirations

Moreover, when designing work-family policies, it also helps when managers understand the complexity and idiosyncrasy of each employee's respective family system, so that they could accommodate more family situations and even customize the policies according to the employees' unique family backgrounds. The one-size-fits-all approach to work-family policies may not be the best approach. Instead, policies with built-in flexibility and consideration of unique family contexts may satisfy more employees. For example, if money is a big concern versus time, organizations could have policies to trade holiday time for more pay, or vice versa.

9. Suggestion for Future Studies

Obviously, leave management has cost implications for law firms. Future research may consider the cost implications of leave management practices to law firms. This study is limited by focusing on female employees in law firms in Nigeria only; future studies may adopt all employees in the different industries with various backgrounds of age, religions, and family orientation.

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