



Assesing the Dynamics of Employee Benefits for Virtual and Flexible Work Arrangements of Obapack Company Limited, Ghana

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Abstract: *The human resource of every organisation plays a crucial role in the organisation's fortunes, as they apply other resources to achieve the aims of that organisation. In recent times, owing to the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the attention of researchers has been drawn to virtual or remote workers. Researchers note that flexible working conditions affect the performance of employees.*

Therefore, this study sought to examine the effect of flexible working arrangements on employees' performance in Obapack Company Limited. In line with this, effect of FWA on organization commitments, job satisfaction, employee performance and work-life balance were examined.

To achieve the aims of the study, a descriptive, quantitative cross-sectional design was adopted. The stratified sampling techniques were combined to recruit 70 virtual workers into the study, after which they completed questionnaires on the variables of the study. Descriptive analysis of the data was done using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations in Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 25.0. To further explore the relationship between FWA and employee benefits, inferential statistics, such as linear regression, was utilised. The main FWAs examined within the context of Obaapack Company were flexi-time, annualised hours, and homeworking. Flexible Working Arrangements affect job satisfaction, work-life balance and employees' performance positively. However, FWA affect organizational commitments negatively. FWA should be encouraged in the company, especially, job-shared which much attention was not given to it. This will improve upon the satisfaction, work-life balance and employees' performance. Furthermore, Obaapack Company Limited should include other factors such as motivation



that also influence organizational commitment since FWA only do not boost the staff's commitment. Lastly, employees should also observe and follow the organizational principles regarding FWA in order for them to have a work-life balance.

Keywords: *Employee Benefits, Job Satisfaction, Flexible Work Arrangements, Obapack Company Limited, Employee Performance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Employees are crucial in influencing an organization's human and social capital by offering essential knowledge and support for sustainable human resource management (HRM) practices (Davidescu, 2020). Workers face heightened pressure to achieve results in the current competitive business landscape, which creates difficulties in managing work and family responsibilities (Christensen & Schneider, 2010; Duxbury & Higgins, 2003). Therefore, many people are looking for methods and assistance to uphold a healthy work-life equilibrium. Organisations are prioritising enhancing the work environment and investing in human resource development to secure skilled and motivated employees (Pradhan et al., 2016).

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs), such flextime schedules, shortened workweeks, and telecommuting, are recognised as effective HRM policies that provide employees with flexibility in their work location, hours, and duration (Gordon et al., 2015). This trend indicates a change in how organisations view work, acknowledging that it is now more about achieving results rather than being limited to a certain physical space (Allen et al., 2015). Organisations globally prioritise adopting and implementing FWAs due to their various benefits, such as increased productivity and employee satisfaction (Mungania et al., 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a faster adoption of FWAs, with companies, such as government organisations in Ghana, swiftly introducing flexible work choices to maintain company operations (Kim et al., 2020; Strategic Human Resources Management SHRM, 2020). Flextime, compressed workweeks, and telecommuting are the main types of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) that give employees independence and flexibility in their work setups. These methods boost enthusiasm and productivity while adhering to total quality management (TQM) principles, encouraging employee participation and organisational dedication (Boon et al., 2006; Karia & Asaari, 2006).

Furthermore, FWAs have helped create a more diverse workforce by allowing individuals, especially women constrained by traditional norms, to engage more actively in employment (Li et al., 2013). Research indicates that Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) are linked to increased employment productivity, contentment, organisational commitment, and well-being (Jahn, 2015; Timms et al., 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the significance of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) in maintaining corporate resilience and guaranteeing employee safety, resulting in a significant increase in their implementation (Kramer & Kramer, 2020; Stirpe & Zárraga-Oberty, 2017). Organisations are realising the connection between employee performance, job happiness, and organisational commitment, emphasising the importance of empirical research to investigate the strategic advantages of FWAs (Hidayati & Rahmawati, 2016; Hidayati, Zarlis, & Absah, 2019). In view of this, the study sought to



investigate how flexible work arrangements affect employee performance, organisational commitment, job happiness, and work-life balance at Obapack Company Limited.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The study was conducted for Obapack Company. It is Ghanaian owned Agro-Processing Private company Incorporated in Ghana on 16th Sept 2019. It specializes in buying and processing Fresh Vegetables to our Ghanaian Market. It is located in Techiman in the Bono East of Ghana. It became fully operational in 2020 with the buying of Onions and Garlic from Ghana and neighboring country Niger, storing, processing and selling it. It has a staff strength 85 (45 permanent and 37 temporary staff). Utilising a quantitative methodology, the study implemented an explanatory design. By employing this particular methodological approach, the study not only explore into descriptive aspects but also expose and analyse the fundamental mechanisms and dynamics that influence the impacts and connections between flexible working arrangements or conditions and employee benefits. Fundamentally, the objective of explanatory research is twofold: to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which flexible work arrangements influence the observed outcomes in employees' benefits and to characterise the phenomena being studied. The primary objective of this research endeavour was to enhance comprehension regarding the mechanisms and rationales underlying the effect of flexible work arrangements on diverse facets of employee satisfaction and organisational efficacy.

The general population of this study comprises of staff of Obapack Company Limited. The staff of Obapack Company Limited is 85. The study used 70 out of the 85 staff as indicated by the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. Stratified sampling was used. It helped to draw adequate representation from both permanent and temporary staff. The study relied basically on primary data, thus, questionnaires that were administered to the staff of the Obapack Company Limited. Necessary steps were taken to ensure that respondents were not harm either physically or emotionally.

Data that were gathered from the instrument administered to the respondents were analysed descriptive using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations as well as inferential statistics such as linear regression in assessing the link between flexible working arrangements and employee benefits. The Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 25.0 was used to code, clean, organise, and analyse data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Background Information of Respondents

The analysis focused on sex, age, marital status, and level of education, number of children, and number of years in service at the Obapack Company. With regards to the sex of the respondents, most of the respondents were males (38, 54%) while others were females (32, 46%). This means that male dominated in the IT industry and Obapack is not an exception. On the age of the respondents, it was categorized into three exclusive groups. Among the groups, most of the respondents (37) were within 30-39 years, followed by 23 respondents who were



within 20-29 years while only 10 respondents were either 40 years or more. This shows that majority of the respondents were within the active population category.

All the respondents have tertiary education or degree. This means that all the respondents were literate and educated and were able to respond to the demand of the various questions appropriately. It shows that majority of the respondents were Christians while few were Muslims. This may be due to the fact that Christians dominated in that district as well as the region. Despite the fact that the area is cosmopolitan with different religious affiliations, Christians still dominate. More than half of the respondents have 1-3 children, followed by respondents who have no child and 12 respondents have either 4 or more children. Most of the respondents have less than 4 children and this may be due to the age category of the respondents, thus, most of the respondents were less than 40 years.

Flexible Working Arrangements

One kind of human resource management policy that provides employees some leeway in terms of when, where, and how long they work is the flexible work arrangement. Therefore, data were gathered from the respondents on the various flexible working arrangements or conditions employed by the Obaapack Company and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Flexible Working Arrangements used by organization

Response	Frequency	Percent
Flexi-time	24	34.3
Flexi-time & Annualized hours	3	4.3
Flexi-time & Homeworking	4	5.7
Annualized hours	28	40
Homeworking	3	4.3
Job-shared	8	11.4
Total	70	100

Table 1 shows that annualized hours were highly perceived by the respondents as FWA found in the Obaapack Company, followed by flexi-time (24, 38.3), and job-shared (8, 11.4%). Also, others indicated that they have flexi-time and homeworking (4, 5.7%), and homeworking (3, 4.3%). Thus, flexi-time and annualized hours are mostly employed in Obaapack Company.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Job Satisfaction

These days, it's thought that job happiness is a key component in deciding how productive an organization's employees and workers are. What makes a person happy in their employment is how much they enjoy certain parts of their profession. Table 4 describe how flexible working arrangements affects job satisfaction.



Table 2: Effect of FWA on Job satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized coefficient	Standardized coefficient (B)	t-stat	Sig.
Constant	1.014		1.552	0.125
FWA	0.779	.404	3.64	0.001

Table 2 describes the relationship between flexible working arrangements and job satisfaction, however, this was not enough, especially in showing the exact relationship between them statistically. Therefore, table 5 shows whether there is statistically significant relationship or not. It shows that there was a positive effect [$\beta=0.404$, $t(3.64)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on job satisfaction of the respondents. In addition, when there is a percent increased in FWA, job satisfaction of the respondents is also increased by 0.78. It suggests that FWA boost staff's job satisfaction and therefore, should be considered in executing policies to improve staff job satisfaction.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Employee Performance

Employee performance can be improved in many ways including flexible working arrangements, therefore, data were gathered on it and the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Effect of FWA on employee performance

Model	Beta	t-stat	Sig.
Constant		6.19	0.000
FWA	0.399	3.59	0.001

After describing the relationship between FWA and employee performance in Table 3, there was the need to examine the significance of this relationship. Therefore, data were gathered, tested and the result is presented in Table 7. It was found that there was a statistically significant positive effect [$\beta=0.399$, $t(3.59)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on employee performance. Thus, as FWA increases, employees' performance also increases.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Organizational Commitments

An integral part of organisational behaviour is the dedication of employees to the organisation. According to this definition, an employee's level of organisational commitment indicates how much they emotionally invest in and identify with their company (Table 4).

Table 4: Effect of FWA on Organizational commitment

Model	Beta	t-stat	Sig.
Constant		9.46	0.000
FWA	-.267	-2.28	0.025

Table 4 depicts the relationship between FWA and organizational commitment. It was found that there was a negative effect [$\beta= -0.267$, $t(-2.28)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on Organizational commitment. It implies that as FWA increases, organizational commitment decreases. This

was not the expectation of the study, however, the description shows that on the average, respondents were not all that committed to the company.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Work-Life Balance

Research has shown that FWAs and other non-monetary policies are more effective at helping people cope with life's challenges than health and wellbeing programmes, children's facilities, and other services that are financed by money. According to the research, employees are able to manage their work, lifestyle, and family responsibilities better when they have FWAs and managers who understand and support them. The impact of flexible work arrangements on the respondents' work-life balance is described in Table 5.

Table 5: Effect of FWA on work-life balance

Model	Beta	t-stat	Sig.
Constant		-.244	0.808
FWA	0.642	6.91	0.000

Table 5 shows whether there is significant relationship or not between FWA and work-life balance. It shows that there was a positive effect [$\beta=0.642$, $t(6.91)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on work-life balance of the respondents. In addition, when there is a percent increase in FWA, work-life balance of the respondents is also increased by 1.182. It suggests that FWA assist staff to balance their work demands as well as their life style demands in order to balance it.

4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Employee Performance

There was a statistically significant positive effect [$\beta=0.399$, $t(3.59)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on employee performance. Thus, as FWA increases, employees' performance also increases. In a similar vein, Wisely (2017) details how flexible working hours greatly benefit many employees and how they substantially contribute to the workplace. Employees will be more invested in the company's success, less stressed out, and able to devote more time to their work if they have more leeway in determining their own schedules.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Organizational Commitments

About 32.9 percent of the respondents agreed (mean= 3.06, SD= 1.18) that they would be very happy to spend the rest of their career with this organization. Thus, most of the respondents were not ready or willing to spend the rest of their career with this organization. Again, only 42.9 percent of respondents agreed (mean= 3.03, SD= 1.22) that they enjoy discussing their organization with people outside it. In addition, most of the respondents (71.2%) agree that they really feel as if the organization's problems are their own. There was a negative effect [$\beta= -0.267$, $t(-2.28)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on Organizational commitment. It implies that as FWA increases, organizational commitment decreases.

In contrast to the results obtained in this investigation, prior scholarly work conducted by Chen and Fulmer (2017) identified an affirmative association between organisational commitment and flexible work arrangements (FWAs). In a similar vein, the study conducted by Sakhtivel



and Jayakhrisnan (2012) established a positive correlation between organisational commitment and work-life balance. In their analysis, Hutagalung et al. (2020) reached comparable conclusions. The foundation for investigating the association between FWAs and organisational commitment, mediated by work-life balance, is established by these contradictory results.

Furthermore, in a study to examine the effect of flexible work arrangements for educators on organisational commitment, Gudep (2019) found that flexible work arrangements have a direct effect on organisational commitment. The heterogeneous results observed in previous investigations underscore the intricate and multidimensional character of the correlation between FWAs and organisational commitment. As a result, additional scrutiny and analysis are justified. Consequently, by expanding upon these prior investigations, the present study endeavours to offer a deeper understanding of the manner in which organisational commitment is impacted by the interaction between work-life balance and flexible work arrangements.

Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Work-Life Balance

There was a positive effect [$\beta=0.642$, $t(6.91)$, $p<0.05$] of FWA on work-life balance of the respondents. When there is a percent increased in FWA, work-life balance of the respondents is also increased by 1.182. This finding is similar to Rehman and Siddiqui (2020) who indicated that flexible working arrangements impact worklife balance. Additionally, a study conducted by Casper and Harris (2008) has established a correlation between flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and affective commitment, perceived organisational support, and affective commitment. However, the findings also suggest that FWAs have an adverse impact on turnover intention. This implies that FWAs have a significant impact on cultivating employees' emotional investment in the organisation and their perception of organisational support, while concurrently diminishing their propensity to resign from their roles.

Furthermore, Skinner and Chapman (2013) emphasised the significance of FWAs when combined with the support and comprehension of management. They posited that the combination of these elements empowers personnel to successfully manage the demands of their professional obligations alongside their personal lives and familial duties. This highlights the importance of not only incorporating FWAs but also guaranteeing that managerial support and comprehension are established to facilitate their effective assimilation into the organisational culture. In summary, the aforementioned results emphasise the diverse advantages that FWAs offer in terms of improving employee welfare, dedication, and tenure.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Flexi-time, annualized and homeworking were the FWA found in the Obaapack Company. Flexible Working Arrangements affect job satisfaction, work-life balance and employees' performance positively. However, flexible working arrangements affect organizational commitments negatively. Flexible working arrangements should be encouraged in the company, especially, job-shared which much attention was not given to it. This will improve upon the satisfaction, work-life balance and employees' performance. Furthermore, Obaapack Company should include other factors such as motivation that also influence organizational commitment since FWA only do not boost the staff's commitment. Lastly, employees should



also observe and follow the organizational principles regarding FWA in order for them to have a work-life balance.

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