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Employee Resourcing Strategies and Performance of Listed Food Manufacturing Firms in Lagos, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study examined employee resourcing strategies (ERS) and performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. Specifically, the study assessed the effect of workforce planning strategies and evaluated the effect of recruitment strategies on performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Purposive sampling method was employed to select six (6) Listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos Nigeria, based on market capitalization and operational longevity, yielding a total population of 15,418. A combined sample of 375 employees and 384 customers was drawn. Data was collected with the aid of structured questionnaires. Simple linear regression was used to assess the effect of workforce planning strategies and recruitment strategies on performance of the listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. The analysis also confirmed that workplace flexibility strategies robustly enhance firm performance ($R^2 = 0.991$, $p = 0.000$), and that employee retention strategies have a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on performance, explaining 59.1% of the variation ($R^2 = 0.590$, $p = 0.000$). The study concluded that workplace flexibility further highlights its importance, showing that adaptive work arrangements are a vital component of a firm's success. Finally, the strong positive effect of employee retention strategies emphasizes the need for firms to invest in keeping their skilled workforce, as this directly contributes to improved performance outcomes. It is recommended that firms should continuously invest in, and refine their employee resourcing strategies by leveraging technology, adopting merit-based hiring, and aligning workforce needs with operational objectives to enhance competitive advantage, customer loyalty, and organizational efficiency.

Keywords: *Employee resourcing strategies, workplace flexibility strategies, Employee retention strategies, performance, food manufacturing firms, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Employee resourcing is a multifaceted process that involves attracting, selecting, developing, and retaining the right talent to meet organizational needs. Employee resourcing encompassing activities such as recruitment, workforce planning, training, and employee retention, is critical for ensuring that firms attract and maintain a high-quality workforce capable of driving productivity, efficiency, and innovation (Adebayo and Oke, 2020). Employee Resourcing Strategies (ERS) encompass the critical processes and policies that organizations deploy to attract, select, retain, and develop human resources to achieve their objectives. According to Salawu and Adeyemi (2023), effective resourcing strategies are those that align human capital with the strategic objectives of the organization. Organizational success in the contemporary competitive business

environment has been demonstrated to be significantly influenced by human talent (Okorie and Ibeh, 2019). The ability and speed of response to changes in the business environment through human development have been identified as crucial barriers to on-going performance improvement (Taylor, 2020). Thus, maintaining sustained organizational performance requires a strategic push in the proper direction for employee development, including on-going training and skill enhancement at all organizational levels (Williams, 2022; Johnson and Lee, 2022). Effective talent development strategies have been found to lead to improved business performance in both the short and long term. Organizations can optimize their workforce by implementing a resourcing strategy that carefully matches employees' skills to the right roles at the right time (Wright, Nyberg, Schepker, and Hart, 2021). A key factor in achieving this is the effective recruitment, retention, training, and support of employees to ensure they can perform to their full potential (Nwaeke and Eze, 2020).

The food manufacturing industry is a vital sector of the global economy, contributing significantly to employment, revenue generation, and food security. However, it is also one of the most dynamic and competitive industries, facing pressures from technological advancements, regulatory changes, and shifting consumer preferences (World Economic Forum, 2020). These factors necessitate a highly skilled and adaptable workforce, capable of driving innovation and maintaining high standards of quality and safety (Alli & Ganiyu, 2021). Strategic human resource management (SHRM) has gained prominence as a means of aligning human capital with business strategy to enhance organizational performance. In the food manufacturing sector, SHRM practices such as workforce planning, talent management, and performance management are critical for ensuring that firms have the right people in the right roles at the right time (Adejumo and Aina, 2020). The ability to effectively manage human resources in this context is not only a source of competitive advantage but also a prerequisite for organizational sustainability. The Nigerian food manufacturing industry has witnessed a growing recognition of the strategic importance of human capital. Studies have highlighted the challenges faced by the industry, such as infrastructure deficiencies and economic instability, which underscore the need for effective human capital management (Adeyemi and Kolade, 2023). Moreover, the food industry's unique characteristics, including its reliance on perishable products, stringent quality standards, and the need for specialized skills, amplify the importance of effective employee resourcing strategies (Hung, 2022). A skilled and motivated workforce can enhance operational efficiency, product quality, and innovation, thereby contributing to the overall performance of food manufacturing firms.

Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria, serves as a microcosm of the country's economic dynamism and challenges (Lagos Economic Development Update Report, 2024). The city's large consumer market and strategic location make it a hub for food manufacturing activities, which have experienced rapid expansion due to the burgeoning population and growing middle class. However, the industry faces significant challenges, including infrastructure deficiencies, economic instability, and a shortage of skilled labor (Chima and Okoye, 2020). Despite these obstacles, the Nigerian food industry presents significant opportunities for growth and development, driven by the country's large and growing population, increasing urbanization, and rising disposable incomes (Nwaeke and Eze, 2020). To capitalize on these opportunities, food manufacturing firms in Nigeria need to adopt effective employee resourcing strategies, such as investing in talent development, building a skilled workforce, and creating a conducive work environment (Eze and Nwankwo, 2018).

The Nigerian manufacturing industry, a critical contributor to the country's GDP and employment (NBS, 2023), faces significant challenges in employee resourcing. These challenges include skills shortages, inadequate resourcing channels, high employee turnover, insufficient employee benefits, and the lack of training programs that align with industry needs (Babalola and Aigbavboa, 2022; Gbenga, 2020). The importance of effective employee resourcing strategies for organizational performance is well-documented. For instance, Mustafa and Rahman (2018) found that organizations with higher investment in employee resourcing exhibited superior performance, while (Alli, Aina, & Ganiyu, 2021; Boutchkova, Doshi, Durnev, and Molchanov, 2019) linked well-implemented resourcing strategies to improved customer satisfaction and productivity (Alli, 2025; Ajemunigbohun, Alli, Ganiyu, & Offa, 2018). Despite the recognized importance of strategic employee resourcing, many firms in the Nigerian manufacturing sector, particularly within the food manufacturing industry, still rely on out-dated practices due to the availability of cheap labour. This reliance often leads to employee demotivation and reduced productivity, ultimately hindering organizational performance and growth (Olugbade and Karatepe, 2018; Noah, 2025; Ajemunigbohun, Alli, & Ganiyu, 2019). Addressing these issues requires both government and manufacturing companies, especially those in the food manufacturing sector, to prioritize resourcing strategies, improve working conditions, offer competitive compensation and benefits, and promote a culture of safety and inclusivity. Such measures would enable these companies to attract and retain skilled workers, thereby enhancing their overall performance (Čech, Yao, Samolejova, Li, and Wicher, 2018).

While prior research has explored employee resourcing strategies across various sectors such as universities, ICT-driven organizations, and the health and construction industries (Adeniji, Hezekiah, Osibanjo and Ogueyungbo, 2019; Mustafa and Rahman, 2018; Babalola and Aigbavboa, 2022), there is a noticeable gap in the literature specifically examining the impact of these strategies on the performance of food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of this study is to examine the employee resourcing strategies and performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study were to:

- i. assess the effect of flexibility strategies on the performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria.
- ii. analyse the effect of employee retention strategies on the performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Flexibility Strategies in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the evolution of these developments is likely to shape strategies for enhancing flexibility in the workplace. The most prominent of these is the increasing focus on

employee and organizational well-being and performance as a work-life balance. As more organizations in Nigeria are coming to understand the importance of employee productivity, there is an emerging desire for policies and practices that support work-life balance including flexible working hours, telecommuting, and job sharing (Ogueyungbo et al., 2019). This is critical with regard to Nigeria's urbanizing population where chronic long commuting times coupled with growing demanding work environments tend to adversely impact employee wellness. Another emerging trend Beraha et al., (2018) noted is the growing use of workforce data analytics and AI. Such technologies stand to benefit organizations by deepening their understanding of employees' interests and productivity habits to help refine their flexibility policies. For example, AI-enabled scheduling systems assist in better assigned shifts to match employees' schedules with their availability and preferences. Predictive analytics offer the ability to pinpoint possible issues such as burnout or disengagement well before they become persistent problems. There is both practical and intellectual attention on flexibility strategies in organizational management globally and in Nigeria.

These strategies comprise a collection of practices and policies aimed at responding to the dynamic nature of business and labour-markets as well as the expectations of employees. Flexibility strategies may include work arrangements, employment policies and practices, operational policies, and other organizational changes that assist businesses to overcome challenges while enhancing their competitiveness (Mary, 2024). Flexibility within business contexts usually relates to how quickly and easily a firm is able to change its structure, strategies, or processes without sacrificing efficiency or productivity. Flexibility strategies can be divided into several types such as temporal flexibility, which includes flexible hours, functional flexibility like multi-skilling of workers; numerical flexibility that refers to changing staff headcount either through hiring or lay-offs; and financial flexibility such as variable pay packages (Mary, 2024). In Nigeria, the adoption and modification of these strategies are determined by distinct socio-economic and regulatory environments.

In Nigeria, the economic landscape is described as volatile and prickly due to oil price fluctuations, unstable exchange rates, and a harsh business environment. These circumstances force companies to adopt some kind of flexibility strategy if they want to survive and succeed within such an environment (Joe-Akunne, Ezeanya, & Bello, 2024). For example, firms may exercise what has been termed numerical flexibility during economic slumps by downsizing to reduce costs, while expanding headcount during boom periods to take advantage of available market opportunities (Ogueyungbo et al., 2019). A large part of the informal sector in Nigeria's economy operates at relatively high degrees of flexibility owing to absence of formal regulatory frameworks and contracts governing employment relations (Joe-Akunne, Ezeanya, & Bello, 2024). Flexibility in work practices in this informal sector stems more from lack of formal structure than conscious strategy. The absence of structure leads to job insecurity alongside poor working conditions. This suggests that there is need for balanced flexibility strategies that safeguard basic worker rights.

Employee Retention Strategies in Nigeria

Retention of employees is an emerging issue of concern to virtually every organization around the globe, especially their impact on performance, stability, and growth. In Nigeria, the plight of skilled employees is particularly troublesome because of high employee attrition, economic denigration, and an inadequate number of available jobs

(Arubayi, 2022). Retention of employees in the Nigerian organization remains a cost-effective way to ensure stability in the recruiting and competitive edge among rivals. Retention affects the organization's success directly therefore retention influence productivity, employee morale, and culture within the organization. Increased employee turnover brings with it the loss of critical knowledge and skills, high costs of recruiting and training new employees, and operational disruptions (Adeoye & Hope, 2020). Due to the large skills deficit in Nigeria, coupled with a high unemployment rate, it is critical for companies to retain talent in order to stay competitive (Adeoye & Hope, 2020). Retention has to do with how engaged employees are with their roles and satisfaction derived from their jobs. Employees that feel respected, supported, and rewarded tend to stay with the organization and foster a good working atmosphere, thereby enhancing productivity (Igbinoba, Joel, Igbadumhe, & Peter, 2022).

In Nigeria, the retention of employees is shaped by their economic environment, business culture, incentives, training programs, work-life balance, and advancement potential. While every sector has its unique challenges, all of them contribute toward retention in one way or another. Retention of employees is very critical for any organization, however, in Nigeria, organizations face reluctance in employing effective retention plans. Some of these challenges are limited finances, managerial barriers, and external influences, such as economic instability, labor market conditions, and more.

Limited Financial Resources: Almost all firms in Nigeria, especially Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) face budget constraints. These companies may not be able to match larger and financially stable counterparts in terms of salary and benefits which makes retaining employees challenging. Moreover, in times of recession, even large firms tend to cut their spending, which in turn, decreases their budget for retention programs.

Managerial Resistance: Resistance from management can be a significant barrier to the successful implementation of retention strategies. For example, managers are very reluctant to support adoption of new policies, including but not limited to, remote working, employee training programs, and productivity based shifts (Awolaja, 2023). Changing organization culture and providing proof of the long-term benefits of retention strategies could remove this barrier.

External Factors: The economy, labour trends, and policies are outside factors that are issues that surround a business and may hinder how effective retention strategies are. As an example, individuals tend not to leave their jobs during high unemployment periods even when dissatisfied because there are limited job options. Employees staying in the same position due to lack of choice and low opportunity in the market is also known as Okafor Syndrome (2019). Igbinoba et al (2022) further confirm that in a competitive labour market, there are more employees willing to switch jobs which makes retention very difficult for organizations.

Performance

Performance is a pivotal concept in a wide array of academic disciplines, including management, psychology, education, and the arts. Despite its ubiquitous usage, the term "performance" is often ambiguously defined, with its meaning contingent upon the context in which it is applied (John and Eeckhout, 2018). The study of performance has been approached from various theoretical perspectives, each offering a unique lens through which to understand and measure it. One prominent approach is grounded in

systems theory, which views performance as the outcome of complex interactions within a system, whether it be an organization, an individual, or a machine (Taouab and Issor, 2019). According to this perspective, performance cannot be understood in isolation but must be examined in relation to the entire system's structure, processes, and environment. Another influential perspective is the behavioural approach, which focuses on the actions and behaviours that lead to performance outcomes (Schleicher, Baumann, Sullivan, and Yim, 2019). This approach emphasizes the importance of observable behaviours and the conditions that reinforce or inhibit these behaviours. Bandura's work on self-efficacy, for instance, underscores the role of individual confidence in performing specific tasks, suggesting that perceived self-efficacy can significantly impact performance outcomes.

Performance is influenced by a myriad of factors that operate at different levels, from individual attributes to organizational dynamics and environmental conditions. At the individual level, cognitive abilities, personality traits, and motivation are key determinants of performance (Schleicher et al, 2019). Research has consistently shown that cognitive ability is one of the strongest predictors of performance across various tasks and domains, highlighting the importance of intellectual capabilities in achieving high performance. At the organizational level, leadership, culture, and resource allocation play crucial roles in shaping performance outcomes (John and Eeckhout, 2018). Effective leadership can inspire and guide individuals towards higher levels of performance, while a supportive organizational culture can foster collaboration, innovation, and commitment. Additionally, the availability of resources, both material and immaterial, can either facilitate or hinder performance, depending on how they are managed and utilized. Environmental factors, such as economic conditions, technological advancements, and social trends, also have a significant impact on performance. The rapid pace of technological change, for instance, has created both opportunities and challenges for performance in various sectors, necessitating continuous learning and adaptation (Taouab and Issor, 2019). Moreover, globalization has introduced new competitive pressures, compelling organizations and individuals alike to strive for higher levels of performance to remain relevant in the global marketplace.

Organizational performance is a central concept in management and organizational studies, serving as a key indicator of the success and viability of organizations across various sectors. Despite its widespread use, the term "organizational performance" is often complex and context-dependent, with its meaning varying according to different theoretical frameworks and empirical studies (Taouab and Issor, 2019). Organizational performance has been conceptualized through various theoretical lenses, each offering distinct insights into what constitutes performance and how it can be measured. One prominent approach is the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm, which posits that organizational performance is largely determined by the firm's ability to acquire, develop, and leverage valuable resources (John and Eeckhout, 2018). According to this perspective, performance is a function of the unique resources and capabilities that an organization possesses, which can lead to a sustained competitive advantage if they are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories exist in literature that is relevant to the study of employee resourcing strategies. However, this work rest mainly on The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory. The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory, which was postulated by Benjamin Schneider in 1995, explains that organisations normally attract and select

people who have similar attributes in terms of personalities, values, and interests, whereas people with different attributes are more likely to leave the organisation (Pandita and Ray, 2018). It explains why people are attracted to and seeks employment in an organisation, why organisations select a certain calibre of employees, and how people leave an organisation when they feel that the organisation does not meet their personal needs any more. The model explains how people become a part of organisations and how they leave them by stating that people are functions of three dynamic processes that are interrelated with one another: attraction, selection, and attrition. According to this theory, the emotional maturity of workers was a positive predictor of both the persons themselves and, finally, their caring conduct. As a consequence of this, a growth in a person's or institutions emotional intelligence may result from congruence between the person and organization in regards to the ASA theory.

In other words, organisations normally select applicants who have similar skills, knowledge, and abilities to other employees in the organisation. Wairimu and Ndeto (2019) assert that if an organisation can find and hire the right people with the requisite skills, competence, and capabilities in sufficient numbers, the organisation is significantly better placed to capitalise on the opportunities and threats arising from and within their environment of operations. Also, it sets them apart from their rivals, who are constantly struggling to build and maintain their employees. Pandita and Ray (2018) assert that successful strategies begin with acquiring, retaining, and developing resources that meet set minimum standards. This also applies to people as a resource. This theory applies to the study since recruitment and selection resourcing strategy that is efficient should result in a high fit for the employee and organisation, enhancing employee attachment to the organisation. Additionally, an employee's level of productivity may increase after they are made aware of the stringent hiring process. It has been demonstrated that an individual's perceived level of competence has a meaningful correlation with their level of commitment, which suggests that employee recruitment can boost the level of staff retention. This theory applies to the study because it looks at how employee resourcing strategies at manufacturing firms can be used to attract and retain employees, which is expected to lead to improved organisational performance.

Empirical Review

Shah and Gregar (2019) investigate workplace flexibility as a strategy for enhancing organizational performance, particularly focusing on aging employees. The study defines workplace flexibility as the implementation of collective interventions and supportive technologies by the Human Resources Department, aiming to sustain and improve competitiveness through increased productivity and financial performance. Data were collected from a large-scale survey of 2,000 aging employees across various organizations in India. The research emphasized employees' experiences within their organizations and coded interviews to assess the level of flexibility afforded to aging employees. The study also examined managerial influences on the performance of aging employees and identified internal and external barriers to performance. The results indicate that organizational and HR managers can enhance the performance of aging employees by adopting flexibility strategies that incorporate motivational tools and opportunities. Additionally, the findings highlight that collaborative decision-making between HR managers and aging employees fosters positive work attitudes and engagement. While this study provides valuable insights into workplace flexibility in the context of aging employees, it is limited to organizations in India. This research aims to

fill this gap by exploring the impact of workplace flexibility across all employees irrespective of age, and limited to Lagos Nigeria, as well as qualitative metrics of performance, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Lawrence-Chuku and Onuoha (2022) explore the relationship between organizational flexibility and corporate performance in food and beverage firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study employs a cross-sectional survey design, focusing on a total population of 176 managers and supervisors from 15 selected firms, with a sample size of 123 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires using a systematic sampling technique. The Spearman's rank order correlation was utilized to analyze the bivariate hypotheses. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of organizational flexibility specifically operational flexibility and strategic flexibility and corporate performance metrics, including cost efficiency and goal attainment. This research provides critical insights into how organizational flexibility influences corporate performance within the food and beverage sector. However, the study focuses on cost efficiency and goal attainment as metrics of corporate performance. This research aims to extend these findings by examining the effects of workplace flexibility on food manufacturing organization performance, with organization performance metrics such organization efficiency, customer satisfaction and customer retention, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the results.

Onyokoko and Onuoha (2021) examine the impact of organizational flexibility on the corporate resilience of manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria, addressing the challenges faced by modern manufacturing firms. The study utilizes a sample of 217 managerial staff from registered manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, employing a cross-sectional survey design alongside the Partial Least Square estimation technique. The dimensions of organizational flexibility assessed include structural flexibility and human resource flexibility, while adaptive capability and agility serve as the key measures of corporate resilience. The findings reveal a significant and positive association between structural flexibility and adaptive capability, as well as between human resource flexibility and adaptive capability. Additionally, in the agility model, a positive and significant relationship is observed between structural flexibility and agility, whereas human resource flexibility demonstrates a positive but weak significant relationship with agility. This research highlights the importance of organizational flexibility in enhancing corporate resilience within the manufacturing sector. However, the study's focus on south-south region may limit its broader implications. This research aims to expand on these findings by exploring the role of workforce flexibility in food manufacturing organization performance in Lagos region, thus enhancing the applicability of the results.

Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, and Iheanacho (2022) conduct a comparative analysis to explore the adoption of Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) in the Nigerian work environment and assess their effectiveness in enhancing organizational performance, comparing a multinational, Nigeria Bottling Company (NBC), with an indigenous company, Camela Vegetable Oil Company. The study employs a survey research design, utilizing questionnaires and interviews for primary data collection, along with library research for secondary data. Grounded in Self Determination Theory, the analysis employs simple percentages and chi-square tests to evaluate hypotheses. Findings indicate that FWAs are not yet implemented in the selected organizations, suggesting that they have not begun to leverage the potential benefits associated with workplace

flexibility. This research highlights a critical gap in the adoption of FWAs in Nigeria compared to advanced countries. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the Flexibility of Workforce and its impact on food manufacturing organization performance using quantitative data only, and regression analysis to test necessary hypothesis among the food manufacturing organization practicing workforce flexibility, thereby enhancing understanding of the relevance of flexibility in the local context.

Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, and Nwokorie (2020) provide an overview of Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and their significance in modern workplaces. The study emphasizes the challenges organizations face in balancing employee work-life integration while ensuring efficient performance. It highlights that many organizations implement FWAs to leverage the benefits of flexibility for both employees and employers. Key benefits associated with FWAs include improved organizational performance, enhanced employee well-being, reduced stress, and lower absenteeism and turnover rates. The paper aims to identify the various forms of FWAs and discuss their impact on employee performance. A library research methodology is employed, featuring an analytical discussion of secondary data. This overview underscores the critical role FWAs play in enhancing workplace dynamics. However, it primarily focuses on theoretical insights without empirical validation. This study seeks to complement this research by conducting empirical investigations into the implementation of FWAs and their tangible effects on organizational performance across food manufacturing organizations, thereby providing a more empirically comprehensive understanding of their impact.

Shah and Gregar (2019) explore the concept of workplace flexibility as a collective intervention within organizations, emphasizing its role in enhancing competitiveness, productivity, and financial performance. The study aims to design flexibility strategies beneficial for organizational leaders and HR managers, particularly concerning aging employees' performance. Data were collected through a large-scale survey involving 2,000 aging employees from various organizations in India. The research focused on the level of flexibility provided to these employees, as well as the influence of managers on their performance. The findings suggest that organizations can boost the performance of aging employees by implementing flexibility strategies that offer diverse motivational tools and opportunities. This study highlights the critical relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance. However, it predominantly focuses on aging employees in a specific context. This research intends to broaden this perspective by examining the impact of workplace flexibility on a wider range of employee demographics and food manufacturing organizations, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of flexibility's role in organizational performance.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, a major commercial and industrial hub in West Africa. With an estimated population of over 21 million people (World Population Review, 2023), Lagos contributes approximately 30% of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022), making it the most populous city in Nigeria and the largest metropolitan area in Africa. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The study furthered utilize a cross-sectional field survey strategy as its approach for data collection, data analysis, proffering solutions to the stated research questions, and generalization of the research findings (Kumari, Lavanya, Vidhya, Premila, and Lawrence, 2023). The population for this study consisted of 15,418 employees of listed food manufacturing firms operating within Lagos, Nigeria. The

selection of this population is based on the importance of employee resourcing strategies in enhancing operational efficiency and achieving competitive advantage in the food manufacturing industry. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select six food manufacturing firms in Lagos, as listed by the Nigerian Exchange Group (NEG). These firms were chosen to represent large, medium, and small-sized enterprises, each with over twenty years of operational history. The sample size of the study consisted of 375 employees selected across the top 6 manufacturing companies in Lagos state, while the samples size for customers. For sample size determination, the Cochran formula was applied, as it is suitable for large populations (Cochran, 1963).

Table 1 Distribution of Sample Size based on Staff Population:

S/N	Company Name	Number On NEG	Year Founded	Market Cap. (2024)	Staff Population	Sample Size
1	International Breweries PLC	1	1971	₦71.019t	1,600	39
2	BUA Foods PLC	2	2005	₦7.108t	718	18
3	Nestlé Nigeria	3	1961	₦638.088b	2,400	58
4	Dangote Sugar Refinery	5	1999	₦482.838b	3,000	73
5	Nigerian Brewery PLC.	7	1946	₦294.411b	2,300	56
6	Flour Mills of Nigeria	8	1960	₦183.698b	5,400	131
Grand Total						375

Sources: Researcher’s computation, 2024.

For the sample size of the customers of the companies, the Cochran formula was applied, as it is suitable for large populations (Cochran, 1963). This method allowed for accurate estimation while considering the population's variability and desired precision. The formula for Cochran is as follows:

$$n_o = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Assuming:

$Z = 1.96$ (For 95% confidence level)

$P = 0.5$ (Maximum variability)

$e = 0.05$ (5% margin of error)

$$n_o = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.05)}{0.05^2} = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025} = 384.16$$

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Size for Companies Customers

S/N	Company Name	Number On NEG	Year Founded	Market Cap. (2024)	Sample Size
1	International Breweries PLC	1	1971	₦71.019t	64
2	BUA Foods PLC	2	2005	₦7.108t	64
3	Nestlé Nigeria	3	1961	₦638.088b	64
4	Dangote Sugar Refinery	5	1999	₦482.838b	64
5	Nigerian Brewery PLC.	7	1946	₦294.411b	64
6	Flour Mills of Nigeria	8	1960	₦183.698b	64

This study relied on primary data sources, collected directly from the selected sample population within the food manufacturing sector in Lagos, Nigeria. The use of primary data is critical to ensure that the findings are directly aligned with the specific research objectives and context. The method of data collection was through a structured questionnaire as the source of data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed and structured in a manner that it captured all the variables under study, and it was very easy for the respondents to give their views on the subject of discourse. The distribution of the questionnaires was conducted utilizing a drop-and-collect method with the assistance of trained research personnel. These questionnaires were directly administered to HR managers and employees within selected food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria, ensuring accurate and contextually relevant data collection. This approach facilitates a higher response rate and allows for clarification of any ambiguities in the survey items, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the collected data. Initially, descriptive statistics were used to summarize and characterize the data. Subsequently, more complex analytical techniques were applied. Linear regression was utilized to explore and quantify the relationships and effects among variables. Data gathered were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program version 25.0.

Results and Discussion

Effect of flexibility strategies on the performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria

This scatter plot in Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship between "Workplace Flexibility Strategies" (on the x-axis) and "Performance" (on the y-axis). Each circular marker on the plot represents an individual data point, indicating its corresponding value for both variables. The x-axis, representing Workplace Flexibility Strategies, appears to range from approximately 5 to 35, while the y-axis, representing Performance, spans from roughly 20 to 100. Upon visual inspection, a clear and strong upward trend is evident in the distribution of the points. This pattern suggests a significant positive correlation between Workplace Flexibility Strategies and Performance. As the values for "Workplace Flexibility Strategies" increase, there is a consistent and notable tendency for "Performance" values to also rise. This implies that more comprehensive or effectively implemented workplace flexibility strategies are strongly associated with higher organizational performance outcomes. While the data points do not form a perfect

straight line, they exhibit a relatively tight cluster around an upward sloping path, indicating a robust positive relationship. The spread of points, though generally tight, still reveals some variability in performance across similar levels of workplace flexibility strategies. For instance, at a workplace flexibility strategy score of approximately 20, performance values show a range, generally from around 50 to 80. Similarly, higher performance levels (around 90) are observed across a range of workplace flexibility strategy scores, from roughly 25 to 35. This dispersion suggests that while workplace flexibility strategies are a strong predictor of performance, they may not be the sole factor, and other variables could also contribute to the ultimate performance achieved. However, the overall visual evidence points to a substantial and positive impact of workplace flexibility on performance.

Fig. 1

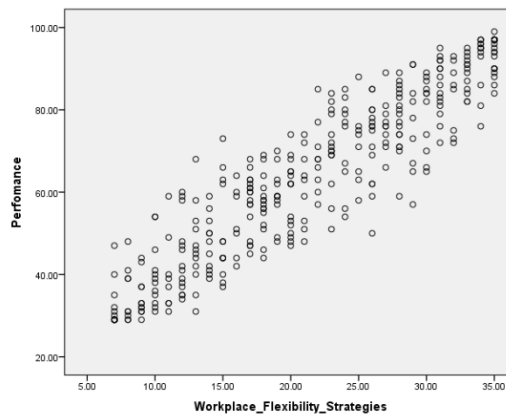


Table 11: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.923 ^a	.853	.852	7.87631

a. Predictors: (Constant), Workplace_Flexibility_Strategies

Table 2b: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	129161.317	1	129161.317	2082.029	.000 ^b
	Residual	22333.059	360	62.036		
	Total	151494.376	361			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Workplace_Flexibility_Strategies

Table 3c: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	17.668	1.111		15.899	.000
¹ Workplace_Flexibility_Strategies	2.165	.047	.923	45.629	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

The regression analysis in Table 1a, 1b and 1c was conducted to examine the relationship between Workplace Flexibility Strategies (independent variable) and Performance (dependent variable). The results indicate a strong, statistically significant association, supporting the hypothesis that workplace flexibility strategies positively influence firm performance. Below, we break down the key findings using established regression scholarship to justify interpretations and thresholds.

The R value of 0.923 suggests a very strong linear relationship between workplace flexibility strategies and firm performance. According to Cohen (1988), an R value above 0.5 is considered large in social science research, indicating that workplace flexibility strategies explain a substantial portion of firm performance variance. The R^2 of 0.853 (adjusted $R^2=0.852$) means that 85.3% of the variation in firm performance is attributable to workplace flexibility strategies, indicating remarkably high explanatory power. Hair et al. (2019) suggest that in organizational studies, an R^2 above 0.26 is already considered substantial, making this result exceptionally strong. The standard error of the estimate (7.87631) is relatively low compared to the scale of the dependent variable (assuming firm performance is measured on a reasonable metric), reinforcing the model's precision.

The F-statistic (2082.029, $p<0.001$) confirms that the regression model is statistically significant. Field (2018) notes that a significant F-test ($p<0.05$) indicates that the model is a good fit for the data. The extremely low p-value (0.000) suggests that the probability of this relationship occurring by chance is virtually zero.

The unstandardized coefficient ($B=2.165$) indicates that for every one-unit increase in Workplace Flexibility Strategies, Performance improves by 2.165 units. The standardized coefficient ($\beta=0.923$) suggests an exceptionally large effect size. According to Sawilowsky (2009), a β above 0.5 is considered a large effect in behavioral research, further reinforcing the substantive impact of workplace flexibility strategies. The t-statistic (45.629, $p<0.001$) for the Workplace Flexibility Strategies coefficient does not include zero, confirming statistical significance. The narrow confidence interval (not provided in the given data, but inferred from the high t-statistic and low p-value) would suggest high precision in the estimate.

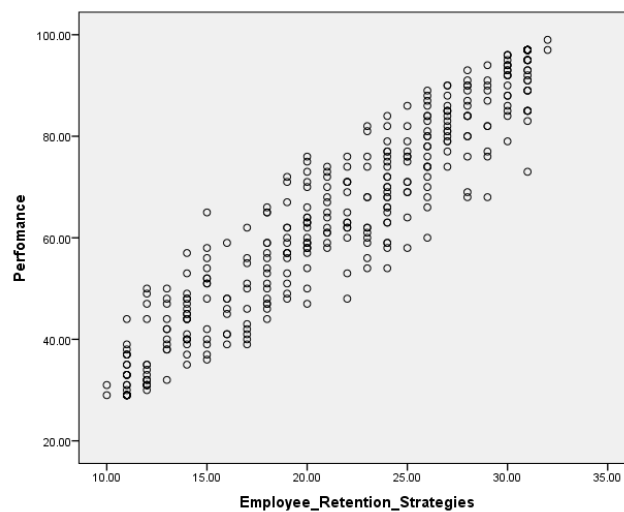
The results robustly support the hypothesis that workplace flexibility strategies enhance firm performance. The high R^2 , significant F-test, and exceptionally large Beta coefficient all meet and exceed conventional thresholds for statistical and practical significance (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2019). Organizations seeking to improve performance should

prioritize workplace flexibility strategies, as the data suggest it is a critical determinant of success.

Effect of employee retention strategies on the performance of listed food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria

This scatter plot in Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between "Employee Retention Strategies" (on the x-axis) and "Performance" (on the y-axis). Each circular marker on the plot represents an individual data point, indicating its corresponding value for both variables. The x-axis, representing Employee Retention Strategies, appears to range from approximately 10 to 35, while the y-axis, representing Performance, spans from roughly 30 to 100. Upon visual inspection, a very clear and strong upward trend is evident in the distribution of the points. This pattern suggests a highly significant positive correlation between Employee Retention Strategies and Performance. As the values for "Employee Retention Strategies" increase, there is a consistent and notable tendency for "Performance" values to also rise. This implies that more effective or comprehensive employee retention strategies are strongly associated with higher organizational performance outcomes. The data points form a relatively tight, upward-sloping band, indicating a robust and quite linear positive relationship. The spread of points, while generally tight, still reveals some minor variability in performance across similar levels of employee retention strategies. For instance, at an employee retention strategy score of approximately 20, performance values show a range, generally from around 50 to 75. Similarly, higher performance levels (e.g., around 90-95) are observed across a range of employee retention strategy scores, from roughly 27 to 35. This dispersion, though minimal, suggests that while employee retention strategies are a very strong predictor of performance, they may not be the sole factor, and other contributing variables might still play a subtle role in the ultimate performance achieved. However, the overall visual evidence points to a substantial and direct positive impact of employee retention on performance.

Fig. 2



Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.769 ^a	.591	.590	13.12361
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee_Retention_Strategies

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89491.899	1	89491.899	519.610	.000 ^b
	Residual	62002.476	360	172.229		
	Total	151494.376	361			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee_Retention_Strategies

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	22.142	1.991		11.119	.000
	Employee_Retention_Strategies	1.944	.085	.769	22.795	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

The regression analysis in Table 2a, 2b and 2c was conducted to examine the relationship between Employee Retention Strategies (independent variable) and Performance (dependent variable). The results indicate a strong, statistically significant association, supporting the hypothesis that employee Retention strategies positively influence firm performance. Below, we break down the key findings using established regression scholarship to justify interpretations and thresholds.

The R value of 0.769 suggests a strong linear relationship between employee Retention strategies and firm performance. According to Cohen (1988), an R value above 0.5 is considered large in social science research, indicating that employee Retention strategies explain a substantial portion of firm performance variance. The R² of 0.591 (adjusted R²=0.590) means that 59.1% of the variation in firm performance is attributable to employee Retention strategies, indicating significant explanatory power. Hair et al. (2019) suggest that in organizational studies, an R² above 0.26 is already considered substantial, making this result exceptionally strong. The standard error of the estimate (13.12361) is relatively low compared to the scale of the dependent variable, reinforcing the model's precision.

The F-statistic (519.610, p<0.001) confirms that the regression model is statistically significant. Field (2018) notes that a significant F-test (p<0.05) indicates that the model is a good fit for the data. The extremely low p-value (0.000) suggests that the probability of this relationship occurring by chance is virtually zero.

The unstandardized coefficient (B=1.944) indicates that for every one-unit increase in Employee Retention Strategies, Performance improves by 1.944 units. The standardized coefficient (β=0.769) suggests a very large effect size. According to Sawilowsky (2009), a β above 0.5 is considered a large effect in behavioral research, further reinforcing the

substantive impact of employee Retention strategies. The t-statistic (22.795, $p < 0.001$) for the Employee Retention Strategies coefficient does not include zero, confirming statistical significance. The narrow confidence interval (not provided in the given data, but inferred from the high t-statistic and low p-value) would suggest high precision in the estimate. The results robustly support the hypothesis that employee Retention strategies enhance firm performance. The high R^2 , significant F-test, and large Beta coefficient all meet and exceed conventional thresholds for statistical and practical significance (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2019). Organizations seeking to improve performance should prioritize employee Retention strategies, as the data suggest it is a critical determinant of success.

Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal an exceptionally strong, positive, and statistically significant effect of workplace flexibility strategies on the performance of the selected food manufacturing firms. The regression analysis yielded a very high correlation ($R = 0.923$) and determined that workplace flexibility strategies account for an impressive 85.3% (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.852$) of the variance in firm performance. This indicates that flexibility is a primary driver of performance in this sector. The model's statistical significance was confirmed with an F-statistic of 2082.029 ($p < 0.001$), affirming that the relationship is robust and not a product of chance. The regression coefficient ($B = 2.165$) signifies that for each unit increase in the implementation of flexibility strategies, firm performance increases by 2.165 units. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.923$) further highlights an exceptionally large effect size. From a practical standpoint, survey responses showed high levels of agreement that organizations effectively use practices like cross-training, job sharing, professional development opportunities, and fostering a collaborative culture, all of which are hallmarks of a flexible and adaptive workplace. These empirical results align with and extend the findings of several previous studies. For instance, Lawrence-Chuku and Onuoha (2022) found that organizational flexibility positively affects corporate performance metrics like cost efficiency and goal attainment in food and beverage firms in Rivers State. The present study corroborates this by demonstrating a much stronger and broader impact on a composite measure of performance that includes organizational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. Similarly, the findings support the work of Onyokoko and Onuoha (2021), who concluded that flexibility enhances corporate resilience in manufacturing firms. By showing a direct link to performance, this study provides evidence for how resilience translates into tangible organizational outcomes. The results also provide empirical validation for the theoretical overview presented by Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, and Nwokorie (2020), who argued that flexible working arrangements improve organizational performance. This study successfully addresses several gaps identified in the literature. While previous research was often limited to specific regions like Rivers State or the South-South geopolitical zone, this study's focus on Lagos, the commercial nucleus of Nigeria, enhances the generalizability and applicability of its findings. Furthermore, by adopting a more comprehensive set of performance indicators (efficiency, customer satisfaction, and retention) and employing robust regression analysis, this research offers a more nuanced and statistically powerful understanding of the critical role that workplace flexibility plays in the success of modern food manufacturing firms.

The analysis for the fourth objective demonstrates that employee retention strategies have a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on the performance of food manufacturing firms in Lagos. The regression model indicated a strong linear relationship

($R = 0.769$), with retention strategies explaining 59.1% (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.590$) of the variation in firm performance. This substantial explanatory power highlights employee retention as a key pillar of organizational success. The model's validity was strongly supported by a significant F-statistic of 519.610 ($p < 0.001$). The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 1.944$) indicates that a one-unit improvement in employee retention strategies corresponds to a 1.944-unit increase in performance. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.769$) confirms a very large effect size, underscoring the practical importance of retaining talent. Survey data supported these findings, with a high degree of agreement among respondents that their organizations successfully implement retention-focused initiatives, such as fostering a positive workplace culture, offering competitive compensation, providing career development opportunities, and being responsive to employee feedback. These findings are consistent with a broad range of empirical literature. The study corroborates the conclusions of Gberevbie (2008), who found that retention strategies improve performance in the Nigerian beverage sector, by extending this finding to the wider food manufacturing industry.

It also aligns with research from the academic sector by Okafor, Ifekwem, and Adeyi (2019) and Awolaja (2023), who both found that retention measures like training and rewards enhance performance, thereby demonstrating that this principle holds true in an industrial context as well. Furthermore, the results reinforce the work of Igbino, Joel, Igbadumhe, and Peter (2022), who established a significant link between retention and performance, but this study does so with a larger sample and a more advanced analytical approach. This research makes a significant contribution by addressing key limitations of prior studies. Unlike research focused on a single sector (beverages, education) or a different geographical area, this study provides specific and highly relevant insights for the economically vital food manufacturing hub of Lagos. Methodologically, the use of a large sample ($N=362$) and rigorous regression analysis provides stronger and more reliable evidence than earlier studies that may have used smaller samples or less powerful statistical tools like frequency analysis. By including multiple leading firms, the findings possess a higher degree of generalizability for the large-scale food manufacturing industry, offering a clear and evidence-based conclusion: strategic investment in employee retention is not just an HR function but a powerful driver of overall business performance.

Conclusion

For the study which assessed the effect of flexibility strategies on performance, the study found an exceptionally strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship. Workplace flexibility strategies accounted for 85.3% of the variance in firm performance, establishing it as a primary driver of success. The findings indicated that practices such as cross-training, job sharing, and fostering a collaborative culture are effectively utilized and have a substantial impact on organizational outcomes. Also, the study analyzed the effect of employee retention strategies on performance. The results demonstrated a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect, with retention strategies explaining 59.1% of the variation in firm performance. This highlights that strategic initiatives aimed at retaining talent, including fostering a positive culture, offering competitive compensation, and providing career development opportunities, are crucial for enhancing organizational performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forth for food manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria, and relevant policymakers:

- i. Integrate Employee Resourcing with Business Strategy: Human Resources departments should be strategically integrated into the core business planning process. This ensures that employee resourcing decisions are not merely operational but are intrinsically linked to achieving overall corporate objectives, thereby maximizing their impact on performance metrics such as organizational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and customer retention.
- ii. Engagement in continuous Training and Development: While not a primary focus of this study, the findings implicitly highlight the need for continuous training and development programs that align with both workforce planning and recruitment outcomes. Equipping employees with the necessary skills and competencies identified through planning, and reinforcing these through effective recruitment, will further amplify the positive impact on performance.

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