



ORGANIZATION-BASED SELF-ESTEEM AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS PREDICTORS OF TASK PERFORMANCE AMONG PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES IN AWKA CITY

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) and Work-Life Balance (WLB) in predicting Task Performance (TP) among private sector employees in Awka City. A total of one hundred and twenty-seven (127) private sector employees (53 males, and 74 females, mean age = 32.46yrs, SD = 5.69) participated in study. Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Organization based self-esteem scale, work-life balance scale, and task performance scale. The hypotheses were tested using hierarchical multiple regression analysis with stepwise modeling. The results revealed that OBSE significantly and positively predicted task performance. Furthermore, WLB was found to be a significant positive predictor of task performance. The study findings underscore the importance of fostering a supportive work environment where employees feel respected and valued, while also promoting policies that allow for a healthier balance between work and personal responsibilities. The study recommends that private sector organizations in Awka and similar contexts should consider implementing interventions and strategies that enhance OBSE and support WLB initiatives to improve employee performance. Limitations of the study were also pointed out and future research directions proposed.

Keywords: Organization-Based Self-Esteem, Work-Life Balance, Task Performance, private sector employees.

Introduction

Task performance is a critical determinant of organizational success, particularly in the private sector, where efficiency, innovation, and adaptability are paramount (Campbell, 1990). Among the numerous factors influencing task performance, psychological constructs such as organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) and work-life balance have received increasing attention in the field of organizational psychology. Organization-based self-esteem refers to an individual's perception of their value within an organization, which significantly impacts their motivation, job satisfaction, and ultimately their task performance (Pierce et al., 1989). Employees with high OBSE tend to engage more effectively with their tasks, demonstrating resilience and proactivity, as they perceive themselves as integral to the organization's success (Bowling et al., 2010). This underscores the importance of fostering OBSE as a strategy for improving employee performance.

Work-life balance, on the other hand, reflects the equilibrium between professional and personal life demands, which is essential for employee well-being and organizational productivity (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). An imbalance between work and personal life can lead to stress, burnout, and reduced task performance (Byron, 2005). Conversely, when employees achieve a harmonious work-life balance, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of engagement, creativity, and efficiency in their roles (Kossek et al., 2014). In the



private sector, where performance metrics are often stringent and competitive pressures high, the interplay between work-life balance and task performance becomes particularly relevant.

Awka City, a burgeoning commercial hub in southeastern Nigeria, provides a compelling context for studying these variables. The private sector in Awka is characterized by rapid growth, diverse industries, and an increasingly competitive labor market, which places significant demands on employees to perform effectively. At the same time, these employees often face challenges in maintaining a healthy work-life balance due to cultural, economic, and organizational factors unique to the region. As such, understanding how OBSE and work-life balance predict task performance in this context could provide valuable insights for both academia and practice.

This study aims to address the existing gap in the literature by investigating the extent to which OBSE and work-life balance independently predict task performance among private-sector employees in Awka. The study examines the unique and incremental contributions of each variable to task performance. While previous research has explored these constructs individually (Bowling et al., 2010; Byron, 2005), limited empirical attention has been given to understanding their predictive roles within the Nigerian context. This approach not only enhances the global discourse on employee performance but also offers localized insights and strategies for improving organizational outcomes in Awka's distinctive economic and cultural environment.

Through this study, we seek to enhance understanding of the psychological and contextual factors shaping employee performance in a rapidly evolving private sector. By investigating the roles of OBSE and work-life balance, we aim to provide actionable recommendations for organizations to create supportive environments that promote employee well-being and optimize performance.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Organization-Based Self-Esteem and Task Performance

Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) represents an individual's perception of their competence, worth, and significance within their organizational roles (Pierce et al., 1989). It is rooted in the belief that employees who feel valued and capable within their organization tend to develop positive attitudes and behaviors that contribute to their work outcomes. High OBSE fosters a sense of belonging and a deep connection to the organization, leading employees to view their success as integral to the organization's success (Gardner & Pierce, 2010). On the other hand, Task Performance refers to the effectiveness with which employees execute tasks directly related to their job descriptions (Campbell, 1990). It encompasses the proficiency, efficiency, and productivity demonstrated by employees in fulfilling their job roles. Both concepts are vital in understanding the drivers of organizational success, particularly in competitive private-sector environments where performance is closely tied to achieving business goals.

The connection between OBSE and task performance can be explained through social exchange theory, which emphasizes reciprocity in relationships (Blau, 1964). According to this theory, employees who perceive high levels of self-worth within their organization feel an obligation to reciprocate through enhanced effort, commitment, and performance. OBSE fosters intrinsic motivation by reinforcing employees' belief that their contributions are valuable, thereby encouraging them to engage more deeply with their work tasks (Pierce et al., 1989). This dynamic is particularly relevant in private-sector contexts like Awka City, where employees often face significant pressure to meet organizational objectives in a rapidly evolving and competitive business environment.



Empirical evidence supports the link between OBSE and task performance. For instance, Bowling et al. (2010) found that employees with high OBSE are more engaged, proactive, and willing to go the extra mile in their roles. This increased engagement is attributed to their belief in their value to the organization, which fosters greater commitment and a desire to excel in their tasks. Furthermore, high OBSE employees demonstrate resilience and adaptability in the face of challenges, leveraging their self-esteem to maintain high productivity levels (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Such resilience is crucial in dynamic work settings like Awka, where fluctuating market conditions and resource constraints often require employees to adapt quickly and perform under pressure.

In addition to enhancing individual performance, OBSE has been shown to influence broader organizational outcomes. Liu et al. (2020) highlighted that OBSE acts as a buffer against workplace stress, enabling employees to sustain task engagement even in high-pressure environments. This stress-buffering role is particularly relevant in the private sector, where employees often juggle demanding workloads and tight deadlines. By fostering OBSE, organizations can create a supportive environment that not only enhances individual task performance but also contributes to overall organizational efficiency and success.

The context of Awka City provides a unique opportunity to explore this relationship. As a growing commercial hub in southeastern Nigeria, Awka's private sector is characterized by rapid industrialization and competitive labor markets. Employees in this environment often face dual pressures: the need to meet organizational goals and the challenge of maintaining personal well-being. High OBSE can play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges by empowering employees to see themselves as valuable contributors to their organizations, thereby enhancing their task performance. This perspective aligns with findings from global studies, further emphasizing the universal relevance of OBSE in predicting employee outcomes. Based on these theoretical and empirical insights, this study hypothesizes thus:

H₁: Organization-based self-esteem significantly and positively predicts task performance among private-sector employees in Awka City.

Work-Life Balance and Task Performance

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to the ability of employees to effectively manage the demands of their work responsibilities and personal life, allowing them to experience fulfillment in both domains without one overwhelming the other (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Achieving a harmonious balance between work and personal life is crucial for maintaining employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance. WLB is not only about allocating equal time between work and life but also about ensuring that employees have the flexibility to meet personal needs while fulfilling professional obligations (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). As employees face increasing work demands and personal responsibilities, managing this balance becomes critical for sustaining long-term productivity and health, particularly in the private sector where competitive pressures often lead to extended working hours.

The connection between work-life balance and task performance can be understood through the lens of the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). COR theory posits that individuals strive to acquire and protect resources, such as time, energy, and emotional well-being. When employees achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and personal lives, they are better able to conserve and replenish their resources, leading to enhanced motivation, energy, and focus. Conversely, a poor work-life balance can lead to resource depletion, resulting in burnout, stress, and decreased task performance. In a work environment where employees are overburdened with excessive work demands or face constant

stress, the lack of time for personal life can reduce their cognitive and emotional capacity, thus impairing their performance in work tasks (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Empirical research has consistently demonstrated that work-life balance is positively associated with task performance. For example, research by Rantanen et al. (2011) indicated that employees who report a higher level of work-life balance are more productive, focused, and effective in completing their tasks. This is because a balanced work-life situation allows employees to maintain high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and engagement in their work, which directly translates into better performance outcomes. Similarly, a study by Chen et al. (2014) found that employees with better work-life balance exhibited higher task performance, as they were less likely to experience burnout and more likely to remain motivated and engaged in their work. Moreover, evidence from the Nigerian context supports the importance of work-life balance in enhancing task performance. A study by Akinwale and Adeoye (2020) found that work-life balance plays a significant role in reducing job stress and improving employee performance in Nigerian private-sector organizations. Employees who perceived better balance in their work and personal lives were more engaged and motivated, leading to increased productivity and performance in their tasks.

In the context of Awka City, a growing urban center with a diverse private sector, employees often face challenges in managing work-life balance due to the demands of a competitive economic environment. In many organizations, the pressures of meeting deadlines, achieving organizational targets, and handling high workloads can negatively impact employees' personal lives, leading to work-family conflict and increased stress levels. However, when organizations provide support through flexible work arrangements, employee well-being initiatives, and sufficient time for rest and personal activities, employees are likely to experience better work-life balance. This, in turn, can enhance their task performance by allowing them to approach their roles with renewed energy and focus. In light of these theoretical and empirical findings, this study hypothesizes as follows:

H₂: Work-life balance significantly and positively predicts task performance among private-sector employees in Awka City.

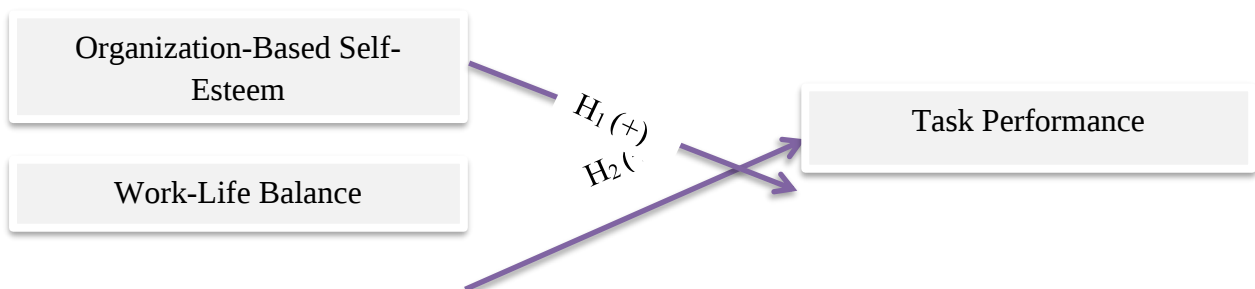


Figure 1: Research Model

Research Methodology

Sample and Procedure

The study involved a total of 127 private sector employees recruited using convenient sampling technique. Participants were drawn from five private secondary schools- Capital City Secondary School, British Spring College, Noble Comprehensive College, Holy Child Secondary School, and Redeemer's International High School- and two commercial banks namely First Bank of Nigeria and Access Bank, all located in Awka, the capital of Anambra State. Only employees who voluntarily consented to participate were included in the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants revealed the following: Of the 127 respondents, 53 (41.7%) were male and 74 (58.3%) were female. Their ages ranged from 23 to 50 years, with a mean age of 32.46 and a standard deviation of 5.69. Regarding marital status, 60



participants (47.2%) were single, 58 (45.7%) were married, and 9 (7.1%) were separated. Job tenure distribution showed that 87 respondents (68.5%) had 1–10 years of experience, 24 (18.9%) had 11–20 years, 10 (7.9%) had 21–30 years, and 6 (4.7%) had 31 years or more. In terms of education, 7 participants (5.5%) held NCE/OND qualifications, 57 (44.9%) had a Bachelor/HND, 25 (19.7%) held a PGD/PGDE, and 38 (29.9%) had master as their highest level of education. 154 questionnaires were initially distributed, out of which 139 were returned, yielding a response rate of 90.3%. However, 12 of the returned questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses, leaving 127 valid questionnaires for data analysis.

Instruments

The descriptions of the scales utilized are provided below.

Organizational-based self-esteem (OBSE) was measured with 10-item OBSE scale (Pierce et al., 1989). Responses on the scale were graded on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). A sample item is: “I am trusted in the organization I work for”. The instrument's internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha), as indicated by Pierce et al. (1989) with seven different samples, was between .89 and .96 with an average value of .91. The reliability estimate in the present study is .97.

Work-life balance (WLB) was assessed with 12-item WLB scale (Brough et al., 2008). The scale is divided into three dimensions comprising work interference with personal life (WIPL; 4-items), personal life interference with work (PLIW; 4-items), and work/personal life enhancement (WPLE; 4-items). Responses on the scale were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item is: “My personal life suffers because of my work”. The scale has a Cronbach's alpha value of .88 (Brough et al., 2008). The Cronbach's alpha in the present study is .98.

Task performance was measured using 7-item individual performance scale (Williams & Anderson, 1991). The responses on the scale were graded on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Sample items include: “I adequately complete assigned duties”, and “I neglect aspects of the job I am obligated to perform”. Two items on the scale were reverse coded. The reliability of this measure was previously reported to be 0.91 (Williams & Anderson, 1991). The reliability estimate in the present study is .94.

Analysis/Design

Hierarchical multiple regressions were employed to test the hypotheses. The data were collated and analysed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Cross-sectional survey design was adopted for this study, drawing samples from the population at a single point in time.

Results

Correlations among Variables

Table 1 showcases the means, standard deviations, reliability estimates (Cronbach's Alpha) and inter-correlations among the variables under examination. The inter-correlation among the variables revealed the following: Work-life balance had a significant positive correlation with task performance ($r = .25$, $p < .01$), while organization-based self-esteem showed no significant correlation with task performance ($r = .16$, ns.).

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviation, Reliability Estimate (Cronbach's Alpha) and Inter-correlations among the study variables

S/N	Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1	WLB	34.71	4.24	(.97)		
2	OBSE	30.51	9.85	.20*	(.98)	
3	TP	19.45	3.05	.25**	.16	(.94)

Note: * $p < .05$ (two-tailed), ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed), $N = 127$; WLB: Work-Life Balance; OBSE: Organization Based Self-Esteem; TP: Task Performance.

Hypotheses Testing

The effects of Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) and Work-Life Balance (WLB) on task performance were analyzed using hierarchical regression with stepwise modeling. In the first step of the regression model (see Table 2), demographic variables- age, gender, marital status, job tenure, and education- were entered as covariates. Collectively, these variables accounted for only 1.7% of the variance in task performance [$R^2\Delta = .017$; $F\Delta (4, 121) = .417$, $p = ns.$].

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regressions for the prediction of Task Performance (TP) by Organization Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) and Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Variables	Beta (β)	T	$R^2\Delta$	$F\Delta$
Step 1			.017	.417
Age	.061	.676		
Gender	.023	.220		
Marital Status	-.086	-.865		
Job Tenure	-.075	-.827		
Education	-.021	-.201		
Step 2			.035*	4.366*
OBSE	.191	2.089*		
Step 3			.047*	6.229*
WLB	.230	2.496*		

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; OBSE: Organization Based Self-Esteem; WLB: Work-Life Balance;

In the second step (see table 2), OBSE was introduced into the model which emerged as a significant positive predictor of task performance ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$) which is consistent with the first hypothesis. Its inclusion explained an additional 5.1% of the variance in task performance [$R^2\Delta = .051$; $F\Delta (1, 120) = 4.366$, $p < .05$], highlighting its significant contribution to the model.

Finally, in the third step, when Work-Life Balance (WLB) was added to the regression equation, it also significantly and positively predicted task performance ($\beta = .230$, $p < .05$), explaining an additional 4.7% of the variance [$R^2\Delta = .047$; $F\Delta (1, 119) = 6.229$, $p < .05$] in task performance. This finding supported the second hypothesis.

Among the predictors, Work-Life Balance made the most substantial positive contribution in predicting task performance ($t=2.496$), followed by Organization-Based Self-Esteem ($t=2.089$). These findings underscore the critical roles of both OBSE and WLB in enhancing task performance, with WLB demonstrating the largest effect.



Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of organisational-based self-esteem (OBSE) and work-life balance (WLB) on task performance among private sector employees in Awka city, Nigeria. The first findings reveal that Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) significantly and positively predicts task performance among private-sector employees, consistent with the first hypothesis. This result aligns with previous studies, which suggest that OBSE fosters employees' intrinsic motivation and enhances their sense of value within the organization, thereby improving their performance (Pierce et al., 1989). Employees with high OBSE often perceive their roles as integral to organizational success, leading to greater engagement and effort in executing their tasks effectively.

The observed positive contribution of OBSE to task performance is also supported by the conservation of resources (COR) theory, which posits that individuals strive to acquire and protect valuable resources, including their self-esteem (Hobfoll, 1989). Employees with high OBSE are likely to feel valued and empowered, which helps them conserve energy and focus on achieving organizational goals. This is particularly relevant in competitive environments like the private sector, where organizational demands require sustained effort and productivity.

Empirical findings from similar studies further reinforce these results. For instance, Gardner and Pierce (2010) found that OBSE is a critical determinant of job performance, as it boosts employees' confidence in their ability to contribute meaningfully to organizational outcomes. Similarly, Liu et al. (2020) demonstrated that OBSE enhances employees' task engagement and resilience, particularly in high-stress environments, by fostering a positive perception of their capabilities and worth. The present findings extend this understanding by showing that OBSE significantly contributes to task performance in the Nigerian context, emphasizing its universal applicability across different cultural and organizational settings.

The second finding of this study indicates that Work-Life Balance (WLB) significantly and positively predicts task performance, supporting the second hypothesis. Employees who achieve a balance between work responsibilities and personal life are more likely to experience reduced stress, increased job satisfaction, and improved focus on their tasks, all of which contribute to enhanced task performance (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). By enabling employees to manage competing demands effectively, WLB fosters an environment where they can fully engage in their roles without the adverse effects of work-life conflict.

This finding aligns with the tenets of the conservation of resources (COR) theory, which posits that individuals who can preserve and replenish their resources- such as time and emotional energy- are better positioned to perform effectively at work (Hobfoll, 1989). When employees achieve a satisfactory balance between work and personal life, they are less likely to experience resource depletion, allowing them to direct more energy and effort toward their professional responsibilities.

Empirical studies provide further evidence of this relationship. For instance, Rantanen et al. (2011) demonstrated that employees with high levels of work-life balance report better performance outcomes due to reduced stress and increased psychological well-being. Similarly, research by Haar et al. (2014) confirmed that WLB is positively correlated with job performance across diverse cultural contexts, suggesting its universal relevance as a predictor of employee outcomes. The current study's findings extend these observations to the Nigerian private sector, highlighting the importance of WLB in enhancing task performance within this unique economic and cultural setting.

Practical Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have important practical implications for human resource (HR) practices, private-sector employees, and organizations as a whole. The identification of



Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) as a significant positive predictor of task performance suggests that HR practices should focus on enhancing employees' self-esteem within the organizational context. This can be achieved by creating an environment that fosters recognition, positive feedback, and opportunities for career growth, which would reinforce employees' sense of value and contribution to organizational success (Pierce et al., 1989). HR managers should invest in programs that promote employees' organizational identification and their feelings of being valued by the company, as these factors are likely to enhance their performance on tasks. Moreover, training initiatives focused on developing leadership skills and providing employees with clear, achievable goals can further support the growth of OBSE, resulting in improved task outcomes.

Similarly, the positive association between Work-Life Balance (WLB) and task performance highlights the importance of supporting employees in balancing work and personal responsibilities. Organizations that prioritize WLB are likely to see improvements in employee well-being, engagement, and overall task performance (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). HR practices should include flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and policies that enable employees to manage work-life demands effectively. Providing options such as remote work, flexible hours, and paid time off can significantly reduce stress and work-life conflict, allowing employees to conserve energy and resources, which they can then channel into more effective task execution (Haar et al., 2014). Furthermore, organizations must take responsibility for fostering a supportive work culture that recognizes the importance of personal time, thereby encouraging employees to perform at their best while maintaining a healthy balance between work and life.

For employees, these findings suggest that their task performance can be significantly enhanced by both fostering their sense of self-worth within the organization and achieving a satisfactory balance between work and personal life. Employees should seek to engage in self-affirming activities that reinforce their value to the organization, while also prioritizing their well-being and seeking support from their employer in balancing work and life demands. As for organizations, these findings stress the need for systematic adjustments to HR practices that not only promote organization-based self-esteem but also facilitate work-life balance. The collective impact of these adjustments can lead to a more engaged, motivated, and productive workforce, with positive outcomes for both employees and organizational performance.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research Directions

This study, while offering valuable insights into the predictors of task performance, has several limitations that warrant consideration. First, the cross-sectional design employed limits the ability to establish causal relationships between Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and task performance. Although the findings highlight significant associations, longitudinal studies are needed to explore how these variables interact over time and whether changes in OBSE and WLB directly lead to improvements in task performance (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). Such an approach would provide a clearer understanding of the temporal dynamics underlying these relationships.

Second, the study's reliance on self-reported measures may introduce common method bias, as participants might overstate or understate their OBSE, WLB, or task performance due to social desirability or other factors (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Future research could address this limitation by incorporating objective performance metrics or obtaining evaluations from supervisors and peers to triangulate the findings. This would enhance the robustness of the results and provide a more comprehensive view of the factors influencing task performance.

Third, the study is limited to private-sector employees in Awka, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions or sectors. The cultural and organizational



contexts of Awka may uniquely shape the relationship between OBSE, WLB, and task performance, and thus, replication studies in different settings and industries are needed to validate these results (Haar et al., 2014). Expanding the scope of research to include public-sector employees and other geographical locations could offer broader insights into these constructs' universal and context-specific effects.

Finally, the study does not examine potential moderating or mediating variables that might influence the observed relationships. For example, factors such as job type, organizational culture, or individual personality traits could interact with OBSE and WLB to affect task performance. Future research should investigate these variables to provide a more nuanced understanding of the conditions under which OBSE and WLB are most impactful.

Addressing these limitations in future research will not only strengthen the empirical foundation of OBSE, WLB, and task performance but also offer more targeted and actionable strategies for enhancing employee productivity across diverse organizational contexts.

Conclusion

This study underscores the significant roles of Organization-Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) and Work-Life Balance (WLB) as predictors of task performance among private-sector employees in Awka. The findings reveal that OBSE enhances employees' sense of value and efficacy within the organization, while WLB supports their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities, both contributing positively to task performance. These results highlight the need for organizations to implement HR strategies that foster OBSE and promote WLB to enhance productivity. Despite its contributions, the study's limitations, including its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data, call for future research to explore these relationships longitudinally, across diverse sectors and cultures, and with the inclusion of moderating or mediating variables. By addressing these gaps, subsequent studies can further advance our understanding of these critical factors in optimizing employee performance.

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