

WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC STATE UNIVERSITY

By

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Abstract

The study investigated work-life balance practices and employee job satisfaction in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. It specifically examined the influence of Institutional Role Conflict (IRC), Supportive Supervisory Culture (SSC), and Digital Work Intrusion (DWI) on employee job satisfaction. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, targeting a population of 1,872 administrative staff across seven public universities. A sample of 320 respondents was determined using the Morgan formula, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire validated for content and reliability at Cronbach's alpha of 0.78. Out of the 320 questionnaires administered, 308 were returned and used for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis with E-Views 9.0. The findings revealed that institutional role conflict had a significant negative effect on employee job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2967$, $p = 0.0001$), indicating that unclear and conflicting role demands reduced satisfaction among administrative staff. Conversely, supportive supervisory culture had a significant positive impact on employee job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.3542$, $p = 0.0030$), demonstrating that supervisory support enhances employee motivation and well-being. Additionally, digital work intrusion negatively affected employee satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2199$, $p = 0.0010$). Based on these findings, the study recommended that universities should clarify administrative roles to reduce conflict, institutionalize supportive supervisory practices, and implement policies limiting digital work intrusion outside office hours. These measures are critical for enhancing employee satisfaction, reducing work-related stress, and promoting organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Work-life balance; Employee job satisfaction; Public universities; Institutional role conflict; Conflicting role demands

1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance within higher education institutions has become a significant organizational concern, particularly in environments characterized by increased administrative expectations, expanded teaching responsibilities, and intensified performance evaluation systems. Contemporary scholars note that universities often demand simultaneous engagement in teaching, research, and community service, which complicates employees' ability to maintain equilibrium between professional and personal life domains (Ojo & Ogunyemi, 2022). The imbalance between institutional expectations and employees' personal well-being frequently leads to emotional exhaustion, reduced morale, and low job satisfaction. Effective work-life balance practices are thus increasingly viewed as strategic tools for sustaining employee

commitment and improving organizational productivity in Nigerian public universities (Okolie, Igbinoba & Nnamdi, 2023).

Institutional role conflict represents one of the major inhibitors of work-life balance in academic environments. It occurs when employees are faced with incompatible demands from multiple roles, resulting in confusion, stress, and the erosion of personal time (Eze & Chukwu, 2022). In public universities, staff are expected to fulfil teaching, administrative, research, and community development duties simultaneously. Such overlapping responsibilities often extend beyond official hours and intrude into personal or family domains. Empirical studies have demonstrated that role conflict significantly predicts job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and reduced organizational commitment (Adigun & Oyeniran,



2023). Clarifying job roles, redefining performance expectations, and aligning workload with institutional capacity are crucial strategies for mitigating role conflict and enhancing job satisfaction.

Another critical dimension of work-life balance is the presence of a supportive supervisory culture. Supervisory support refers to the degree to which immediate supervisors exhibit empathy, provide flexibility, and demonstrate understanding toward employees' family and personal responsibilities (Bassey & Ekanem, 2023). In higher educational settings, supportive supervisors create an enabling environment that allows staff to attend to personal matters without fear of career penalties. Studies have found that supervisors who practice open communication, offer emotional and practical support, and accommodate employees' scheduling needs significantly enhance job satisfaction and reduce burnout (Afolabi & Enwereuzor, 2024). Conversely, unsupportive leadership tends to amplify stress, increase turnover intentions, and diminish overall employee well-being.

Digital work intrusion has emerged as a modern organizational challenge that undermines work-life boundaries. It refers to the tendency for work-related communication and technological engagement, such as emails, messaging apps, and virtual meetings, to extend into personal or family time (Nwosu & Ogbuehi, 2024). While technology offers flexibility and accessibility, its overuse can lead to constant connectivity, reduced recovery time, and psychological fatigue. Scholars have linked digital work intrusion to diminished job satisfaction, lower work engagement, and increased work-family conflict (Ogundele & Abiola, 2023). For academic staff in public universities, the expectation to remain perpetually available online for administrative or academic duties exacerbates stress levels and undermines the intended benefits of flexible work systems.

Collectively, evidence suggests that institutional role conflict, supportive supervisory culture, and digital work intrusion significantly shape employees' perceptions of work-life balance and their overall job satisfaction (Idogho & Uche, 2025). Universities that address these contextual variables through effective managerial practices, clear communication structures, and digital boundary policies tend to foster more satisfied, motivated, and committed employees. In the context of public universities in Delta State, focusing on these modern dimensions of work-life balance provides a more relevant and innovative perspective for understanding and improving employee job satisfaction in the Nigerian higher education sector.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Work-life Balance and Its Dimensions

Work-life balance practices refer to organizational initiatives designed to help employees effectively manage their professional responsibilities alongside personal and family roles, thereby promoting psychological well-being and job

satisfaction (Okolie & Edeh, 2022). In the university context, such practices are influenced by factors such as institutional role conflict, supervisory support, and digital work demands, which collectively shape employees' perceptions of fairness, control, and satisfaction in their work environment (Adewale & Olatunji, 2023; Eruvwe, et al., 2024). Employee job satisfaction, on the other hand, represents the extent to which individuals find fulfilment, motivation, and contentment in their jobs, serving as a critical determinant of commitment, productivity, and organizational stability (Nwachukwu & Egwu, 2024).

Institutional Role Conflict

Institutional role conflict arises when employees experience incompatible expectations from different aspects of their work, leading to tension, stress, and reduced job satisfaction. In the context of public universities, academic and administrative staff often face overlapping obligations such as teaching, research, committee work, and community service, which create competing demands and ambiguity in performance expectations. Such conflicts can erode employees' ability to maintain a healthy balance between professional and personal responsibilities, resulting in emotional exhaustion and diminished productivity (Adewale & Olatunji, 2023). Studies have shown that persistent role conflict not only reduces job satisfaction but also leads to burnout and disengagement among staff, especially when institutional workload policies lack clarity or fairness (Nwachukwu & Egwu, 2024; Oghenero, Omoye & Odiri, 2025).

Addressing institutional role conflict requires structural and managerial reforms that clarify task expectations and promote equitable workload distribution. Universities with transparent performance appraisal systems and defined role boundaries tend to record higher employee satisfaction and lower turnover intentions (Okolie & Edeh, 2022). Furthermore, effective communication between management and staff regarding responsibilities helps minimize uncertainty, allowing employees to better align their professional roles with personal well-being (Umeadi & Akpan, 2025). Consequently, mitigating institutional role conflict is crucial for sustaining both employee morale and organizational effectiveness in public universities.

Supportive Supervisory Culture

A supportive supervisory culture reflects an organizational climate where supervisors demonstrate empathy, fairness, and flexibility toward employees' work and family needs. Supervisors who actively support their subordinates—through understanding workloads, granting flexibility, and fostering open communication—enhance employee satisfaction and commitment (Ezenwafor & Ogbu, 2023). Within universities, a supportive supervisory relationship has been linked to lower stress, improved morale, and increased job engagement among both academic and non-academic staff (Adebayo & Okechukwu, 2022). Such supportive behaviors signal that the institution values employee well-being, which in turn promotes trust and loyalty.

Conversely, when supervisors are unsympathetic or dismissive of employees' personal constraints, the perceived lack of support exacerbates work-life conflict and dissatisfaction. Research indicates that employees who experience low supervisory support report higher levels of burnout and turnover intentions (Uzundu & Ehioghae, 2024). Building a culture of supervisory support, therefore, requires continuous leadership training, institutional policy alignment, and reinforcement of emotional intelligence as a managerial competency (Okoro & Amah, 2025). In this sense, supportive supervisory culture not only facilitates a healthier work-life interface but also serves as a vital predictor of sustained job satisfaction and organizational performance.

Digital Work Intrusion

Digital work intrusion refers to the spill-over of work-related tasks and communications into employees' personal time due to constant digital connectivity. In higher education, staff often receives emails, messages, and administrative notifications beyond regular working hours, blurring the line between work and home life. This "always-on" culture fosters stress, fatigue, and diminished psychological detachment, thereby undermining job satisfaction and well-being (Eromafuru & Omoeye, 2022; Nwosu & Akande, 2023). Researchers have observed that increased digital intrusion leads to sleep disruption, cognitive overload, and reduced concentration, especially among employees who feel compelled to remain digitally accessible to their superiors (Chike & Olatunbosun, 2024).

The pervasive use of digital platforms in universities, though beneficial for communication and efficiency, can become counterproductive if not regulated. Institutions that establish boundaries for after-hours communication and promote digital disconnection policies tend to record higher employee morale and satisfaction (Ifeanyi & Omoregbe, 2022). Encouraging employees to manage their digital exposure and training supervisors to respect off-duty boundaries are crucial interventions for mitigating digital intrusion. Hence, digital work intrusion is a growing dimension of work-life balance challenges that demands managerial awareness and proactive institutional response in today's technology-driven academic environment (Obi & Etuk, 2025).

2.2 Employee Job Satisfaction

Employee job satisfaction refers to the extent to which individuals find fulfilment, enjoyment, and a sense of achievement in their work roles. It represents a complex psychological state that encompasses emotional reactions, cognitive evaluations, and behavioural tendencies toward one's job (Okafor & Udu, 2022). Job satisfaction is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, including recognition, job security, work conditions, pay, supervisory relationships, and opportunities for professional growth. Within public universities, satisfaction levels are often shaped by workload management, fairness in promotions, leadership style, and institutional culture. When employees perceive their job environment as supportive and equitable, they tend to exhibit higher motivation, stronger organizational commitment, and

improved performance outcomes (Ezenwafor & Okoye, 2023; Omoeye, Tarurhor & Aruoren, 2024).

Moreover, job satisfaction in academic institutions plays a pivotal role in determining staff retention and organizational stability. Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to display reduced absenteeism, lower turnover intentions, and greater dedication to institutional goals (Olabode & Iheanacho, 2024; Omoeye, et al, 2024). Conversely, dissatisfaction, often resulting from excessive workload, inadequate resources, and unsupportive management, can manifest as job stress, burnout, and disengagement. In Nigerian public universities, challenges such as irregular remuneration, administrative bottlenecks, and limited career advancement opportunities continue to undermine staff morale and satisfaction. Research shows that effective work-life balance practices, clear job roles, and supportive leadership are among the most significant predictors of job satisfaction across tertiary institutions in developing contexts (Adewale & Olatunji, 2023).

Fostering job satisfaction requires a holistic approach that integrates personal, organizational, and environmental factors. Institutions that cultivate transparent communication, participatory decision-making and psychosocial support mechanisms tend to record higher satisfaction levels among staff (Chukwuma & Ehioghae, 2025). The emergence of digital technologies and evolving work expectations have also reshaped the concept of satisfaction, as employees increasingly value flexibility, respect, and recognition of their personal lives alongside professional contributions. For public universities in Delta State, promoting job satisfaction is therefore not merely a human resource concern but a strategic imperative for improving teaching quality, research output, and institutional sustainability (Uzundu & Eze, 2024).

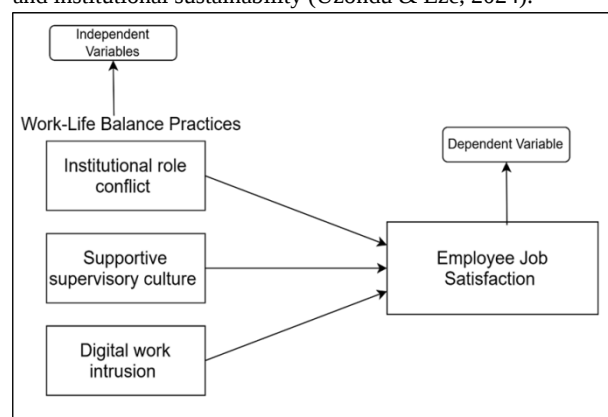


Figure 1: Operational Model of the Study
(Source: Researchers' Construct, 2026)

The conceptual framework illustrates the relational dynamics between specific work-life balance practices and employee job satisfaction. It positions three key elements, institutional role conflict, supportive supervisory culture, and digital work intrusion, as independent variables that exert influence on the dependent variable, employee job satisfaction. Each of these components represents a distinct dimension of the work-life interface, and their interactions with job satisfaction are both direct and nuanced. Institutional role conflict refers to the

tension employees experience when their professional responsibilities clash with personal or family roles.

Furthermore, this conflict often arises in rigid organizational structures where expectations are inflexible, leading to stress and dissatisfaction. When role conflict is high, employees may feel overwhelmed or unsupported, which can significantly diminish their sense of fulfilment at work. Conversely, organizations that recognize and mitigate role conflict, through flexible scheduling or family-friendly policies, can enhance job satisfaction by allowing employees to better manage their dual roles.

Supportive supervisory culture plays a critical mediating role in the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. Supervisors who demonstrate empathy, encourage open communication, and accommodate personal needs foster a positive work environment. This support not only reduces stress but also boosts morale and engagement. Employees who perceive their supervisors as allies in balancing work and life demands are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction, as they feel valued and understood within the organization.

Digital work intrusion captures the extent to which technology blurs the boundaries between work and personal life. While digital tools can enhance productivity, they can also lead to constant connectivity and an inability to disconnect from work. This intrusion can erode personal time, increase burnout, and negatively impact job satisfaction. Organizations that establish clear digital boundaries, such as limiting after-hours emails or promoting digital practices, help protect employees' personal space, thereby improving their overall satisfaction with their job. Together, these variables form a comprehensive framework that explains how organizational practices and cultural norms shape employees' experiences. By addressing institutional role conflict, fostering supportive supervisory relationships, and managing digital work intrusion, organizations can create a healthier work-life balance that directly contributes to higher employee job satisfaction.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Role Conflict Theory, originally proposed by Kahn et al. (1964), explains how individuals experience stress and dissatisfaction when they face incompatible expectations between multiple roles they occupy within an organization or society. In the workplace, especially within academic institutions, employees often juggle professional, administrative, and personal roles that may demand conflicting behaviours or time commitments. Such conflicts can lead to decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and lower productivity (Eze & Chukwu, 2023). In public universities, lecturers and administrative staff frequently experience tension between teaching, research, community service, and family responsibilities, resulting in strain that negatively impacts their satisfaction and overall well-being. Recent studies affirm that minimizing role ambiguity and clarifying job expectations enhance job satisfaction and organizational

commitment among university staff (Okorie & Adeniran, 2024).

This study is anchored on role conflict theory because it provides the most appropriate lens for understanding how conflicting job expectations and multiple role demands affect employees' satisfaction in public universities. Staff members in these institutions often navigate competing responsibilities such as teaching, research, community engagement, and administrative duties, all within a system characterized by limited resources and bureaucratic constraints. By applying role conflict theory, the study examines how the tension arising from incompatible role expectations influences job satisfaction, thereby offering insights into strategies for reducing role strain and improving institutional productivity (Eze & Chukwu, 2023; Okorie & Adeniran, 2024).

2.4 Empirical Studies

Eze and Chukwu (2022) investigated the relationship between institutional role conflict and job satisfaction among academic staff in selected public universities in South-East Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design with a sample size of 310 lecturers drawn from three public universities using a stratified random sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and regression analysis, revealing a strong negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. The authors concluded that overlapping job roles, unclear reporting structures, and inconsistent institutional policies led to dissatisfaction and burnout among staff. However, the study was limited to the South-East region and did not account for the unique administrative and structural dynamics of public universities in Delta State. This present study bridges that gap by contextualizing institutional role conflict within Delta State's higher education system.

Ojo and Ogunyemi (2022) conducted an empirical study on work-life balance policies and employee satisfaction in public organizations across Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey of 270 respondents, the study employed multiple regression analysis to assess the influence of institutional policies on staff well-being and satisfaction. Results indicated that policy fairness and managerial support had more impact than the mere existence of work-life balance initiatives. However, the study aggregated data across public sectors without isolating university settings. The current research narrows the focus to public universities, emphasizing administrative policy disparities as a determinant of employee satisfaction.

Adigun and Oyeniran (2023) examined the effects of role conflict and ambiguity on employee morale and productivity in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Using a mixed-method design, they collected data from 285 academic and non-academic staff through questionnaires and interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed with multiple regression, while thematic analysis was used for the qualitative component. Findings revealed that conflicting institutional roles and unbalanced workloads significantly reduced employee satisfaction and motivation. The authors recommended job redesign and workload clarity as measures for improvement. Nevertheless, the study did not specifically

focus on job satisfaction as a dependent construct nor assess moderating institutional culture variables. This current study extends their work by focusing explicitly on job satisfaction as an outcome variable.

Bassey and Ekanem (2023) explored the influence of supervisory culture on job satisfaction among staff of federal universities in South-South Nigeria. The researchers adopted a correlational survey design with a sample of 350 respondents, comprising academic and administrative staff. Using Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient, they found that supervisors who demonstrated empathy, transparency, and supportive communication significantly improved employee morale and satisfaction. The study underscored the importance of leadership empathy in reducing job dissatisfaction and turnover. However, it focused only on federal institutions, leaving a gap in understanding how supervisory culture functions within public state universities, which this study addresses.

Ogundele and Abiola (2023) studied the effects of digital work intrusion on work-life balance and job satisfaction among university employees in Lagos and Ogun States. Employing a survey design with a sample of 400 staff members, they analyzed data using structural equation modelling (SEM). The findings revealed that continuous digital communication, especially after office hours, disrupted employees' psychological detachment and personal time, leading to job dissatisfaction and stress. The authors called for digital communication policies to protect personal boundaries. Yet, their focus was limited to urban federal universities.

Afolabi and Enwereuzor (2024) carried out a longitudinal study examining how supervisory support moderates the relationship between job stress and satisfaction among academic staff in Nigerian universities. Data were collected in two waves from 330 lecturers across five universities, analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression. The findings showed that supportive supervision reduced the negative impact of job stress on satisfaction over time. Nonetheless, their research did not explore the digital and institutional role dimensions of work-life balance, which the present study incorporates for a more holistic understanding.

Nwosu and Ogbuehi (2024) examined techno-stress and job satisfaction among 312 university workers in South-East Nigeria using a quantitative correlational design. Employing SEM analysis, they found that constant connectivity expectations and technology-related overload significantly reduced satisfaction and increased fatigue. The study's limitation was its narrow focus on ICT stressors without integrating the organizational and supervisory context influencing these effects.

In a nutshell, Idogho and Uche (2025) conducted a multi-site survey across six public universities in Nigeria, focusing on

integrated work-life balance practices and their impact on job satisfaction. Using a sample size of 420 respondents and regression modelling, they found that institutions that implemented a combination of clear job roles, supervisory empathy, and digital policy regulation experienced higher staff satisfaction and lower attrition rates.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered suitable because it enabled the researcher to collect data from a representative sample of respondents and to describe existing conditions regarding work-life balance practices and employee job satisfaction without manipulating variables. The design was also appropriate for identifying relationships between institutional role conflict, supportive supervisory culture, digital work intrusion, and employee job satisfaction among administrative staff of public universities in Delta State.

The population of this study consisted of 1,872 administrative personnel drawn from the seven (7) public universities in Delta State, on table 3.1 below. The population included staff within the administrative hierarchy such as Administrative Officers, Assistant Registrars, and Senior Executive Officers. This category of employees was selected because they play critical roles in institutional administration and often experience overlapping job roles, supervisory pressures, and digital workload demands that influence their job satisfaction.

Table 1 Population of Non-Teaching Senior Staff

University	Staff
Delta State University, Abraka	412
Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba	271
Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences, Kwale	149
Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (Warri)	249
Nigerian Maritime University, Okerenkoko	138
Southern Delta University, Ozoro	212
University of Delta, Agbor	341
Total	1,872

Source: Institutional Official Websites, 2026

The sample size for the study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table (See Appendix I), which recommends a sample of 320 respondents for a population of 1,872 at a 95% confidence level. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation across the seven universities and the three administrative cadres (Administrative Officers, Assistant Registrars, and Senior Executive Officers). This technique allowed for fairness in the selection of participants according to their institutional and hierarchical categories (Etikan & Bala, 2021).

Table 2: Proportionate Sample Distribution of Employee in Public Universities in Delta State

University	Population (N)	Formula: $(n/N) \times 320$	Sample Size (n)
Delta State University, Abraka	412	$(412/1872) \times 320 = 70.43$	70
Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba	271	$(271/1872) \times 320 = 46.35$	46
Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences, Kwale	149	$(149/1872) \times 320 = 25.48$	26
Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (Warri)	249	$(249/1872) \times 320 = 42.58$	43
Nigerian Maritime University, Okerenkoko	138	$(138/1872) \times 320 = 23.59$	24
Southern Delta University, Ozoro	312	$(312/1872) \times 320 = 53.33$	53
University of Delta, Agbor	341	$(341/1872) \times 320 = 58.29$	58
Total	1872		320

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2026

Table 3: Proportionate Distribution of Sample Size by Staff Category

University	Total Sample (n)	Assistant Registrars	Administrative Officers	Senior Executive Officers
Delta State University, Abraka	70	7	42	21
Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba	46	5	27	14
Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences, Kwale	25	3	15	8
Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (Warri)	43	4	26	13
Nigerian Maritime University, Okerenkoko	24	2	15	7
Southern Delta University, Ozoro	36	4	35	14
University of Delta, Agbor	58	6	35	17
	320	31	195	94

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2026

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A focused on demographic information of respondents, while Section B contained items related to the variables under study, Institutional Role Conflict, Supportive Supervisory Culture, Digital Work Intrusion, and Employee Job Satisfaction. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1), which allowed for quantitative analysis and statistical comparison (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022).

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted among 30 administrative staff from a nearby public tertiary institution in the State (college of Education, Warri), which was not part of the main study area. The responses were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test, yielding a coefficient of 0.78, which exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Table 4: Summary of Reliability Result of Instrument for the Study

S/N	Code	Description	Alpha	Remark
1	EJS	Employee Job Satisfaction	0.74	Reliable
2	IRC	Institutional Role Conflict	0.80	Reliable
3	SSC	Supportive Supervisory Culture	0.77	Reliable
4	DWI	Digital Work Intrusion	0.81	Reliable
Aggregate Reliability			0.78	Reliable

Sources, Researchers' Computation, 2026.

Data were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires by the researcher with the assistance of trained research aides. Prior permission was obtained from institutional management, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Questionnaires

were distributed physically and retrieved after one week. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to summarize demographic data and responses to questionnaire items, while multiple regression analysis was applied to establish whether work-life balance practices affect employee job satisfaction. The model was expressed as:

$$EJS = f(IRC, SSC, DWI)$$

The econometric form of the model is represented as:

$$EJS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IRC + \beta_2 SSC + \beta_3 DWI + \mu$$

Where: *EJS*= Employee Job Satisfaction; *IRC*= Institutional Role Conflict; *SSC*= Supportive Supervisory Culture; *DWI*= Digital Work Intrusion; β_0 = Constant term; $\beta_1 - \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients; μ = Error term

4. RESULTS

Table 5: Demography of Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	140	45.45
Male	168	54.55
Age Group		
21–30 years	76	24.68
31–40 years	105	34.09
41–50 years	90	29.22
51 years and above	37	12.01
Staff Category		
Administrative Officer	189	61.36%
Assistant Registrar	29	9.42%
Senior Executive Officer	90	29.22%
Years of Experience		
11–15 years	66	21.43
1–5 years	111	36.04

6–10 years	84	27.27
Above 15 years	47	15.26
Marital Status		
Divorced/Widowed	8	2.6
Married	177	57.47
Single	123	39.94

Source: Researcher's Compilation, 2026

Table 5 presents the demographic characteristics of the 308 respondents who participated in the study. The result shows that 140 (45.45%) of the respondents were female, while 168 (54.55%) were male, indicating a slightly higher proportion of male respondents among the administrative staff of the selected universities. Considering the age distribution, 76 (24.68%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 21–30 years, 105 (34.09%) were aged between 31–40 years, 90 (29.22%) were within 41–50 years, while 37 (12.01%) were 51 years and above. This implies that most respondents were in their middle-age group, representing a workforce that is active and experienced.

In terms of staff category, 189 (61.36%) of the respondents were Administrative Officers, 29 (9.42%) were Assistant Registrars, while 90 (29.22%) were Senior Executive Officers. This shows that the majority of the participants were drawn from the operational level of the administrative structure. With regard to years of experience, 111 (36.04%) of the respondents had worked for 1–5 years, 84 (27.27%) had 6–10 years, 66 (21.43%) had 11–15 years, while 47 (15.26%) had above 15 years of work experience. This distribution reveals that most of the respondents were relatively new or moderately experienced in their positions.

Concerning marital status, 123 (39.94%) of the respondents were single, 177 (57.47%) were married, while 8 (2.6%) were divorced or widowed. This implies that the majority of the respondents were married individuals, which may influence their perspectives on workplace stability, commitment, and work-life balance.

Table 6: Mean Response to Items of Questionnaire

S/N	Question Items	Mean	Std	Remark
Institutional Role Conflict				
1	I often experience conflicting demands between my administrative and personal responsibilities.	3.17	0.79	Agree
2	My workload makes it difficult to balance my family and professional life.	3.24	0.76	Agree
3	There is a lack of clarity about my role expectations in the university system.	3.20	0.73	Agree
4	My institutional duties frequently interfere with my personal commitments.	3.21	0.76	Agree
5	Role ambiguity within the university affects my overall productivity.	3.24	0.78	Agree

	Total Mean	3.21	0.76	Agree
	Supportive Supervisory Culture			
1	My supervisor encourages flexible work arrangements when needed.	3.80	0.62	Agree
2	I receive emotional and professional support from my supervisor during stressful periods.	3.80	0.66	Agree
3	Supervisors in my department show concern for employees' personal well-being.	3.80	0.69	Agree
4	My supervisor respects employees' need to maintain a healthy work-life balance.	3.82	0.69	Agree
5	The leadership culture in my department promotes mutual respect and understanding.	3.81	0.65	Agree
	Total Mean	3.81	0.66	Agree
	Digital Work Intrusion			
1	I am often required to respond to official emails or messages outside working hours.	2.81	0.79	Disagree
2	Work-related digital communication frequently interrupts my personal time.	2.89	0.81	Disagree
3	The use of digital platforms has extended my work beyond official hours.	2.83	0.76	Disagree
4	I feel pressured to remain digitally available to my supervisors at all times.	2.88	0.73	Disagree
5	Technology-related work demands have negatively affected my personal relationships.	2.92	0.78	Disagree
	Total Mean	2.87	0.77	Disagree
	Employee Job Satisfaction			
1	I am satisfied with the nature of my work and responsibilities.	3.02	0.62	Agree
2	I feel motivated to perform well in my current position.	2.97	0.60	Disagree
3	My job provides adequate opportunities for career growth and development.	3.01	0.68	Agree
4	I am happy with the level of recognition I receive for my contributions.	3.02	0.65	Agree
5	Overall, I am satisfied with my job in this university.	3.01	0.58	Agree
	Total Mean	3.01	0.63	Agree

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of respondents' opinions on four key constructs: Institutional Role Conflict, Supportive Supervisory Culture, Digital Work Intrusion, and Employee Job Satisfaction. The interpretation focuses on both the mean and standard deviation (SD) values, which indicate the level of agreement and variability in responses respectively. Item-wise, respondents agreed that they often experience conflicting demands between administrative and personal responsibilities (Mean = 3.17, SD = 0.79), and that their workload makes it difficult to balance family and professional life (Mean = 3.24, SD = 0.76). Similarly, lack of clarity about role expectations recorded a mean of 3.20 and

SD of 0.73, while institutional duties interfering with personal commitments had a mean of 3.21 and SD of 0.76.

The item stating that role ambiguity affects productivity showed a mean of 3.24 and SD of 0.78. The consistency in SD values (ranging from 0.73 to 0.79) indicates minimal variation in perception, implying that most respondents share a common experience of role conflict which could negatively impact work-life balance and performance. The overall mean score for Institutional Role Conflict was 3.21 with a standard deviation of 0.76, suggesting that respondents generally agreed that role conflict exists among university administrative staff

The responses on Supportive Supervisory Culture respondents agreed that their supervisors encourage flexible work arrangements when needed (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.62) and provide emotional and professional support during stressful periods (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.66).

Likewise, concern for employees' well-being scored a mean of 3.80 and SD of 0.69, while respect for work-life balance had a mean of 3.82 and SD of 0.69. Furthermore, the perception that leadership culture promotes mutual respect and understanding recorded a mean of 3.81 and SD of 0.65. The close clustering of the means (3.80–3.82) and low SD values (0.62–0.69) indicate uniformity in responses, suggesting that supportive supervisory practices are well institutionalized and positively influence employees' morale and satisfaction. Overall mean of 3.81 and SD of 0.66, reflecting a high level of agreement that supervisors demonstrate supportive behaviours within the university system.

Digital Work Intrusion showed respondents disagreed that they are often required to respond to official messages outside work hours (Mean = 2.81, SD = 0.79) or that work-related digital communication interrupts personal time (Mean = 2.89, SD = 0.81). Similarly, the perception that digital platforms extend work beyond official hours had a mean of 2.83 and SD of 0.76, while pressure to remain digitally available scored a mean of 2.88 and SD of 0.73. The belief that technology-related demands harm personal relationships recorded a mean of 2.92 and SD of 0.78. The moderate variability in SD (0.73–0.81) indicates diverse experiences among respondents, though the general trend shows that digital work encroachment is not yet a severe issue among administrative

staff in Delta State public universities. Overall mean of 2.87 with a standard deviation of 0.77, signifying that respondents generally disagreed that digital technologies excessively intrude into their personal lives.

Specifically, satisfaction with the nature of work and responsibilities scored a mean of 3.02 and SD of 0.62, while motivation to perform well recorded a slightly lower mean of 2.97 and SD of 0.60. Satisfaction with career growth opportunities had a mean of 3.01 and SD of 0.68, recognition for contributions recorded a mean of 3.02 and SD of 0.65, and overall job satisfaction had a mean of 3.01 and SD of 0.58. The narrow SD range (0.58–0.68) reflects a shared sentiment among respondents, indicating general contentment with their work conditions, though motivation levels appear slightly subdued. This suggests that while employees find their roles meaningful and adequately recognized, continuous efforts are needed to enhance intrinsic motivation and growth prospects. The overall mean for Employee Job Satisfaction was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 0.63, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction among respondents.

Thus, the descriptive results indicate that institutional role conflict moderately affects employees' work-life balance, while a supportive supervisory culture strongly promotes satisfaction and morale. Conversely, digital work intrusion appears minimal, implying that technology has not yet become a dominant source of stress. Overall, the moderate level of employee job satisfaction observed suggests that institutional support and role clarity remain crucial determinants of employee well-being and performance within public universities in Delta State.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of study Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Max.	Min.	Jarque-Bera	Obs.
EJS	3.01	0.47	3.00	4.60	1.80	1.22	308
IRC	3.21	0.65	3.20	5.00	1.20	0.32	308
SSC	3.81	0.52	3.80	5.00	2.40	1.51	308
DWI	2.87	0.65	2.80	5.00	1.00	0.31	308

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026

Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables, Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS), Institutional Role Conflict (IRC), Supportive Supervisory Culture (SSC), and Digital Work Intrusion (DWI), based on 308 valid responses. The mean value for EJS was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 0.47, indicating moderate job satisfaction with minimal variability among respondents. IRC recorded a mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.65, suggesting a moderate level of role conflict within the university system. SSC had the highest mean value of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 0.52, implying a strong perception of supportive leadership and consistent supervisory culture among administrative staff.

Conversely, DWI had the lowest mean of 2.87 and a standard deviation of 0.65, reflecting that digital work-related intrusions into personal life were not considered a major concern by most respondents. The closeness between the

mean and median values across all variables, as well as the low Jarque-Bera statistics (ranging from 0.31 to 1.51), indicates that the data were approximately normally distributed and suitable for further regression analysis. Overall, the descriptive results reveal that while employees moderately experience role conflict and job satisfaction, supervisory support remains a strong positive factor, and digital work intrusion is relatively minimal among public university administrative staff in Delta State.

Table 8: Variable Correlation Matrix

Variable	IRC	SSC	DWI	EJS
IRC	1.000			
SSC	0.035	1.000		
DWI	-0.052	-0.046	1.000	
EJS	-0.378	0.388	-0.299	1.000

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026

Table 8 presents the correlation matrix showing the relationship among the study variables: Institutional Role Conflict (IRC), Supportive Supervisory Culture (SSC), Digital Work Intrusion (DWI), and Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS). The result reveals that IRC has a negative correlation with EJS ($r = -0.378$), indicating that higher levels of role conflict are associated with lower job satisfaction among administrative staff. Conversely, SSC shows a positive correlation with EJS ($r = 0.388$), suggesting that a supportive supervisory culture enhances employee satisfaction. DWI also demonstrates a negative correlation with EJS ($r = -0.299$),

meaning that increased digital intrusion into personal life tends to reduce job satisfaction.

The weak positive relationship between IRC and SSC ($r = 0.035$) and the negative but negligible correlations between DWI and both IRC ($r = -0.052$) and SSC ($r = -0.046$) indicate limited multicollinearity among the independent variables. Overall, the correlation results imply that while supervisory support positively influences job satisfaction, institutional role conflict and digital work intrusion exert adverse effects on employees' overall job fulfilment in public universities within Delta State.

Table 9: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Result

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	3.241563	0.212673	15.24199	0.0000
IRC	-0.296730	0.032509	-9.127539	0.0001
SSC	0.354178	0.040678	8.706897	0.0030
DWI	-0.219977	0.032546	-6.758924	0.0010
R-squared	0.395591	Mean dependent var		3.005844
Adjusted R-squared	0.389627	S.D. dependent var		0.471844
S.E. of regression	0.368635	Akaike info criterion		0.854881
Sum squared resid	41.31102	Schwarz criterion		0.903323
Log likelihood	-127.6516	Hannan-Quinn criter.		0.874250
F-statistic	66.32364	Durbin-Watson stat		1.914959
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

Source: EViews 9.0v Regression Output, 2026

Table 9 presents the summary of the multiple regression analysis conducted to examine the joint and individual effects of Institutional Role Conflict (IRC), Supportive Supervisory Culture (SSC), and Digital Work Intrusion (DWI) on Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) among administrative staff in public universities in Delta State. The regression coefficients reveal that Institutional Role Conflict (IRC) had a negative and significant effect on Employee Job Satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2967$, $t = -9.13$, $p = 0.0001$), suggesting that as role conflict increases, job satisfaction significantly decreases. This finding aligns with the theoretical premise that conflicting demands between institutional and personal roles can lead to stress and reduced morale. Conversely, Supportive Supervisory Culture (SSC) exhibited a positive and significant effect on Employee Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.3542$, $t = 8.71$, $p = 0.0030$), indicating that employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive and empathetic tend to report higher satisfaction levels. This underscores the importance of supervisory practices that foster respect, trust, and flexibility in enhancing employee well-being.

Similarly, Digital Work Intrusion (DWI) demonstrated a negative and statistically significant relationship with Employee Job Satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2199$, $t = -6.76$, $p =$

0.0010), implying that excessive work-related digital communication outside office hours diminishes employees' job satisfaction by disrupting work-life boundaries. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.91 suggests the absence of autocorrelation, confirming the reliability of the model estimates. The regression model yielded an R-squared value of 0.3956 and an Adjusted R-squared of 0.3896, indicating that approximately 39.6% of the variation in employee job satisfaction is explained by the combined influence of the three independent variables, while the remaining 60.4% may be attributed to factors not captured in this model. The F-statistic of 66.32 with a corresponding p-value of 0.0000 shows that the model is statistically significant overall, implying that the predictors collectively exert a meaningful effect on job satisfaction.

Overall, the regression results indicate that while supportive supervision enhances job satisfaction, institutional role conflict and digital work intrusion significantly reduce it. These findings reinforce the need for university management to minimize role ambiguity, regulate digital communication after work hours, and promote supportive leadership practices to improve employee satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness.

5. DISCUSSION

Institutional role conflict and employee job satisfaction

The regression analysis produced a significant negative effect of institutional role conflict on employee job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2967$, $t = -9.13$, $p < 0.001$), hence, higher role conflict was associated with lower job satisfaction. This result corroborated earlier empirical work which reported negative relationships between role conflict/ambiguity and satisfaction among university staff (Eze & Chukwu, 2022; Adigun & Oyeniran, 2023), both of which recommended role clarification and workload realignment as corrective measures. A few prior studies reported weaker or conditional effects, for example, research that found policy presence alone did not translate into improved outcomes unless accompanied by fair administration and manager endorsement (Ojo & Ogunyemi, 2022), which suggests the role-conflict effect may be moderated by administrative equity and supervisory practice.

Theoretically, this finding affirms Role Conflict Theory as the appropriate lens for the first objective (to determine the extent IRC influences job satisfaction): unresolved incompatible role expectations produce strain that reduces job satisfaction, implying management interventions should prioritize role clarification, workload audits, and alignment of performance expectations to achieve objective 1.

Supportive supervisory culture and employee job satisfaction

The analysis showed a strong positive and statistically significant effect of supportive supervisory culture on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.3542$, $t = 8.71$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that perceived supervisory support substantially increased employee satisfaction. This result supported studies that found supervisory empathy, flexibility, and practical support improved morale and reduced turnover intentions among academic and administrative staff (Bassey & Ekanem, 2023; Afolabi & Enwereuzor, 2024). Some researchers have cautioned that supervisory support may be insufficient when wider institutional problems persist (e.g., systemic policy disparity or unmanaged digital demands), which can attenuate the straightforward beneficial effect of supervision (Ojo & Ogunyemi, 2022; Ogundele & Abiola, 2023).

The theoretical implication aligns with Organizational Support Theory and speaks directly to the second objective (to determine how supportive supervisory culture affects job satisfaction): perceived organizational (and supervisory) support motivates reciprocity, greater commitment and satisfaction, and therefore leadership development, manager accountability, and policies that institutionalize supportive behaviours are practical priorities.

Digital work intrusion and employee job satisfaction

The regression results rejected H_{03} by showing a significant negative relationship between digital work intrusion and job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.2199$, $t = -6.76$, $p < 0.01$): greater after-hours and always-on digital demands corresponded with lower satisfaction. This finding was consistent with recent studies that distinguished routine digital interruptions from

sustained after-hours intrusions and reported that the latter strongly reduced psychological detachment and job satisfaction (Ogundele & Abiola, 2023; Nwosu & Ogbuehi, 2024). By contrast, some prior work observed only modest effects of digitalization where institutional norms or individual boundary management practices mitigated intrusion (Ojo & Ogunyemi, 2022), indicating contextual variability.

The result is theoretically resonant with Boundary Theory, which emphasizes the importance of temporal and psychological boundaries between work and non-work roles; it addresses the third objective (to assess the impact of digital work intrusion) by showing that policies and managerial norms that protect offline time and set expectations for after-hours communication are essential to preserve employee satisfaction.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the study established that work-life balance practices significantly influence employee job satisfaction among administrative staff in public universities in Delta State. Specifically, institutional role conflict and digital work intrusion were found to adversely affect job satisfaction, while a supportive supervisory culture positively enhanced it. These findings highlight the critical role of managerial support, clear role definition, and controlled digital work demands in promoting employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. The study underscores that for universities to sustain motivated and satisfied administrative personnel, policies must prioritize reducing role ambiguity, fostering empathetic and flexible supervision, and establishing boundaries around digital communication. Overall, the research affirms that effective work-life balance strategies are essential for improving employee satisfaction and, by extension, institutional productivity.

In-line with the stated objectives and based on the finding the conclusions, the following are being recommended:

- i. To address the first objective, university management should clarify job roles and responsibilities, minimize overlapping duties, and implement fair workload distribution among administrative staff. This will help reduce conflicting demands and enhance employee job satisfaction.
- ii. In line with the second objective, supervisors should be trained to provide consistent professional and emotional support, encourage flexibility, and recognize employees' contributions. Institutionalizing such supportive leadership practices will positively impact job satisfaction.
- iii. To achieve the third objective, universities should establish clear policies that limit after-hours digital communication, ensuring employees maintain a healthy boundary between work and personal life. This will help reduce

stress associated with digital work intrusion and improve overall employee satisfaction.

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