National College of Ireland

Project Submission Sheet

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Additional Evidence:

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Investigating the Role of Supervisory Support and Work-Life Balance on the Relationship between Job Autonomy and Employee Engagement Among Employees in Five-Star Hotels in Nigeria.

PATRICIA EKATA ANYASI

Master of Arts in Human Resource Management

National College of Ireland

Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2024

School of Business

National College of Ireland

Supervisor: Dr. Kesiena Ebenade

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ABSTRACT

In the fast-paced world of luxury hospitality, where every smile counts and every detail matters, the engagement of hotel employees is paramount. This study explored the role of supervisory support and work-life balance on the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement among employees in five-star hotels in Lagos, Nigeria. The researcher employed the positivist philosophy and the quantitative research approach to achieve the study's objective. Data was gathered through a survey questionnaire developed with Google Forms and distributed through WhatsApp and Telegram. The respondents of the study are employees in seven Five-Star Hotels in Lagos State. The researcher employed the random sampling approach to reach out to the broader study population.

Out of the 302 questionnaires sent to the population, 284 were completed and adopted for the study, reflecting a response rate of 94%. With a sample size of 284, the data underwent processing and analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 26) and Analysis of Moments (AMOS version 23). Descriptive Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) with Process Macro and hierarchical regression were employed to test the reliability and validity of the model and evaluate the research hypotheses.

The results indicate that job autonomy has a positive and significant effect on both employee engagement and work-life balance. Furthermore, work-life balance was found to mediate the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement. Additionally, supervisory support was found to moderate the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement, as well as between work-life balance and employee engagement. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the hotel management/hospitality industry create a work environment that allows for flexibility and autonomy, allowing employees to set their own goals and enabling employees to better manage their work and personal lives. Encourage regular communication between supervisors and employees to address any issues and ensure a positive work environment.

Keywords: employee engagement, job autonomy, supervisory support, work-life balance

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the years, businesses have recognized the greater impact that engaged employees can exert on overall productivity and commitment, leading to enhanced overall organizational effectiveness (Lee and Ok, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2023). Employee engagement represents an individual's motivation, emotional commitment, and enthusiasm toward their job and organization (Saks, 2006). Moreover, increased employee engagement is linked to lower turnover rates, as individuals who feel connected to their work are less inclined to seek alternative employment (Kwon and Kim, 2020; Korankye *et al.*, 2022). At the personal level, engaged individuals usually experience increased job satisfaction and a greater sense of purpose (Lee and Shin, 2023). Given the importance of this outcome, there is a growing demand to explore the factors that affect and shape employee engagement as the element continues to attract attention from scholars and industry leaders (Odai *et al.*, 2021; Ali, Li and Qiu, 2022). Exploring the determinants of employee engagement is crucial for firms seeking to create a workforce that is not only content but actively invested in contributing to the business's success and goals (Al-Ajlouni, 2020; Busse and Regenberg, 2019). Given that the debate of why, how, and under what situations elements such as job autonomy, are associated with employee engagement is garnering attention in the literature (Sheoran, Goyal and Sharma, 2022), it is prudent to initiate such a study, particularly in a developing country, since such studies are still at the infantile stage.

The concept of job autonomy has become increasingly significant in shaping the dynamics of the employer-employee relationship (Volmer, Spurk and Niessen, 2012). Job autonomy encompasses the degree of discretion and independence employees have to make informed decisions about their work, including how they manage their tasks and space (Khoshnaw and Alavi, 2020). Numerous studies suggest that a greater degree of job autonomy is linked with increased satisfaction (Jing *et al.,* 2021; Nasution, Siregar and Pristiyono, 2021), motivation, and overall well-being (Jin and Kim, 2015; Kao *et al.*, 2022). One important issue that calls for attention is the possible effect of job autonomy on the engagement of employees. This is because job autonomy is an important job resource that is expected to lead to enhanced employee engagement (Jin and Kim, 2015). On the contrary, researchers have determined that job autonomy has in some cases

been a weak determinant of employee engagement (Muecke, Linderman-Hill and Greenwald, 2020). Sheoran *et al.,* (2022) also asserted it has not usually enhanced engagement. Also, Malinowska, Tokarz and Wardzichowska (2018) established that it is a major contributor to employee engagement. Given the ongoing scholarly debate on the nexus between autonomy and engagement, comprehending this link is vital for organizations especially in emerging countries aiming to boost employee engagement, as it can guide the development of job responsibilities that cultivate a sense of ownership and empowerment among employees.

Furthermore, job autonomy plays a pivotal role in impacting their work experiences and, consequently, their tenacity to attain a satisfactory work-life balance (WLB) (Chung-Yan, 2010; Nasution, Siregar and Pristiyono, 2021). Employees with higher levels of job autonomy often have more control over their work schedules, tasks, and methods of execution (Muecke, Linderman-Hill and Greenwald, 2020). This increased control can empower individuals to manage their work in a way that aligns with their personal lives, facilitating a better integration of professional and personal responsibilities (Ahakwa *et al*., 2021). Conversely, a lack of job autonomy may lead to a more rigid work structure, potentially impeding employees' ability to balance work and personal life demands (Muecke, Linderman-Hill and Greenwald, 2020). Understanding the impact of job autonomy on WLB is essential for businesses striving to establish environments that aids employee well-being, satisfaction, and overall engagement (Malinowska, Tokarz and Wardzichowska, 2018; Peng *et al.*, 2022). As organizations navigate the changing dynamics of the workplace, recognizing and facilitating a healthy balance between autonomy and work-life considerations becomes integral to fostering a positive and sustainable work culture.

In evaluating the nexus between job autonomy and organizational and employee outcomes, several intervening and underlying factors have been ascertained as influential. In exploring the complex link between job autonomy and employee engagement, prevailing factors such as WLB have been suggested as a crucial component (Muecke *et al*., 2020; Sheoran *et al*., 2022). Work-life balance, which represents the balance between personal life and professional duties, has been recognized as a critial determinant of employee engagement (Lewis and Beauregard, 2018; Le *et al.*, 2020). A positive WLB, facilitated by job autonomy, may contribute to reduced stress (Brough *et al.*, 2020). The subsequent reduction in work-related stress is particularly pronounced when employees can make decisions aligning with their preferences and life circumstances (Sirgy and

Lee, 2018; Brough *et al.*, 2020). This positive shift in stress levels contributes to improved well-being, fostering a heightened sense of job satisfaction (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). Given this, WLB is anticipated to play a critical role in shaping how the autonomy granted in job roles influences the overall well-being and engagement of employees. Conversely, research evaluating the role of WLB as a mediating mechanism on the job autonomy-employee engagement link remains scarce.

As stated by Ýplik *et al.* (2014) and Khoshnaw and Alavi (2020), the determination of the positive ramifications of job autonomy on organizational outcomes may depend on certain boundary conditions and contextual factors. One important element that has a significant impact on autonomy and the tendency to be engaged is supervisory support which has not received sufficient attention among scholarly works (Peng *et al.*, 2022). Supervisory support is crucial because it represents the degree to which managers provide guidance, resources, and encouragement to their workforce (Chan, 2017; Odai *et al.*, 2021). In situations where supervisors extensively commit to and ensure employees' autonomy, the plausible effects of autonomy on engagement may be enhanced (Kim *et al.*, 2019). In another breath, inadequate support from supervisors may prevent employees from fully experiencing the favorable outcomes linked to autonomy, potentially manifesting in uncertainty or disengagement (Charoensukmongkol, 2022). More so, the positive association between support from supervisors and engagement of employees (Lee and Shin, 2023; Odai *et al.,* 2021), underscores the potential that it could contribute significantly to promoting employee engagement in the advent of job autonomy.

Furthermore, in investigating the influence of WLB, studies have shown that supervisory support is crucial as it enhances the effect of WLB on various organizational outcomes (Lee and Shin, 2023; Fiernaningsih, 2019). Given that work-life balance has been determined to represent the equilibrium between personal responsibilities and personal life (Sirgy and Lee, 2018), which has been determined as a significant predictor of employee engagement (Ali, Li and Qiu, 2022), it is a call in the right direction to explore how support from supervisors serves as a boundary condition between WLB and employee engagement. Recognizing the pivotal ramifications of supervisory support in shaping the work-life balance and engagement dynamic is crucial for businesses looking to optimize employee well-being and commitment, invariably contributing to a more positive and sustainable work environment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Employee engagement is an important factor in the success of businesses and several business sectors (Liu *et al.,* 2023; Sheoran *et al.,* 2022), including the hospitality industry (Buil, Martinez and Matute*,* 2019; Lee and Ok, 2015). It is therefore essential to always consider engagement, particularly in five-star hotels where exceptional customer service is a key differentiator. Employee engagement is influenced by various factors, including job autonomy (Muecke, *et al*, 2020), supervisory support (Panda, Sinha and Jain, 2022), and work-life balance (Ali*et al*, 2022). However, there is a gap in comprehending how these elements interact and impact employee engagement in the context of five-star hotels in Nigeria.

A key gap in the existing is to evaluate the role of work-life balance as a mediator in the link between job autonomy and employee engagement relying on employees who work in Five-Star Hotels in Lagos, Nigeria. Despite the recognized relevance of job autonomy in enhancing employee engagement (Muecke, *et al*, 2020), the mechanisms through which job autonomy influences engagement, particularly in the context of work-life balance, are not well understood.

While job autonomy can empower employees and enhance tsheir engagement, the lack of supervisory support and challenges hinder engagement levels (Kao *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, there is a need to explore the interplay between these factors to develop a comprehensive understanding of their influence on employee engagement. Specifically, in the context of five-star hotels in Nigeria, where the hospitality industry is rapidly growing and facing unique challenges, it is essential to investigate how support from supervisors moderates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement. Understanding these dynamics can provide valuable understanding for hotel management to develop effective strategies that enhance employee engagement and ultimately improve customer satisfaction and hotel performance.

Lastly, the study would address the problem of moderating the role of supervisory support in increasing the influence of WLB on employee engagement is very rare and requires exploration. Lee and Shin (2023) discovered that work-life balance is a precursor of engagement, however, the study indicates that boundary conditions that affect this relation are rare. More so, Ali *et al.* (2022) establishing the nexus between WLB and engagement indicated this effect cannot be assumed to

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be universal, and requires that researchers explore mechanisms that can affect this association. The current study addresses the gap by providing research suggesting that supervisory support has an interacting effect on the nexus between WLB and engagement among employees in the hospitality industry.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The primary goal of the research is to probe how supervisory support moderates and work-life balance mediates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement among Five-Star Hotel employees in Lagos, Nigeria. The research's specific objectives are as follows:

(1) To evaluate the association between job autonomy and employee engagement.
(2) To assess the link between job autonomy and work-life balance.
(3) To investigate the mediating effect of work-life balance on the association between job autonomy and employee engagement.
(4) To explore how supervisory support moderates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement.
(5) To ascertain how supervisory support moderates the link between work-life balance and employee engagement.

1.4 Research Questions

(1) What influence does job autonomy have on employee engagement?
(2) Does job autonomy affect work-life balance?
(3) How does work-life balance mediate the association between job autonomy and employee engagement?
(4) How significantly does supervisory support moderate the association between job autonomy and employee engagement?
(5) How does supervisory support influence the link between work-life balance and employee engagement?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H1: Job autonomy positively influences employee engagement.

H2: Job autonomy positively impacts work-life balance.

H3: Job autonomy indirectly affects employee engagement through work-life balance.

H4: Supervisory support strengthens the influence of job autonomy on employee engagement. Specifically, this link will be more pronounced when supervisory support is higher (versus lower).

H5: Supervisory support moderates the association between work-life balance and employee engagement. Particularly, this relationship will be stronger when supervisory support is higher (versus lower).

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is of importance to several stakeholders, including hotel management, HR practitioners, academia, and government (policy makers).

Hotel Management: Hotel managers and supervisors will benefit from this research as it can help them understand the factors that influence employee engagement and job satisfaction. The findings can inform management practices, such as implementing supportive supervisory techniques (e.g., offering guidance and monitory, rewarding efforts, discussing workload, providing feedback), promoting work-life balance (for instance, telecommuting, flexible working hours, breaks, and vacations), and granting job autonomy (e.g., setting their own goals and deadlines and freedom to choose methods to complete a task), to enhance employee engagement and retention.

Human Resource Practitioners: Human resource professionals in the hospitality industry can employ the revelations of this study to create more effective HR policies and practices. Understanding the ramifications of supervisory support, work-life balance, and job autonomy on employee engagement can guide HR practitioners in creating strategies to recruit, retain, and inspire employees in five-star hotels.

Academic Community: Researchers and scholars in the areas of hospitality management, organizational behavior, and personnel resources will find this study significant for its contribution to the current body of knowledge. It adds to the understanding of factors influencing employee

engagement in the setting of five-star hotels, providing a basis for further research and theoretical development.

Government and Policy Makers: Government agencies and policymakers involved in labor and employment regulations may find the findings of this study relevant. Insights into factors that enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction can inform policies geared at advancing working conditions and employee well-being in the hospitality sector.

Tourism and Economic Development: The study's results can have consequences for the broader tourism and economic development of Nigeria. By improving employee engagement and satisfaction in five-star hotels, the overall quality of hospitality services can be enhanced, potentially leading to increased tourism revenue and economic growth.

1.7 Outline of Methodology

The research employed the quantitative method; hence, it is aligned with the positivist philosophy and the deductive strategy. More so, the study population consists of employees who work in Five-Star Hotels in Lagos State, Nigeria. A random sampling approach was adopted to give all participants an equal chance. A structured questionnaire was developed, comprising validated scales to measure job autonomy, supervisory support, WLB, and employee engagement. The survey was administered online via WhatsApp and Telegram. The demographic information of participants was provided. The researcher conducted the validity and reliability of measuring items via exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the help of SPSS v.26 and AMOS v.23. The researcher established the relationships under consideration through the structural equation modeling (SEM), the process macro, and the hierarchical regression.

1.8 Dissertation Structure

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION                  │
│                                                       │
│  Research background, Problem statement, Research     │
│  questions, Objectives, Significance, and Outline     │
│  of Methodology.                                      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review, Conceptual Review, Empirical Review

Chapter 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Method, Research Population, Sampling Technique, Construct Measurement, Data Collection, Data Analysis

Chapter 5: RESULTS PRESENTATION AND INTEPRETATION
Assessment of measurement model (EFA & CFA), Structural Equation Modeling (Direct effects) and Moderation Analysis (Hierarchical Regression)

Chapter 6: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Figure 1. 1 Dissertation structure for the study

The dissertation has been structured into five chapters. The first chapter hosts the introduction of the research which encompasses themes such as the background, the problem statement, questions, objectives, significance, and novelty. The second chapter covers the literature review which would provide the conceptual review of the model, an empirical review of the relationships under consideration, and theories that justify the associations. Chapter three covers the conceptual framework, hypotheses development of this research while chapter four entails the methodology which stipulates the study population, sampling approach, data collection, and analysis procedure. Chapter five encompasses results presentation, analysis, and interpretations.

The last chapter hosts the conclusion, implications, study limitations, some suggestions for future studies, and personal learning statements.

1.9 Conclusion

The chapter covers the introduction to the phenomena under consideration. Moreover, the research questions and hypotheses are stipulated based on the research problem recognized with respect to the moderating role of supervisory support and the mediating role of work-life balance on the effect of job autonomy on employee engagement. The chapter indicated the significance of this research to various stakeholders. Subsequently, the next chapter of the study will evaluate past studies on the phenomena under consideration. A conceptual and theoretical review of the study's constructs will be undertaken.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This aspect of the research covers a review of the previous works on the research's constructs, the relationship between these variables, and theoretical justifications. It is, however, organized into two sections: the conceptual and theoretical review.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Job Autonomy

Job autonomy represents the discretion and degree of control employees have over their work tasks and decisions (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). It is a key component of job design and is believed to have significant consequences for employee attitudes and behaviors. In another breath, job autonomy encompasses the discretion and freedom granted to individuals regarding their work methods, schedules, and criteria for performing tasks and responsibilities (Khoshnaw and Alavi, 2020). Jing *et al.* (2021) further elaborated on job autonomy, defining work method autonomy as the freedom to choose work methods, work scheduling autonomy as the ability to control the timing or sequencing of tasks, and work criteria autonomy as the discretion to modify the standards or indicators employed to assess an individual's performance. Moreover, job autonomy also has ramifications for business outcomes. Studies suggest that firms that provide employees more autonomy often promote greater levels of innovation and creativity (Chang, Rui and Wu, 2021; Kao *et al.*, 2022).

The nexus between job autonomy and employee outcomes has been extensively explored. High levels of job autonomy have been associated with increased job satisfaction (Nasution, *et al.,* 2021), motivation (Malinowska, *et al*., 2018), employee engagement (Muecke, *et al* 2020), and job performance (Khoshnaw and Alavi, 2020). Employees with greater autonomy experience higher levels of intrinsic motivation, as they perceive their work as more meaningful and enjoyable (Cho *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, autonomy has been associated with the reduction of stress and burnout, as individuals have more control over their work environment and can adapt their work methods to suit their preferences (Kim *et al.*, 2019).

2.1.2 Supervisory Support

Supervisory support, a crucial aspect of human resource management and organizational behavior, refers to the degree to which supervisors provide resources, guidance, and assistance to their followers (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Supervisory support is evident in various forms, such as demonstrating care for employees, acknowledging completed tasks, recommending individuals for promotions, providing timely and relevant information, encouraging skill development and competency building, fostering coordination, nurturing a sense of affection, and fostering a sense of belonging among subordinates (Odai *et al.*, 2021; Panda, Sinha and Jain, 2022). An effective supervisor is one who can establish a positive supervisor-employee relationship, enhance engagement, and be accessible to employees when needed (Talukder, 2019).

Supervisory support has been connected with enhanced employee engagement, job satisfaction (Ghasemy, Rosa-Díaz and Gaskin, 2021), organizational commitment (Panda, Sinha and Jain, 2022), and job performance and engagement (Chan, 2017; Panda, Sinha and Jain, 2022). Employees who view their supervisors as helpful are more inclined to feel recognized and respected, resulting in heightened levels of motivation and engagement (Lee and Shin, 2023). Supervisory support also plays a significant role in employee welfare and mental health. Research suggests that employees who receive high levels of supervisory support experience lower levels of stress, burnout, and turnover intentions (Afzal *et al.,* 2019; Zhang , Rasheed and Luqman, 2020). This is because supervisory support provides employees with a sense of security and confidence, reducing feelings of uncertainty and anxiety (Afzal *et al.*, 2019).

2.1.3 Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a crucial component of creating a comfortable work environment for employees (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). Individuals have multifaceted lives, encompassing their roles in the company, their personal lives, families, communities, and involvement in other organizations (Talukder *et al.,* 2018). Kumar and Mokashi (2020) describe WLB as the capacity of individuals to fulfill their work commitments while also meeting responsibilities in their family life and other non-work areas. Similarly, Sánchez-Hernández *et al.* (2019) characterize WLB as the ability of employees to freely manage their working hours to harmonize their work with other obligations such as hobbies, family, studies, and arts, rather than solely concentrating on work. WLB has

critical consequences for employee behaviors toward their firm and their overall well-being (Badri and Panatik, 2020). Individuals who achieve an equilibrium between personal life and work tend to be more engaged, satisfied, and productive (Gądecki, Jewdokimow and Żadkowska, 2018; Sánchez-Hernández *et al.*, 2019).

Achieving WLB poses a challenge for companies aiming to establish a supportive environment where individuals can effectively concentrate on their job while in the workplace, with the goal of enabling them to balance work demands with household responsibilities (Gragnano, Simbula and Miglioretti, 2020; Panda and Sahoo, 2021). The essence of WLB lies in the company's efforts to enhance employee well-being, improve job satisfaction (Rashmi and Kataria, 2023), meet family expectations and needs, and fulfill employee expectations for a more meaningful and beneficial working life (Talukder et al., 2018). According to Kumar and Mokashi (2020), WLB programs encompass various resources, such as parental and child care support, employee health and welfare initiatives, relocation assistance, and other related benefits. Many companies offer family-friendly benefits to help employees align their professional and personal lives, including flexible working hours (flexitime), job sharing arrangements, telecommuting options, and other similar benefits (Badri and Panatik, 2020; Panda and Sahoo, 2021).

2.1.4 Employee Engagement

Since its inception in the 1990s, several definitions of employee engagement have emerged. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) suggested that engagement involves employees immersing themselves cognitively, physically, and emotionally in their duties, effectively integrating their personal selves into their professional responsibilities. Salanova *et al.* (2003); Schaufeli Bakker and Salanova, (2006) proposed a widely cited definition, describing engagement as a positive, enriching state of mind in the workplace marked by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor encompasses greater levels of persistence and energy in the face of challenges, dedication represents a degree of involvement and pride in one's job, and absorption describes a position of being deeply engrossed in one's tasks, often losing track of time.

Research has also examined the antecedents of employee engagement. The predominant factors include leadership style (Liu *et al.*, 2023), job characteristics, organizational culture,

supervisory support (Alam *et al.,* 2021; Pires, 2021), work environment, job autonomy (Sheoran *et al.,* 2022), P.O fit (Kao *et al.*, 2022), psychological climate (Lee & Ok, 2015). Furthermore, the impact of employee engagement extends beyond the individual level to team and organizational outcomes. Engaged employees contribute to a positive work environment, resulting in higher team cohesion and collaboration (Byrne *et al.,* 2016; Panda *et al.,* 2022). At the firm level, greater levels of employee engagement are associated with better customer satisfaction, higher profitability, and lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Buil *et al.,* 2019; Albrecht *et al.,* 2021). Moreover, engaged individuals tend to demonstrate heightened levels of satisfaction (Ahakwa and Atingabili, 2021) and commitment (Albrecht and Marty, 2020), reduced turnover intentions (Khusanova, Kang and Choi, 2021), increased organizational citizenship behavior (Liu *et al.*, 2023), and better overall health (De-la-Calle-Durán and Rodríguez-Sánchez, 2021).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Job Autonomy and Employee Engagement

Job autonomy has consistently been linked to heightened employee engagement in various scholarly works (Jin and Kim, 2015; Muecke,*et al.*, 2020; Kao *et al.*, 2022). Research by Gao and Jiang (2019) conducted among large energy groups in China found that granting autonomy at work motivates employees, leading to increased engagement in their roles. More so, a study of 180 workers in the service sector of India by Sheoran *et al.* (2022) found that autonomy at work was positively connected with employee engagement. They concluded that allowing employees' autonomy in their work can lead to profound levels of engagement and satisfaction. Conversely, when organizations do not promote such job features or provide necessary resources, individuals are more prone to be disengaged (Kao *et al.*, 2022).

In the context of providing autonomy, the way in which feedback is delivered can significantly impact employees' feelings of competence. Positive and negative feedback, when provided in a non-critical, informational, and autonomy-supportive manner, can enhance employees' sense of competence (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Research by Volmer *et al.* (2012) suggests that feedback within organizations has significant ramifications on employee performance, particularly in tasks with high autonomy. However, in tasks with low autonomy, increased feedback has less effect on performance. Providing opportunities for employees to give feedback

also allows them to exercise their autonomy (Kim *et al.*, 2019). This participation in active discussions about work methods, schedules, and criteria enables employees to feel more engaged and committed to their work (Khoshnaw and Alavi, 2020). Therefore, job autonomy must be augmented by opportunities for employees to give and receive information on job-related issues. This not only enhances their engagement but also contributes to their commitment to the organization.

2.2.2 Job Autonomy and Work-Life Balance

Badri and Panatik (2020) indicate that job autonomy has a significant influence on WLB, affecting how individuals manage their professional and personal responsibilities. Research indicates that heightened job autonomy is linked to improved WLB (Haar *et al.*, 2019; Metselaar, den Dulk and Vermeeren, 2023). When employees have greater control over how they organize and execute their work tasks, they can better integrate work with several aspects of their lives, such as hobbies, family, and personal interests. A study by Novianti and Fuadiputra (2021) on 100 banking employees of Malang City established that job autonomy affects job satisfaction, WLB, and retention. De Clercq and Brieger (2022) also established among 5334 female entrepreneurs emanating from 37 nations that job autonomy increases the possibility that individuals feel satisfied with their capacity to balance the demands of their jobs with those of their individual lives.

Studies have shown that job autonomy gives room for employees to have flexibility in managing their work schedules, resulting in reduced work-life conflict (Jing et al., 2021). Individuals with greater levels of autonomy are better able to adapt their work hours to accommodate personal commitments, leading to greater satisfaction with their work-life balance (Malinowska, *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, job autonomy can enhance overall well-being and job satisfaction, as people feel more in control of their work and personal lives (Khawand and Zargar, 2022). This sense of control and flexibility can minimize burnout, contributing to a pronounced positive work-life balance (Kim *et al.*, 2019). However, it is essential to note that the relationship between job autonomy and work-life balance may vary depending on individual preferences and organizational contexts. While job autonomy can facilitate better work-life balance for many employees, some individuals may prefer more structured roles (Khawand and Zargar, 2022).

Additionally, the availability of supportive policies and organizational culture can also influence the extent to which job autonomy impacts work-life balance (Novianti and Fuadiputra, 2021).

2.2.3 Job Autonomy, Work-Life Balance, and Employee Engagement

Job autonomy has been widely identified and defined as a fundamental aspect of work that significantly impacts employees (Charoensukmongkol, 2022). Autonomy is viewed as a resource provided by the organization through the nature of the job itself (De Clercq and Brieger, 2022). Studies have consistently revealed that autonomy is important in promoting engagement and WLB of employees (Muecke, *et al.*, 2020; Novianti and Fuadiputra, 2021). Individuals with heightened autonomy are better inspired and equipped, as they have more control over how they approach their work, which ultimately enhances WLB and engagement (Badri and Panatik, 2020).

Scholars and professionals emphasize the indispensable role of WLB in business contexts to amplify overall engagement of employees (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). There is also a clarion call by researchers (e.g., Muecke *et al.,* 2020; Sheoran *et al.,* 2022) to consider exploring the underlying factors such as WLB on the association between job autonomy and employee engagement. Research consistently shows that employees often struggle with balancing their work and personal lives (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). Work-life balance which stems from the need for individuals to find a healthy equilibrium between their professional responsibilities and personal commitments is a very important element in an organizational setup and the lives of employees (Rajendra Kumar and Mokashi, 2020; Novianti and Fuadiputra, 2021). Therefore, WLB helps in finding a satisfactory level of engagement in various life roles (Badri and Panatik, 2020). More so, several research have established the link between WLB and employee engagement (e.g., Dinh, 2020; Suryanto *et al.,* 2019)

In the context of job autonomy, employees who have more control over how they perform their tasks and manage their work schedules are more likely to achieve a sense of autonomy satisfaction (De Clercq and Brieger, 2022). This satisfaction with autonomy can spill over into other areas of their lives, including their ability to manage their personal responsibilities and achieve a sense of balance between work and life (Novianti and Fuadiputra, 2021). As employees perceive that they have the autonomy to manage their work in a way that corresponds with their

individual needs and priorities, they are usually likely to develop lower levels of work-life conflict (Metselaar, den Dulk and Vermeeren, 2023) and greater levels of WLB (Novianti and Fuadiputra, 2021). This, in turn, can result in heightened engagement, as individuals feel more fulfilled and motivated both at work and in their personal lives.

2.2.4 Supervisory Support, Job Autonomy, and Work-Life Balance

Support from supervisors, which encompasses facilitation, recognition, and appreciation in the workplace, has consistently been identified empirically as a significant factor influencing several employee behaviors and organizational outcomes (Chan, 2017; Panda, Sinha and Jain, 2022). Per the JD-R model, more profound supervisor support is associated with increased levels of work-family balance (Fiernaningsih, 2019). Consequently, individuals are most likely to achieve a better WLB between their work and family responsibilities, resulting in fewer conflicts between these domains (Ghasemy, *et al.*, 2021). Recently, several empirical studies (e.g., Kumar and Mokashi, 2020; Nabawanuka and Ekmekcioglu, 2022; Talukder and Galang, 2021) have established a profound influence of supervisory support on WLB.

Notably, the moderating role of supervisory on the link between job autonomy and WLB is one that is very rare. Notwithstanding, recommendations from researchers (e.g., Badri and Panatik, 2020; Khawand and Zargar, 2022), brings to light the need to explore such a research gap. There are, however, studies that indicate the moderation role of supervisory support on job autonomy and organizational outcomes or employee behaviors such as performance (Msuya and Kumar, 2022), innovative behavior (Sönmez and Yıldırım, 2019), and life attitude (Talukder and Galang, 2021). According to Panda *et al.* (2022), employees who have supportive supervisors who provide guidance, encouragement, and understanding, may feel more empowered to make decisions about how they manage their workload and schedule. This, invariably, can lead to a greater experience of control over their work and personal lives (Lee and Shin, 2023), ultimately contributing to a better WLB. Given the arguments, the significance of support from supervisors in facilitating the positive ramifications of job autonomy on work-life balance is imminent.

2.2.5 Supervisory Support, Work-Life Balance, and Employee Engagement

The attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by supervisors are instrumental in altering the behaviors and attitudes of employees (Alam, Kartar Singh and Islam, 2021). Research has consistently demonstrated that the support provided by supervisors is positively connected with employee engagement (Panda, *et al.*, 2022). Previous studies have revealed the importance of general supervisor support in fostering several positive work-related outcomes, including heightened levels of employee engagement (Odai *et al.*, 2021; Pires, 2021). Supervisors function as a crucial link between the organization and its employees, and their actions can significantly impact how employees perceive the organization's policies related to work-life balance (Lee and Shin, 2023). This, in turn, can influence employees' attitudes toward work, ultimately affecting their levels of engagement (Alam, Kartar Singh and Islam, 2021). Cognizance to the JD-R model, a study has shown that higher levels of support from supervisors are linked to improved work-family balance (Nabawanuka and Ekmekcioglu, 2022). This, in turn, can result in employees experiencing a more harmonious life with fewer conflicts between their family and work roles ultimately enhancing their engagement at the workplace (Ali *et al*., 2022; Lee and Shin, 2023).

The moderating role of supervisory support on the nexus between WLB and engagement is very rare in the literature. However, it has been determined that supervisors play a crucial role in creating a supportive work atmosphere that allows employees to effectively manage their work and their life demands (Kumar and Mokashi, 2020; Navajas-Romero, Ariza-Montes and Hernández-Perlines, 2020). Research by Lee and Shin (2023) found that supervisors who are perceived as supportive of WLB initiatives are more likely to have employees who are engaged in their work. This suggests that when employees feel that their supervisors are understanding of their WLB needs, they are more likely to be engaged in their job roles (Navajas-Romero,*et al.,* 2020).

2.3 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on the self-determination and job demand-resource theory. These theories helped to provide a justification theoretically for the relationships between the constructs.

2.3.1 The Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory is a generally researched framework that concentrates on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that drive human behavior (Ryan and Deci, 2022). As depicted by the SDT, people have three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Autonomy encompasses the need to have control over one's choices and actions, relatedness posits being able to connect with others and experience belongingness, and competence represents being effective and capable of interacting with the environment (Deci, Olafsen and Ryan, 2017). SDT accentuates that when the various needs are satisfied, individuals become intrinsically inspired, which leads to greater engagement, performance, and well-being (Deci, *et al.*, 2017). Research has shown that autonomy-supportive environments, where individuals feel encouraged to make choices and take initiative, promote greater intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Vansteenkiste, 2023).

Job autonomy is crucial in SDT as it relates to fulfilling the fundamental psychological need for autonomy (Sheldon *et al.*, 2017). When employees have control over their jobs and the freedom to make the right calls, their intrinsic motivation is likely to increase, leading to greater levels of engagement (Ryan and Deci, 2022). More so, SDT suggests that satisfying the need for autonomy can lead to greater intrinsic motivation and, in turn, better work-life balance (Deci, *et al.,* 2017). Employees who feel empowered to manage their firm duties and personal life demands are more likely to be engaged in both domains, leading to overall higher levels of engagement (Moran *et al.*, 2012). SDT posits that supportive supervisors can enhance employees' intrinsic motivation by providing autonomy support and recognizing their competence (Deci, *et al.*, 2017). Supervisors who are supportive of employees' need for autonomy and work-life balance can strengthen the favorable effects of job autonomy on engagement and work-life balance (Ryan and Vansteenkiste, 2023). Following SDT, when employees' primary psychological needs are met, they are most likely to be intrinsically motivated, leading to higher levels of engagement (Sheldon *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, organizations that promote job autonomy, work-life balance, and supportive supervision are likely to have more engaged employees, ultimately benefiting from higher productivity and well-being (Ryan and Vansteenkiste, 2023).

2.3.2 The Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) Theory

Job Demands-Resources Theory is a well-established framework in organizational psychology that explains the association between job characteristics and individual well-being (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Following the JD-R Theory, every job has two fundamental components: job demands and job resources (Bakker, 2015). Job demands refer to the facets of the job that call for cognitive, physical, or emotional commitment and are linked to increased strain and potential negative consequences, for instance, burnout (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). In another breath, job resources are the elements of the job that facilitate the achievement of job priorities, minimize job demands, and enhance personal development (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). Research based on JD-R Theory has shown that high demands of a job, for example; time pressure or workload can manifest in increased exhaustion and stress, which in turn can negatively impact the well-being of employees (Cho *et al.*, 2020). Conversely, high job resources, for instance; social support or autonomy can mitigate the adverse effects of job demands and encourage positive results, such as engagement and job satisfaction (Cho *et al.*, 2020).

Job autonomy is considered a job resource in JD-R Theory (Dust and Tims, 2020). It is a key factor that can minimize job demands and stimulate personal growth and development (Dust and Tims, 2020). Research has shown that heightened job autonomy is linked to minimized burnout and a greater degree of engagement (Muecke, *et al.*, 2020). JD-R Theory posits that job resources, for example, job autonomy, can result in better WLB, which invariably can enhance employee engagement (Schaufeli *et al.,* 2009). Employees who are able to effectively balance their work and personal lives are most likely to be engaged in their work and experience greater job satisfaction (Talukder and Galang, 2021). JD-R Theory also posits that supportive supervisors can enhance the positive effects of job resources on employee well-being and performance (Charoensukmongkol, 2022). Supervisors who provide support and guidance can help employees navigate job demands and their resources, leading to higher levels of engagement. JD-R Theory suggests that when employees have the necessary job support and resources, they are mostly likely to be engaged in their duties (Talukder and Galang, 2021). Therefore, organizations that promote job autonomy, work-life balance, and supportive supervision are likely to have more engaged employees, resulting in higher levels of performance and well-being.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provides the literature on the study's constructs which encompasses job autonomy, supervisory support, work-life balance, and employee engagement. This section of the study employs the self-determination and job demand-resource theory, to justify the relevance of the constructs in the research model. Empirical studies supporting the relationships under consideration are provided here. In the next chapter, the researcher will consider developing the method to achieve research objectives.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

   This chapter focused on the methods deployed to achieve the objectives of the study. The methods originate from the ones outlined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2009). The researcher created an onion model to cover the present research. This section outlines the population of the study, the sampling approach, and the processes for collecting and analyzing data. The researcher provided multiple rationales and justifications for selecting these methods to support their choice.
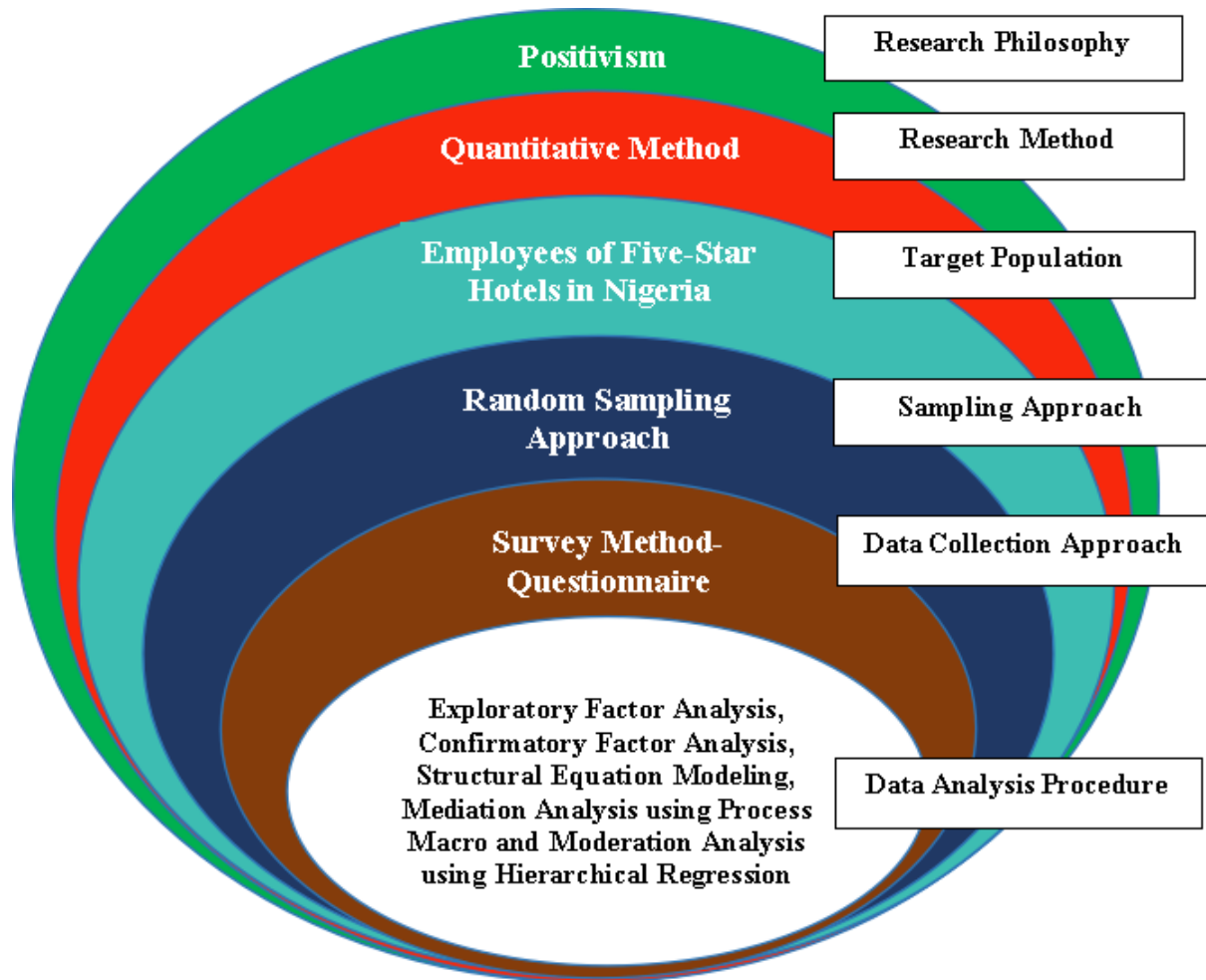
Figure 3. 1 Onion Model for the present study

3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

The philosophy of research encompasses the belief systems and assumptions that streamline the process of conducting a research study or developing knowledge in a particular field (Katherine and Zoë, 2020). Researchers employ various philosophies to conduct a study effectively. Ontology and epistemology represent the two forms of research philosophies. Ontology addresses questions concerning the study of being and the nature of reality. In contrast, epistemology questions associated with the study of knowledge, focusing on its scope, validity, and approaches employed to attain it (Katherine and Zoë, 2020). More so, there are several paradigms, namely interpretivism, pragmatism, realism, positivism, and post-modernism that are related to epistemology. This study employed the positivist approach.

The positivist approach highlights the use of scientific methods and empirical observation to explore the social world and believes that there is an objective reality that can be investigated via experimentation and systematic observation. More so, positivists use quantitative methods to collect and analyze data, aiming to uncover general principles that govern human behavior (Žukauskas, Vveinhardt and Andriukaitienė, 2018). The researcher employed the philosophy because the study uses quantitative data that allows for statistical analysis and the generation of empirical evidence. The approach will aid the researcher in providing clear, precise, and concise findings, making it easier to communicate results to make informed conclusions based on the available information. It can aid in clarifying how support from supervisors and WLB would affect the link between job autonomy and employee engagement among employees in the hospitality industry in Lagos State, Nigeria. Due to the positivist approach, there is a requirement for hypotheses and research questions that can be empirically explored.

3.2 Research Methods

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2012), the qualitative and quantitative are the two main methods for undertaking a study. The qualitative method focuses on exploring and understanding complex phenomena in-depth, often through the collection and interpretation of non-numerical information such as observations, interviews, and textual analysis. These methods are particularly useful in uncovering rich, detailed insights into individuals' experiences, perceptions, and behaviors (Schaffer and Riordan, 2003). Qualitative analysis involves unraveling

themes, patterns, and categories in the information obtained, often through manual coding and interpretation. This approach allows researchers to develop rich, detailed descriptions of complex phenomena (Mays and Pope, 2020).

Quantitative methods, on the other hand, involve the collation and interpretation of numerical data to evaluate hypotheses and establish patterns or relationships. These methods are often used to gather data from large samples and to generalize findings to a larger population. Quantitative methods are well-suited for studying phenomena that can be quantified, such as attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes (Arghode, 2012). Quantitative analysis encompasses the use of statistical approaches to evaluate numerical data, such as descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis. This approach allows researchers to evaluate hypotheses and unfold the relationships between study constructs (Bingham and Witkowsky, 2021).

Given the aim of this study, the study employed the quantitative design where responses were gathered, processed statistically, and inferences drawn to justify the relationships under consideration.

3.3 Target Population

The population of a study represents the entire group of individuals that the study is interested in researching and from which they will draw their sample. It is important to define the research population clearly, as it helps to ensure that the outcome of the study can be generalized to a larger group or population (Stratton, 2021). When defining the research population, researchers must consider factors such as the research objectives, the feasibility of data collection, and the resources available for the research. It is also essential to consider the characteristics of the population that are relevant to the research question, such as gender, age, or income level (Stratton, 2021).

The target population chosen for this study are employees working within Five-Star Hotels in Nigeria, specifically, Lagos. Lagos is the largest city in Nigeria and is an economic and cultural hub. These hotels employ a significant number of staff to maintain their operations and provide high-quality services to their guests. The research population comprised full-time, part-time, and contract employees from seven different Five-Star Hotels in Lagos. This implies that the

respondents emerged from various hotels making the information from the population cross-sectional to increase the generalizability of the findings.

3.4 Sampling Approach and Sample Size

The sampling approach encompasses the technique employed to choose participants from the research population, while the sample size represents the number of individuals or units incorporated in the study. There are several sampling approaches, each with its strengths and limitations (Etikan and Bala, 2017). Probability sampling techniques, such as stratified sampling, simple random sampling, and cluster sampling, involve selecting participants randomly from the research population. These methods ensure that the sample largely reflects the population, which maximizes the generalizability of the outcome. However, probability sampling methods can be costly and time-consuming (Stratton, 2021).

In contrast, non-probability sampling techniques, such as purposive sampling, convenience sampling, and snowball sampling, encompass selecting individuals or units based on judgment or convenience (Levy and Lemeshow, 2013). While these methods are often more practical and cost-effective, they may manifest in a sample that may not be representative of a study's population, limiting the generalizability of the findings (Etikan and Bala, 2017).

The researcher employed the random sampling approach to access the larger study population and to ensure all individuals within the population are given an equal chance of being selected for the study.

The sample size is another critical consideration in research design. A larger sample size typically enhances the statistical power of research, enhancing the likelihood of detection of true effects or relationships. Determining an appropriate size of a sample depends on several factors, including the research objectives, the variability of the data, the expected effect size, and the statistical methods used (Levy and Lemeshow, 2013). In this study, the sample size is 284.

3.5 Research Instrument

This researcher utilized electronic questionnaires, specifically Google Forms, as its instrument for the study. several reasons informed this choice, including convenience and ease of use of online questionnaires compared to traditional hard-copy questionnaires. Online questionnaires are particularly advantageous when the research involves a large and

geographically dispersed population, as they give room for efficient data collation from participants who may be located far from the researcher (Williamson, 2013). Additionally, electronic questionnaires offer researchers greater control over the research process, as they can monitor responses in real time and summarize results more easily. This feature is beneficial for studies that aim to gather data from a large group of people within a constrained timeframe and from diverse locations. The researcher can also ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, which is crucial for obtaining honest and unbiased responses on sensitive research topics. Overall, the use of electronic questionnaires, such as Google Forms, provides a practical and efficient method for conducting research across different settings and populations.

3.5.1 Reliability and Validity of Research Instrument

Before distributing the questionnaire to respondents, the researcher conducted a thorough evaluation of its quality. Hence, the researcher shared the questionnaire with some PhD students in Nigeria who had their input which called for modifications. This assessment aimed to ensure that the questions were essential to the objectives of the dissertation. After making necessary corrections and adjustments, the researcher finalized the questionnaire. To ascertain the reliability of the instruments, the researcher employed statistical methods such as the composite reliability, the Cronbach alpha, and the average variance extracted to evaluate the internal consistency of the constructs. The discriminant validity was also employed.

3.5.2 Variables Measurement

The researcher measured four variables. They include job autonomy (the independent variable), supervisory support (the moderator), work-life balance (the mediator), and employee engagement (the dependent construct). Job autonomy was measured with six items employed from Morgeson and Campion (2003). For example: "I have the freedom to decide how to schedule my work." More so, employee engagement was assessed with nine items obtained from Schaufeli *et al.* (2006). A sample is: "I am proud of my work." In addition, work-life balance was evaluated with five items adapted from Shukla and Srivastava (2016). For example: "My preferences are considered when they assign my work area." Lastly, supervisory support was evaluated with six items employed from Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, (1990). An example is "My supervisor takes the time to learn about my career goals and aspirations." Details of the measuring

items can be found in the Appendices. In addition, the researcher also employed demographic features such as age, gender, educational qualification, organizational tenure, and employment status as control variables. Etikan and Bala (2017) indicate that these demographics have the propensity to influence people's perceptions and attitudes.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The information used for the study is from primary sources. The researcher developed a questionnaire using Google Forms. A link (https://forms.gle/AgKizu2tPPVh8FG1A) was developed and shared on social media platforms, particularly through WhatsApp and Telegram. This was after the researcher obtained approval from the management of seven Five-Star Hotels in Lagos State, Nigeria through emails. Given that, the administrative staff and in some cases, the HR officers helped in the distribution of the questionnaire online.

The online survey lasted for five weeks. After the fifth week, the researcher downloaded the Excel file containing the responses. 302 responses were obtained. The researcher, upon perusing the responses realized some of the responses were incomplete. Out of the 302, 18 were incomplete, therefore, they were deleted. The researcher employed the 284 completed responses as the sample for the study. This accounted for a 94% response rate.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

In this study, the collected responses underwent a systematic and structured process of coding, processing, and analysis. This process was facilitated by utilizing statistical software packages, specifically Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.26) and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS v.23) (Haardörfer, 2019). These software tools played a crucial role in extracting meaningful insights from the data, which contributed to a deeper understanding of the relationships examined in the research. Initially, a demographic analysis was conducted to provide a clearer representation of the dataset's characteristics and to identify any patterns within it. Following this, to ensure the internal consistency, reliability, and validity of the measurement model, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed (Brown and Moore, 2012). The EFA helped in deriving factor loadings, which provided insights into the underlying structure of the data.

Moreover, to authenticate the measuring items further, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used. This analysis generated modification indices, average variance extracted, composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha, offering a comprehensive assessment of the measurement model's reliability and validity (Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen, 2008). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in AMOS version 23 was employed to investigate the influence of the predicting variable on the outcome variables. SEM is a robust statistical approach that quantifies the impact of one set of constructs on another, providing a quantitative basis for understanding the dynamics within the research model (Kline, 2016). More so, the researcher employed the ordinary least square (OLS) regression and Process Macro to validate the mediating effect (Hayes, 2018). Additionally, hierarchical regression analysis was carried out to assess the moderating associations between variables. This analysis helped in understanding the conditions under which the independent constructs influenced the dependent construct (Hayes, 2018).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

An important message conveyed to participants emphasized the commitment to protecting their privacy. Participants were guaranteed that all responses collected would be safeguarded and kept confidential and not shared with a third party. The questionnaire was carefully designed to avoid asking personal questions that could potentially cause discomfort or offence, demonstrating sensitivity and respect for participants. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity was paramount, and participants were assured that their participation would not result in any harm or negative consequences. Furthermore, respondents were notified that their involvement in the research was optional and by choice. They were not obligated to participate and could opt out from the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable or no longer wished to participate.

3.9 Limitations / Restrictions to the Study

Collecting data from the population posed a challenge during this study due to the time constraints imposed for completing the research. Due to that, the questionnaire was not shared with all employees within the hotels we contacted. Moreover, the researcher was restricted to only seven hotels because the researcher did not obtain consent from some hotels the researcher sent letters.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter details the research methodology, encompassing the deductive research strategy, and quantitative method. It outlines how the variables were measured. The study targeted employees from seven Five-Star hotels, utilizing random sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire over 5 weeks through online platforms. The analysis included EFA, CFA, SEM, and hierarchical regression analyses, ensuring validity and reliability. Ethical considerations were paramount, with assurances of privacy and confidentiality for participants. The next chapter considers the presentation and interpretations of the results.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter covers the findings of the primary research that was conducted through a survey sent to individuals working within the Five-Star Hotels in Lagos, Nigeria. It outlines participant's demographics such as gender, age, education, organizational tenure, and employment status, which is important in determining the features of the study population through the use of descriptive statistics. In addition, the study conducted EFA and CFA to establish the validity of the measuring items and measurement model. More so, the researcher employed SEM to establish the direct influence of job autonomy on work-life balance and employee engagement. Also, the OLS regression was employed to determine the mediating role of WLB on the nexus between job autonomy and the engagement of employees. Lastly, the researcher relied on hierarchical regression to conduct the moderating analysis with the moderator being supervisory support.

4.1 Demographic Information of Participants

To achieve the objectives of this research, it is important to provide some background information about the participants of the research. Comprehending the backgrounds of the participants gives a descriptive perspective that is useful in evaluating the impact of job autonomy on work-life balance and employee engagement. Therefore, the first five questions of the survey consist of elements such as gender, age, education, organizational tenure, and employment status.
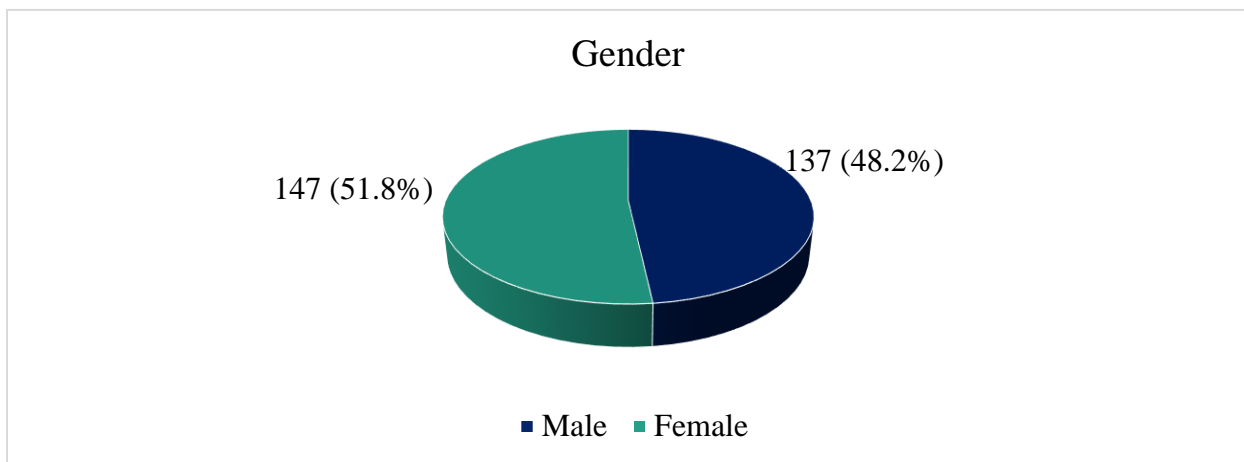
Figure 4. 1 Gender distribution of respondents
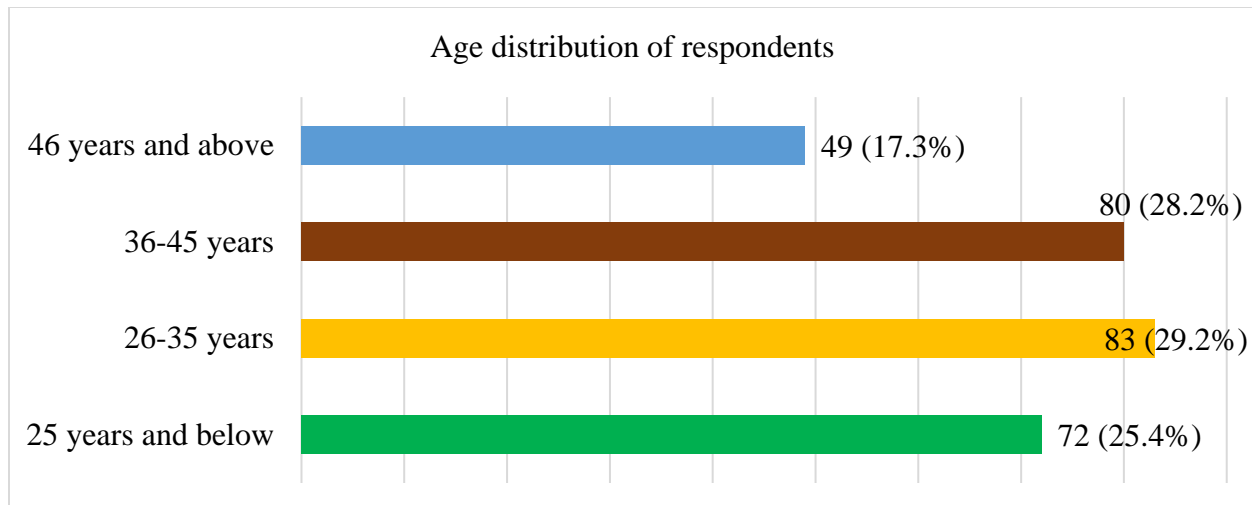
Figure 4. 2 Age distribution of respondents

Out of the 284 respondents, the majority of participants are male (147, 51.8%). Females are few with 137 (48.2%) individuals as shown in Figure 4.1.

The majority representing 29.2% (83) are between 26 - 35 years. A reasonable majority are those within the 36 - 45 years age bracket is 80 (28.2%). 72 (25.4%) and 49 (17.3%) belong to the 25 years and below and 46 years and above age range. Relatively, the results outlook indicates the presence of experienced hotel employees within the hospitality industry. See Figure 4.2.
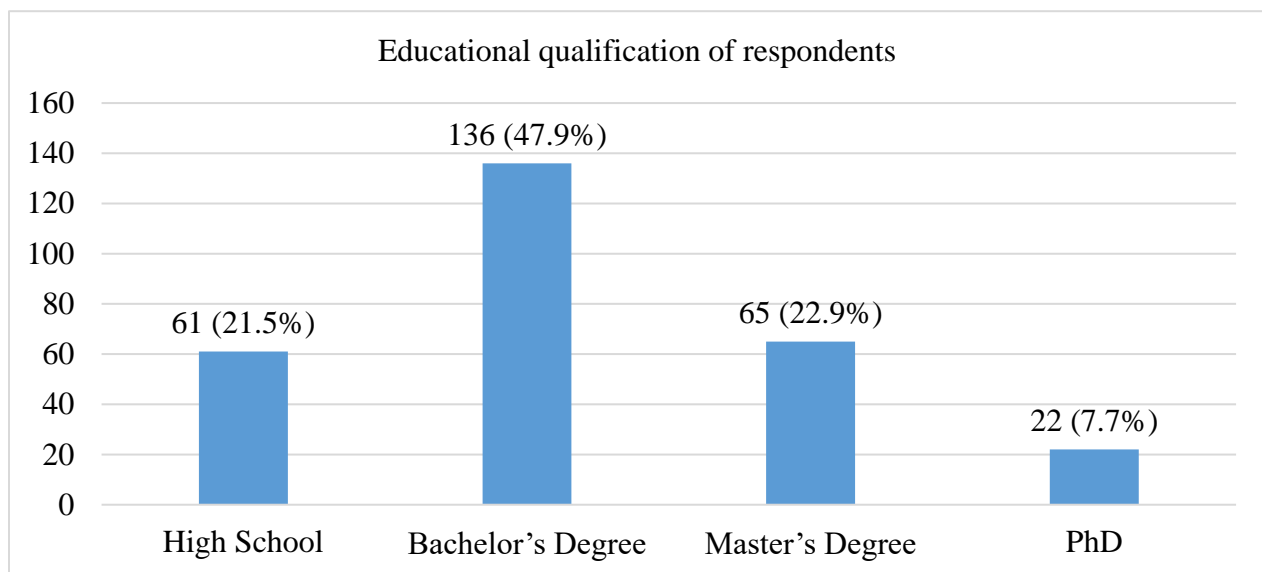
Figure 4. 3 Educational qualification of respondents

30

With educational qualifications as demonstrated in Figure 4.3, the majority have bachelor's degrees (136 individuals, 47.9%). Participants with master's degrees were 65 (22.9%). Those with high school certificate and PhD were 61 (21.5%) and 22 (7.7%), respectively. The diversity in educational qualifications suggests a dynamic workforce with varying levels of expertise and potential implications for employee engagement and job autonomy.
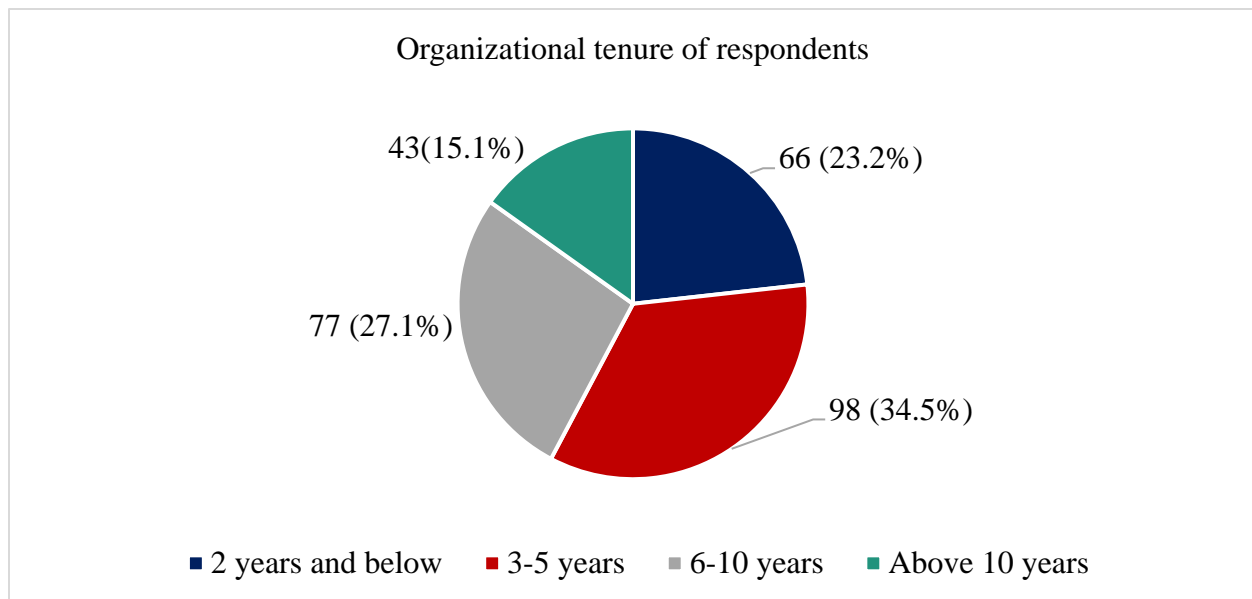
Figure 4. 4 Organizational tenure of respondents

Figure 4.4 shows that 34.5% of participants have been with their organization for 3-5 years, indicating moderate experience and potential workforce stability. Additionally, 27.1% have 6-10 years of tenure, suggesting significant loyalty and commitment. Meanwhile, 23.2% are relatively new with 2 years or less, and 15.1% have over 10 years of experience, likely holding senior positions. Longer tenures may reflect deeper loyalty and commitment, influencing employee engagement and perceptions of autonomy.

Figure 4.5 shows that 72.5% of participants in five-star Nigerian hotels are employed full-time, indicating high commitment and involvement. Additionally, 16.2% work part-time, and 11.3% are on contract. Part-time and contract employees may have different expectations and experiences, potentially affecting their engagement and perception of autonomy compared to full-time employees.
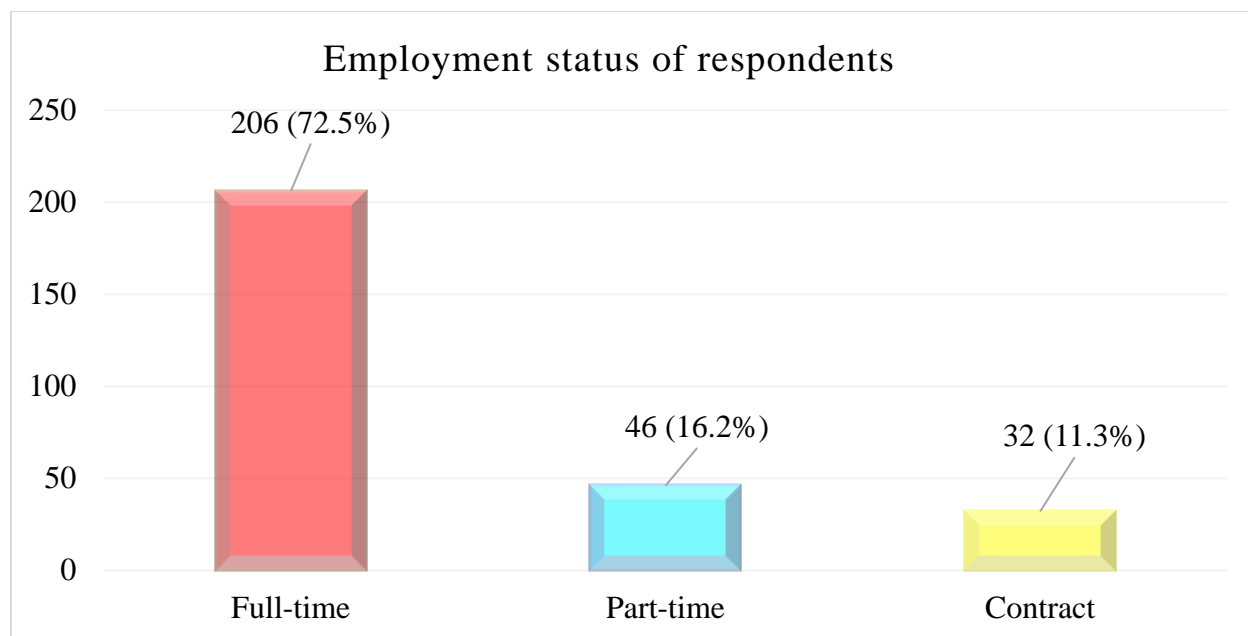
Figure 4. 5 Employment status of respondents

4.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

The researcher proceeded with the data analysis stage by conducting an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS. The aim was to determine the factor loadings for the items within each construct. Principal Component Analysis together with the Varimax Rotation was used to evaluate the appropriateness of item loadings across all constructs. Following Kline's (2016) guideline of factor loadings greater than 0.7, the initial findings indicated that almost all items met the criteria for suitable factor loadings. The results of the item loadings from the EFA are indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 1 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.863
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2109.082
	Df	325
	Sig.	.000

Furthermore, the KMO measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity were executed to evaluate the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis. The results indicated a high KMO results of 0.863

and a significant Bartlett's test χ^2 (325) = 2109.082, p<.000, suggesting that each variable was suitable for the analysis. See Table 4.1.

Table 4. 2 Factor Loading, Reliability, and Convergent Validity Results

Item	λ	λ^2	E-variance $(1-\lambda^2)$	$\sum\lambda^2$	Items	AVE	CR
JA1	0.849	0.721	0.279				
JA2	0.871	0.759	0.241				
JA3	0.862	0.743	0.257	4.415	6	0.736	0.876
JA4	0.765	0.585	0.415				
JA5	0.900	0.810	0.190				
JA6	0.893	0.797	0.203				
EE1	0.905	0.819	0.181				
EE2	0.862	0.743	0.257				
EE3	0.924	0.854	0.146				
EE4	0.858	0.736	0.264	4.592	9	0.510	0.951
EE5	0.751	0.564	0.436				
EE6	0.936	0.876	0.124				
EE7	0.834	0.696	0.304				
EE8	0.858	0.736	0.264				
EE9	0.895	0.801	0.199				
SS1	0.914	0.835	0.165				
SS2	0.861	0.741	0.259				
SS3	0.725	0.526	0.474	4.051	6	0.675	0.925
SS4	0.726	0.527	0.473				
SS5	0.783	0.613	0.387				
SS6	0.899	0.808	0.192				
WLB1	0.834	0.696	0.304				
WLB2	0.752	0.566	0.434	3.413	5	0.683	0.915
WLB3	0.820	0.672	0.328				
WLB4	0.862	0.743	0.257				
WLB5	0.858	0.736	0.264				

Note: λ = item loadings, E-variance = error variance, $\sum\lambda^2$ = sum of square of item loadings. Abbreviation: JA = job autonomy; EE = employee engagement; WLB = work-life balance; SS = supervisory support.

Following the initial analysis, the study examined convergent validity by estimating the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and examined inter-item consistency using Composite Reliability (CR). To establish acceptable convergent validity, it is commonly required that the AVE for each variable exceeds 0.5, as suggested by Hair Jr *et al.* (2014). The AVE was computed by squaring the item loadings (λ^2), summing these squared loadings, and then dividing by the number of items. For example, for the six job autonomy items, the sum of squared loadings was

4.415, resulting in an AVE of 0.736 when divided by the total of 6 items. As shown in Table 4.2, the AVE values span from 0.510 to 0.736. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha (α) outcome for all constructs surpassed the minimum limit of 0.70, indicating that the consistency among variables internally is good. The values were as follows: job autonomy (α = 0.873), employee engagement (α = 0.950), work-life balance (α = 0.913), and supervisory support (α = 0.925). These results mean that the measurement items were reliable and valid for examining the constructs in the study.

Following the confirmation of convergent validity, the researcher proceeded to estimate composite reliability using the formula:

$$CR = \frac{(\Sigma \lambda^2)}{\Sigma (\lambda_i)^2 + \Sigma var(\varepsilon_i)}$$

Based on the criteria set by Fornell and Larcker (1981), a Composite Reliability (CR) value surpassing 0.7 is deemed acceptable for a construct. The outcome of this study demonstrates that all constructs in the survey meet this criterion, indicating no concerns regarding the reliability of the scaled items. The CR values range from 0.876 to 0.951, as illustrated in Table 4.2, confirming the reliability of the measurement items for each construct.

Table 4. 3 Discriminant Validity – Fornell Larcker Matrix

	Mean	SD	EE	JA	WLB	SS
EE	4.148	0.686	**0.714**			
JA	3.626	1.036	0.231***	**0.858**		
WLB	3.775	0.709	0.227***	0.279***	**0.826**	
SS	3.547	0.793	0.359***	0.363***	0.473***	**0.822**

Note: n = 284, √AVE in bold; below the diagonal *** = significant values of correlation. Abbreviation: JA = job autonomy; EE = employee engagement; WLB = work-life balance; SS = supervisory support.

In this dissertation, the researcher carried out a comprehensive assessment to evaluate the performance of the measurement model, including discriminant validity and variable correlations. Discriminant validity was evaluated using a standard approach, which necessitates comparing the √AVE for each construct with their correlation coefficients, as prescribed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This approach helps determine whether items within one construct are unique from those

in other variables. The results indicated that the correlation values were significantly lower than the √AVE, providing strong confirmation of discriminant validity in the analysis (see Table 4.3).

4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To ensure the study's model is valid, the researcher evaluated various model fit indices (MFIs) against established acceptable ranges, following guidelines from scholars such as Hair (2021); Kline (2016) using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in SPSS-AMOS 23.0. All MFI values indicated a strong fit between our theoretical framework and the collected data. These values, detailed in Table 4.4, included a Chi-Square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) of 1.553, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) at 0.018, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.948, Normed Fit Index (NFI) of 0.905, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of 0.914, and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.920. These results collectively validate the robustness and appropriateness of our model for our research objectives. Figure 4.6 presents CFA loadings.

Table 4. 4 Model fit indices (MFIs)

| Model indices Fit	Fit indices output	Measurement model threshold	Source
CMIN (χ^2)	454.894		
DF	293		
χ^2/df	1.553	Between 1 & 3	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)
CFI	0.948	>.90	"
RMSEA	0.018	<.08	"
NFI	0.905	>.90	(Brown and Moore, 2012)
GFI	0.914	≥.90	(Hu and Bentler, 1999)
TLI	0.920	≥.90	"
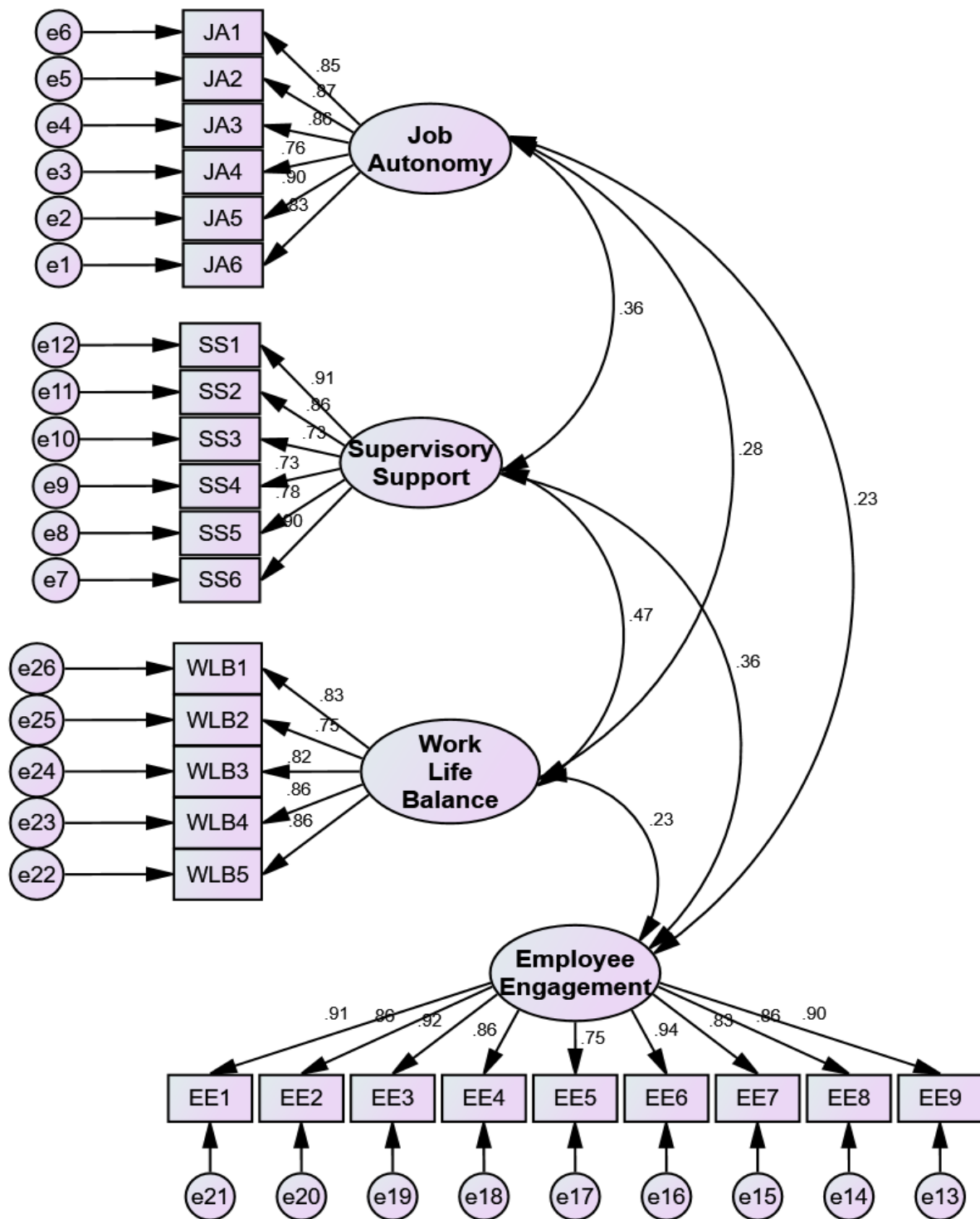
Figure 4. 6 CFA loadings and correlations

4.4 Hypotheses Evaluation

4.4.1 Direct Path Analysis

After evaluating the measurement model, the researcher proceeded to construct SEM to assess the proposed associations. The path relationships were assessed employing the unstandardized regression weights obtained from the SEM analysis conducted in AMOS 23.0. When examining the relationships between job autonomy, work-life balance, and employee engagement, the findings revealed a good fit for the model, with a χ^2 value of 378.973, df of 268, a χ^2/df ratio of 1.414, and a significance level of $p = 0.000$. Additionally, the model showed a CFI of 0.933, NFI of 0.891, RMSEA of 0.021, and GFI of 0.917. The model also explained 38% of the change in employee engagement and 44% change in work-life balance. See Figure 4.7.

Table 4. 5 Regression weights of direct effects

Hypotheses		Explanatory Path		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Decision
H1	EE	<---	JA	.230	.047	4.894	***	Retained
H2	WLB	<---	JA	.355	.052	6.827	***	Retained
	EE	<---	Age	-.067	.038	-1.737	.082	
	EE	<---	Gender	-.034	.080	-.424	.672	
	EE	<---	Education	.033	.047	.704	.481	
	EE	<---	Org. tenure	.072	.040	1.786	.074	
	EE	<---	Emp. status	-.055	.059	-.946	.344	
	WLB	<---	Age	.030	.029	1.042	.297	
	WLB	<---	Gender	.056	.060	.942	.346	
	WLB	<---	Education	.020	.035	.557	.579	
	WLB	<---	Org. tenure	-.015	.030	-.497	.619	
	WLB	<---	Emp. Status	-.062	.044	-1.417	.156	

Note: N= 284, Note: * $p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Abbreviation: JA = job autonomy; EE = employee engagement; WLB = work-life balance.

Moreover, the findings from Table 4.5 and Figure 4.7 indicate a significant association between job autonomy and employee engagement (β=0.230, p<0.001), thus confirming hypothesis 1. This suggests that a percentage change in job autonomy leads to a 23% rise in employee engagement among employees of five-star hotels in Nigeria. This result highlights the important role of job autonomy in impacting the engagement of employees.
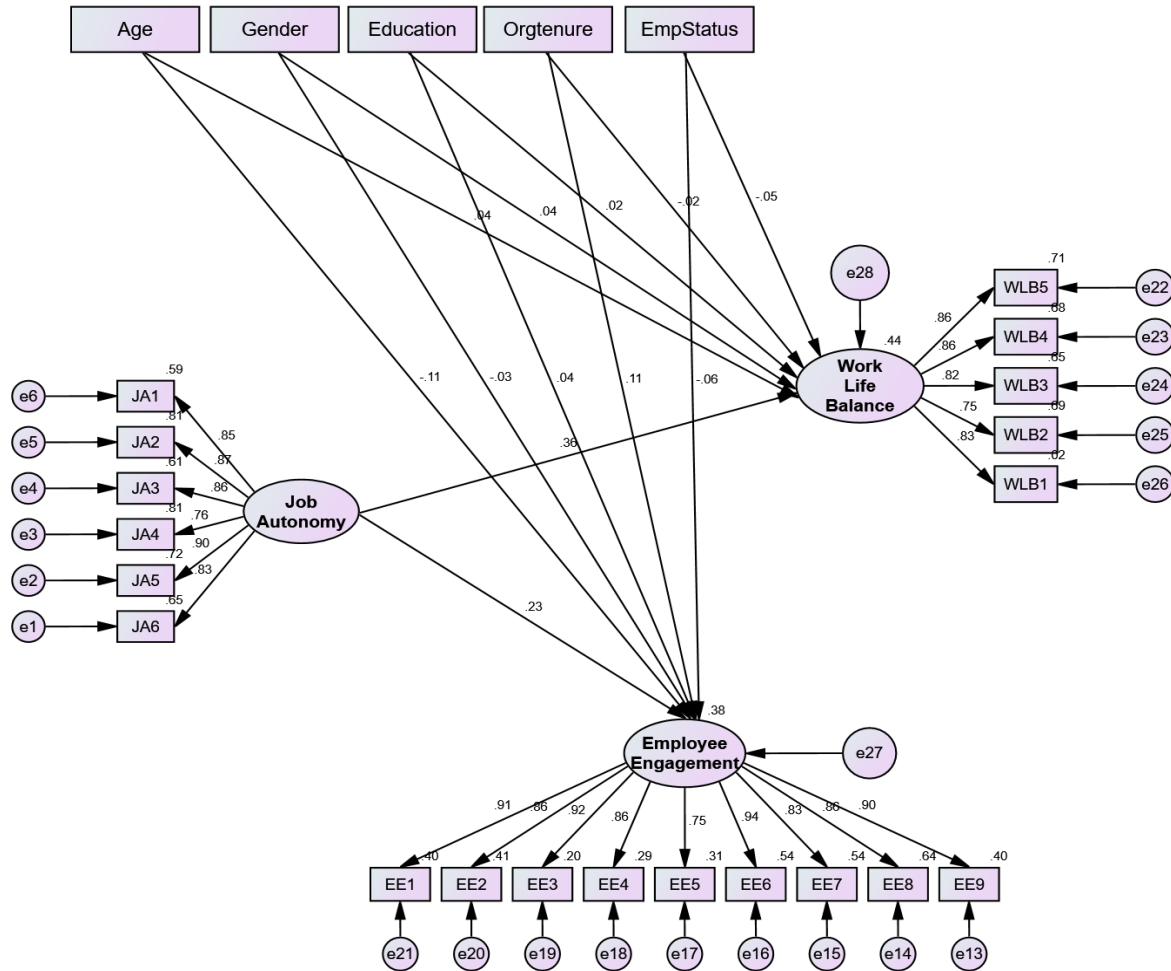
Figure 4. 7 Results of the direct relationships involving job autonomy, work-life balance, and employee engagement.

More so, job autonomy showed a significant effect on work-life balance (β=0.355, p<0.001) as displayed in Figure 4.7 and Table 4.4, hence supporting hypothesis 2. The results suggest that a percentage increase in job autonomy would amount to a 35.5% rise in WLB.

4.4.2 The Mediation Analysis

The mediation relationships were analyzed using OLS regression in SPSS version 26 and the PROCESS MACRO model 4 as suggested by Hayes (2018). To assess the indirect influence

of job autonomy on employee engagement, a bootstrap of 5,000 iterations was conducted at a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. In this analysis, the mediatory effect of WLB on the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement was examined.

The results as presented in Tables 4.6 and 4.7, present proof that WLB mediates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement (β=0.166, CI [0.166, 0.250]). Since there is no zero in the confidence interval, the indirect impact of job autonomy on employee engagement was ascertained. Therefore, H3 is supported.

Table 4. 6 The mediation effect of WLB on job autonomy and employee engagement relationship

Constructs	Mediation Model							
	Work-Life Balance (WLB)				Employee Engagement (EE)			
	β	SE	β	SE	β	SE	β	SE
Intercept	3.608***	.213	1.820***	.165	4.096	.209	2.495	.270
Control variables								
Age	.093	.055	.012	.036	-.016	.054	-.055	.049
Gender	-.116	.085	.010	.055	-.073	.084	-.027	.076
Education	.023	.057	.012	.037	.026	.056	.016	.050
Org. tenure	.032	.058	.018	.038	.080	.057	.066	.051
Emp. status	-.001	.061	-.047	.039	-.031	.060	-.027	.054
Independent Variables								
JA			.352***	.027			.142*	.056
WLB							.484***	.082
R^2	.048*		.404		.020		.216	
Adjusted R^2	.031		.396***		.003		.196***	
F	2.800		70.475		1.154		34.393	

Table 4. 7 The three effects of job autonomy on employee engagement via work-life balance in a mediation model

Paths	Effect	SE	T	p	Bias Corrected（95%）	
					LLCL	ULCL
Total effect	0.312	0.039	8.000	.000	0.136	0.288
Direct effect	0.142	0.056	2.536	.041	0.153	0.169
Indirect effect	0.170	0.047			0.166	0.250

4.4.3 The Moderating Analysis

A moderator affects the association between a predictor and outcome variables, showing how this relationship changes under different conditions (Hayes, 2018). In this study, supervisory support moderates the job autonomy-employee engagement relationship. Hierarchical regression was employed to analyze the moderation assumptions. The analysis included three steps: first, five control variables (age, education, gender, employment status, and organizational tenure) were entered into the first block (model 1); second, the independent and conditional variables were included in the second block (model 2); third, the interaction term for the IV and the moderator was included in the third block (model 3).

The study examined supervisory support's moderating role on the job autonomy-employee engagement relationship. Results from model 3 in Table 4.8 showed a positive, significant product between job autonomy and supervisory support on employee engagement ($\beta = .160$, t = 3.404, p < .001). The change in R-square across models confirmed the moderating effect: Model 1 ($R^2 = 0.020$), Model 2 ($R^2 = 0.237$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.217$), and Model 3 ($R^2 = 0.262$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.025$). This indicates that supervisory support amplifies the positive association between job autonomy and employee engagement, supporting hypothesis H4. The significant positive interaction is depicted in Figure 4.8.

Table 4. 8 Results of the moderating effect of supervisory support on the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement

		Coefficients[a]				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.096	.209		19.594	.000
	Age	-.016	.054	-.025	-.301	.764
	Gender	-.073	.084	-.054	-.878	.380
	Education	.026	.056	.033	.471	.638
	Org. tenure	.080	.057	.117	1.405	.161
	Emp. status	-.031	.060	-.031	-.524	.601
2	(Constant)	2.427	.264		9.182	.000

	Age	-.078	.048	-.118	-1.612	.108
	Gender	.002	.075	.002	.028	.977
	Education	-.038	.051	-.047	-.750	.454
	Org. tenure	.099	.051	.144	1.958	.051
	Emp. status	-.049	.053	-.048	-.920	.358
	JA	.198	.036	.299	5.512	.000
	SS	.311	.047	.359	6.594	.000
3	(Constant)	1.653	.663		2.494	.013
	Age	-.084	.048	-.128	-1.741	.083
	Gender	-.004	.075	-.003	-.059	.953
	Education	-.032	.051	-.040	-.631	.528
	Org. tenure	.098	.051	.143	1.937	.054
	Emp. status	-.051	.053	-.051	-.971	.332
	JA	.409	.169	.617	2.416	.016
	SS	.539	.185	.623	2.906	.004
	JA x SS	.160	.047	.177	3.404	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EE

Abbreviation: JA = job autonomy; SS = supervisory support; EE = employee engagemen
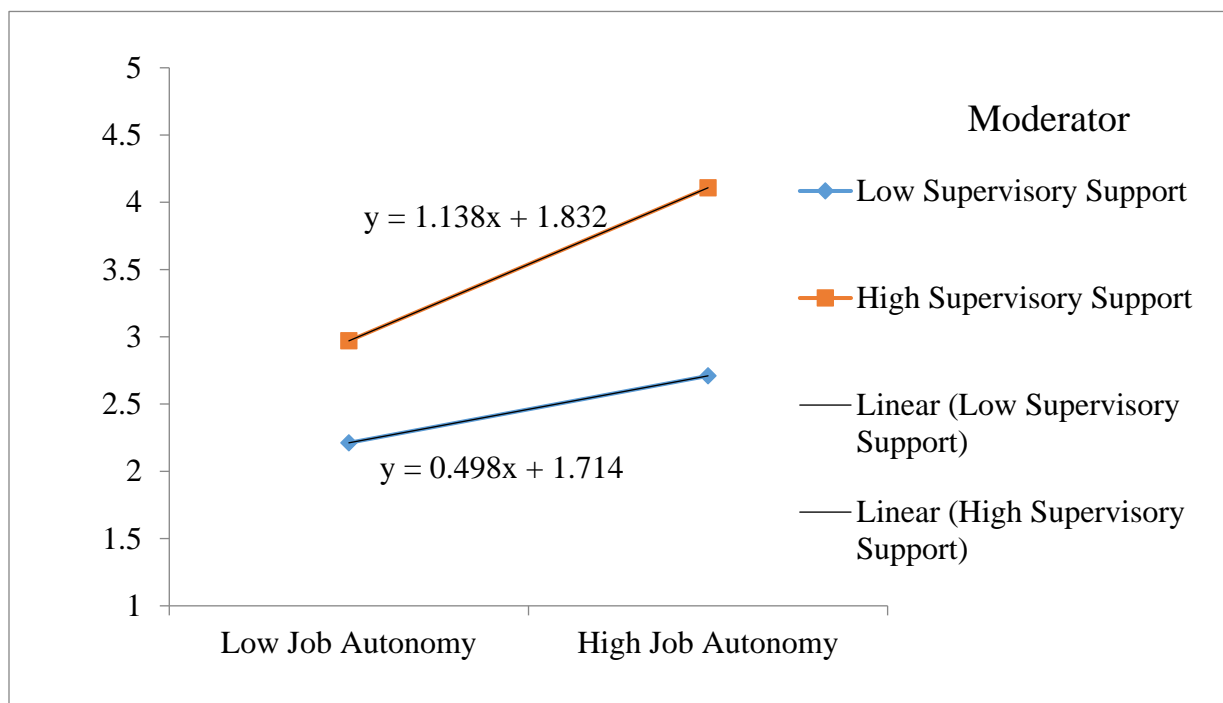
Figure 4. 8 Interaction of supervisory support and job autonomy on employee engagement

Furthermore, in Table 4.9, the result, as determined in Model 3, shows that the interaction term between WLB and supervisory support had a positive significant influence on employment engagement (β = .123, t = 3.154, p<0.001). The study's outcome illustrates a significant moderating effect of supervisory support on the link between WLB and employee engagement. This moderation is supported by the significant changes in R-square as depicted by the following output: Model 1 (R^2 =.020 and R-square change =.020); Model 2 (R^2 = .305 and R-square change = .284); Model 3 (R-square = .325 and R-square change = .010). The result means that supervisory support strengthens the positive nexus between WLB and employee engagement. Thus, hypothesis H5 is supported and, hence, accepted. The significant positive interaction is represented graphically in Figure 4.9.

Table 4. 9 Results of the moderating influence of supervisory support on the nexus between work-life balance and employee engagement

		Coefficients[a]				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.096	.209		19.594	.000
	Age	-.016	.054	-.025	-.301	.764
	Gender	-.073	.084	-.054	-.878	.380
	Education	.026	.056	.033	.471	.638
	Org. tenure	.080	.057	.117	1.405	.161
	Emp. status	-.031	.060	-.031	-.524	.601
2	(Constant)	1.814	.278		6.519	.000
	Age	-.080	.046	-.121	-1.738	.083
	Gender	-.004	.071	-.003	-.050	.960
	Education	-.035	.048	-.044	-.733	.464
	Org. tenure	.089	.048	.130	1.838	.067
	Emp. status	-.031	.051	-.031	-.618	.537
	WLB	.391	.050	.404	7.755	.000
	SS	.272	.045	.315	5.992	.000
3	(Constant)	1.528	.911		1.678	.095
	Age	-.080	.046	-.122	-1.742	.083
	Gender	-.006	.072	-.004	-.084	.933
	Education	-.035	.048	-.043	-.718	.473
	Org. tenure	.089	.049	.130	1.836	.067
	Emp. status	-.032	.051	-.031	-.625	.532
	WLB	.466	.233	.481	2.000	.047
	SS	.360	.172	.417	2.093	.016

WLB x SS	.123	.039	.140	3.154	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EE

Abbreviations: WLB = work-life balance; SS = supervisory support; EE = employee engagement

$y = 1.178x + 1.593$

$y = 0.686x + 1.611$
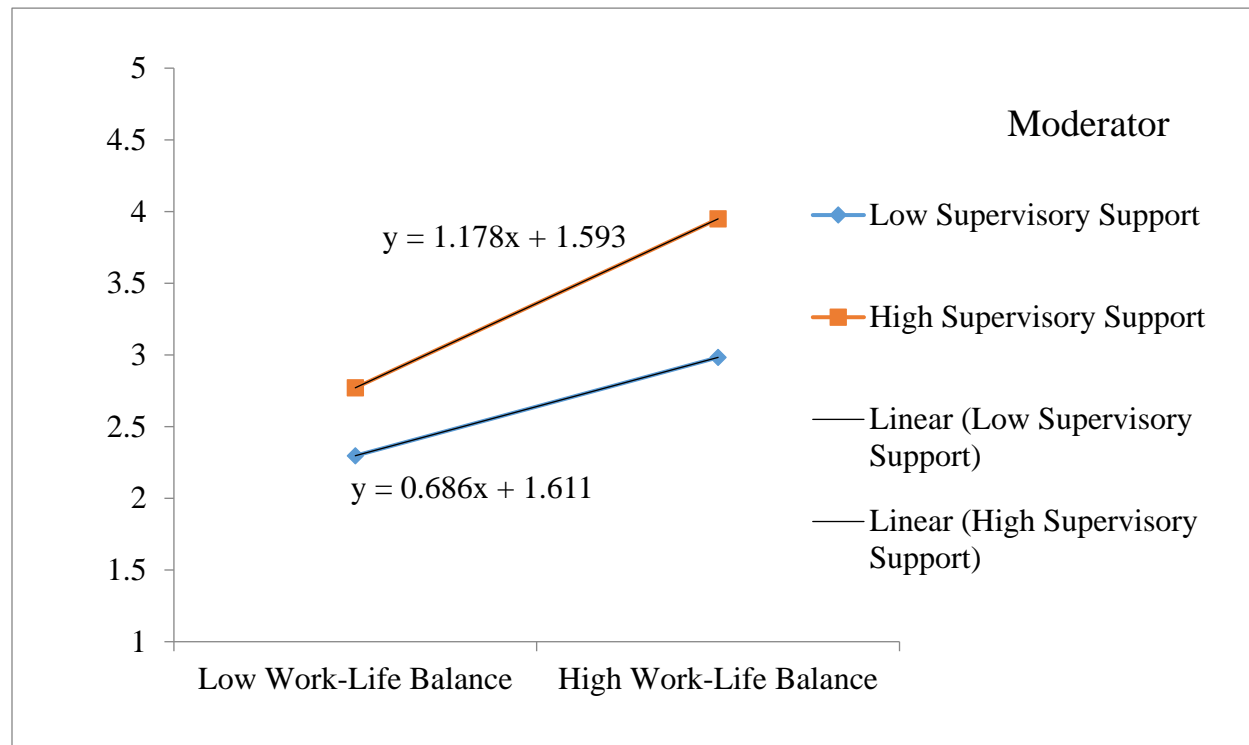
Figure 4. 9 Interaction of supervisory support and work-life balance on employee engagement

4.5 Conclusion

The chapter covers the results obtained from the processed responses of respondents. The researcher provided the demographic details of the respondents. The reliability and validity of the measuring items and the measurement model were determined through EFA and CFA. The researcher subsequently provided results on the hypotheses under consideration. The SEM was used for the direct relationships, the OLS regression and the process macro were used for the mediating relationship, and the hierarchical regression was employed to establish the moderating effect. The results have been discussed in light of the existing literature. The next chapter encompasses the study's conclusion.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Introduction

The findings from the previous chapter are discussed here. The results obtained from the respondents for this study will be compared to previous or past studies. This would enable the researcher to determine if the results obtained by previous literature are consistent with the outcome of this study or contradict the results produced by this study. The purpose of this research was to explore the moderating impact of supervisory support and the mediating role of WLB on the nexus between job autonomy and engagement among Five-Star Hotel workers in Nigeria. The researcher proceeded with the following objectives:

(1) To probe the effect of job autonomy on employee engagement and WLB.

(2) To examine the mediating role of WLB on the association between job autonomy and employee engagement.

(3) To explore the moderating effect of supervisory support on the nexus between; job autonomy and employee engagement; WLB and employee engagement.

The next section discusses the findings of the results and ascertains if they align with previous literature.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Objective 1 - To evaluate the association between job autonomy and employee engagement.

The first objective was to investigate how job autonomy influences employee engagement which was ascertained based on this study given the results. This outcome is justified because job autonomy allows employees to have control over their tasks and decision-making processes (Kao *et al.*, 2022), enhancing the spirit of ownership (Jin and Kim, 2015). This results in increased enthusiasm and overall engagement. More so, the findings align with other empirical studies from different jurisdictions, such that, job autonomy is identified to be a key determinant of employee engagement. According to Muecke *et al.* (2020), employees who have autonomy in their roles are most likely to feel empowered and encouraged to perform well. More so, job autonomy has been determined to be a critical aspect of job design that enhances employee satisfaction and

performance. According to Sheoran *et al.* (2022), this satisfaction culminates into an engagement. This outcome underscores the relevance of granting employees the freedom to manage their work which can result in organizational outcomes such as engagement. This position answers the first question "Does job autonomy influence employee engagement"?

5.1.2 Objective 2 - To assess the link between job autonomy and work-life balance.

The second objective aimed to determine if there is a nexus between job autonomy and WLB. The study's results reveal that job autonomy affects WLB. According to Haar *et al.* (2019), autonomy provides flexibility in managing work schedules and tasks more effectively. This flexibility is critical in managing stress and minimizing burnout, resulting in a more harmonious balance between professionalism and personal commitments. Metselaar, den Dulk and Vermeeren (2023) also indicate that job autonomy aids employees in tailoring their work environment to suit individual needs, further enhancing their ability to maintain a healthy WLB. More so, the finding of this research is consistent with previous scholarly works emphasizing the relevance of job autonomy in encouraging work-life balance (Badri and Panatik, 2020). Research by Khawand and Zargar (2022) suggest that individuals with higher levels of job autonomy experience greater command over their tasks and work schedules, leading to a better balance between personal and professional life. Similarly, research by Novianti and Fuadiputra (2021) identified that job autonomy is positively linked to work-life balance, as employees with more autonomy can better manage their work demands and personal responsibilities. Additionally, research by Msuya and Kumar (2022) highlight the importance of job autonomy in reducing work-related stress, which can further contribute to a better WLB. This outcome answers the second question "Does job autonomy affect work-life balance"?

5.1.3 Objective 3 - To investigate the mediating effect of WLB on the association between job autonomy and employee engagement.

The third objective was to investigate the indirect influence of job autonomy on employee engagement through WLB. The results of this research indicate that job autonomy enhances WLB, which in turn boosts employee engagement. According to De Clercq and Brieger (2022), employees better manage their personal and professional lives when they have control over their work, resulting in improved WLB. Charoensukmongkol (2022) indicates that employees who

experience good WLB are mostly energized, motivated, and committed to their work. This suggests that the positive ramifications of job autonomy on engagement are, to a large extent facilitated through the enhancement of WLB. The results of this study are in line with current literature that highlights the intricate interplay between these elements. Research by Demerouti and Bakker (2011) suggests that job autonomy can lead to increased work engagement by enabling employees to better manage their work demands and personal lives, thus enhancing their overall well-being. However, this relationship is often influenced by the extent to which employees comprehend that they have command over their work schedules and responsibilities. Moreover, studies by Dinh (2020) and Metselaar *et al.* (2023) have found that WLB plays a crucial function in determining how profound job autonomy enhances employee engagement. The outcome of the research answers the question "Does work-life balance mediate the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement"?

5.1.4 Objective 4 - To explore how supervisory support moderates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement.

The fourth goal was to examine the moderating effect of supervisory support on the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement. This objective was established given the results of this study. Kumar and Mokashi (2020) indicates that supervisors provide resources and emotional support which can enhance the positive effects of job autonomy. This support not only empowers employees to take initiative and make decisions but also fosters trust and security, which are crucial for engagement. Supervisors are said to provide support and guidance to employees thereby making them feel empowered to make autonomous decisions, leading to higher levels of engagement (Lee and Shin, 2023). Moreover, studies by Fiernaningsih (2019); Panda *et al.* (2022) have shown that supervisory support can enhance the motivational benefits of job autonomy, leading to increased engagement. When individuals assume that their supervisors are supportive and responsive to their needs, they are most likely to experience an element of autonomy in the discharge of their duties, which in turn, enhances their engagement (Ghasemy, *et al.*, 2021). This finding underscores the significance of a caring work environment in maximizing the positive ramifications of job autonomy on employee engagement. The outcome of the study answers the question "To what extent does supervisory support moderate the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement"?

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5.1.5 Objective 5 - To ascertain how supervisory support moderates the link between WLB and employee engagement.

The last objective was to ascertain the interactive effect of supervisory support and WLB on employee engagement. This objective was achieved based on the outcome of this study. A study by Lee and Shin (2023) suggest that supervisors who provide support and understanding regarding employees' work-life balance challenges can enhance their engagement levels. Moreover, studies by Fiernaningsih (2019) have illuminated the significance of supervisory support in minimizing the negative consequences of work-life imbalance on employee engagement. When supervisors show flexibility and empathy in supporting employees' work-life needs, employees are more likely to feel appreciated and engaged in their work (Chan, 2017). Moreover, the position of supervisory support in moderating the association between WLB and engagement underscores the significance of organizational support structures. By fostering a supportive work environment where supervisors are responsive to employees' work-life needs, organizations can enhance employee engagement and well-being. This finding highlights the importance of integrating WLB initiatives into organizational policies and practices to promote employee engagement and overall organizational performance. This outcome answers the question "To what extent does supervisory support moderate the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement"?

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the dissertation's results ascertained all the proposed objectives. Given the results, all the hypotheses were verified and retained. The results of the study obtained from the respondents were consistent with previous studies in the existing literature.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The basic objective of the study was to unravel the effect of supervisory support and WLB on the association between job autonomy and engagement among five-star hotel employees in Lagos, Nigeria. The study employed the quantitative method and therefore designed an online survey questionnaire to obtain responses and processed to achieve the aims as stated. Given the findings, it was deduced that job autonomy affects employee engagement and WLB; WLB mediates the nexus between job autonomy and employee engagement; supervisory support moderates the association between job autonomy and employee engagement; and supervisory support moderates the association between WLB and employee engagement among five-star hotels workers in Nigeria. These findings underscore the significance of these factors in enhancing a favorable work environment and improving the engagement of employees. Therefore, hotel managers and policymakers should contemplate administering policies and initiatives that promote job autonomy, support work-life balance, and provide strong supervisory support to enhance employee engagement and ultimately improve organizational performance.

6.2 Implications of the Finding

This aspect considers the implications of the research findings and what it means to several interest stakeholders and how the findings associate with management practices, industry, and the larger society.

6.2.1 Implication in Management Practices

Cognizance to the outcome of this research, the research provides an up-to-date information on the phenomenon under consideration that is of importance to management practitioners. More so, the positive and significant influence of job autonomy on employee engagement underscores the importance of granting employees more control over their work. Hotel managers should consider empowering employees to make decisions and take ownership of their tasks, as this can manifest in heightened engagement and ultimately improve the quality of service delivery.

In addition, the positive and significant impact of job autonomy on WLB highlights the role that job design plays in employees' overall well-being. Businesses and employers should make efforts to establish a work atmosphere that allows for flexibility and autonomy, enabling individuals to efficiently manage their personal lives and their work. This may result in stress reduction and enhance satisfaction among employees.

Moreover, the results indicate that WLB is not only essential in its own right but also plays a fundamental role in amplifying employee engagement. Managers should therefore focus on instituting directives and practices that enhance work-life balance, such as adjustable working hours and telecommuting alternatives.

Finally, the moderating influence of supervisory support as established on the relationships considered in the study emphasizes the essence of strong supervision in driving employee engagement. Supervisors should be trained to provide the necessary support and guidance to employees, helping them navigate challenges and ensuring they feel valued and supported in their roles. Supervisors should be encouraged to be empathetic and understanding of employees' personal circumstances and to provide support where needed.

6.2.2 Implications to the Industry

The study's findings suggest several key implications for the hospitality industry, particularly five-star hotels in Nigeria. Granting employees more job autonomy can enhance both their engagement and WLB, potentially encouraging increased productivity and satisfaction. Administering initiatives that support WLB, such as adjustable work schedules, can further boost employee engagement. Additionally, providing strong supervisory support is crucial, as supervisors play an essential role in fostering a positive work environment. Investing in training programs for supervisors can enhance their leadership capabilities and ensure they give the necessary assistance to employees. Overall, focusing on these areas can help hotels improve employee engagement, contributing to better organizational outcomes and increased competitiveness in the industry.

6.2.3 Implications to the Society

The study's outcome has broader implications for society, emphasizing the relevance of job autonomy, WLB, and supervisory support in enhancing employee engagement and well-being. By promoting job autonomy, organizations can empower employees and improve their job satisfaction, which can have positive effects on their overall quality of life. Additionally, practices that support WLB can help employees manage their professional and personal lives more successfully, leading to enhanced physical and mental health outcomes. Moreover, the role of supervisory support in fostering a positive work atmosphere underscores the significance of strong leadership in enhancing employee well-being and engagement. These findings indicate that promoting these factors in organizations can not only benefit employees but also contribute to a more engaged and healthier society overall.

6.3 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Research

Regardless of the valuable knowledge obtained from this research, some limitations have to be acknowledged. Firstly, the study's context was limited to Five-Star Hotels in Lagos, Nigeria, which could affect the generalizability of the findings. Organizational practices, cultural norms, and economic conditions unique to this region could influence the relationships being explored, and the results may not be directly applicable to other industries, cities, or countries. Replication studies in different cultural and organizational settings are necessary to determine the broader applicableness of these observations.

Secondly, the study's cross-sectional design limits the study's capacity to establish causal inferences. While significant associations were identified between job autonomy, supervisory support, WLB, and employee engagement, the direction of these nexuses cannot be conclusively determined. Longitudinal studies are required to evaluate how these relationships evolve and to assess the long-term effects of job autonomy, WLB, and supervisory support on the engagement of employees.

Lastly, the reliance on quantitative data obtained through surveys may not wholly cover the intricaces of employees' experiences and perceptions. While the use of surveys allows for the gathering of data from a large sample, it may overlook insights that could be obtained from

qualitative methods. Introducing qualitative studies such as focus groups or interviews, could provide a deeper appreciation of the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors influencing these relationships.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

6.4.1 Concepts

This study enriches to the existing literature and broadens the understanding of the relationships between job autonomy, WLB, supervisory support, and employee engagement in the context of five-star hotels in Nigeria. It explores how these elements interact to impact employee engagement, expanding the existing scholarly works on employee engagement in the hospitality industry.

6.4.2 Analytical Findings

The study's findings suggest that job autonomy has a favorable impact on both employee engagement and work-life balance. Work-life balance, in turn, mediates the association between job autonomy and employee engagement. Additionally, supervisory support moderates the links between job autonomy, work-life balance, and employee engagement. These analytical findings provide insights into the mechanisms and conditions through which these factors enhance employee engagement, highlighting the importance of considering job design, work-life balance policies, and supervisory practices in enhancing employee engagement in five-star hotels in Nigeria.

6.4.3 Recommendations with an Implementation Plan

The subsequent propositions are provided based on the findings obtained from the research.

i.   **Promote Job Autonomy:** Five-star hotels in Nigeria should consider redesigning job roles to grant employees more autonomy. This can be achieved by involving employees in decision-making processes, allowing them to set their own goals, and providing opportunities for skill development and innovation.

ii. **Support Work-Life Balance:** Administer policies that support work-life balance, such as adjustable work hours, work-from-home choices, and wellness programs. Inspire employees to use their vacation days and promote a culture that values personal time.

iii. **Enhance Supervisory Support:** Provide training schemes for supervisors to enhance their leadership abilities and capacity to provide assistance and guidance to employees. Encourage regular communication between supervisors and employees to address any issues and ensure a positive work environment.

6.4.4 Implementation Plan

Given the findings, the researcher recommends the following plans.

i. **Assessment:** Conduct a thorough assessment of the current job roles, work-life balance policies, and supervisory practices in the organization to identify areas for improvement.

ii. **Training and Development:** Develop training programs for supervisors to enhance their leadership skills, communication skills, and ability to provide support to employees. Include modules on understanding the importance of job autonomy and work-life balance in employee engagement.

iii. **Policy Development:** Develop and implement policies that support job autonomy and work-life balance. Ensure these policies are communicated effectively to all employees and supervisors.

iv. **Communication:** Establish regular communication channels between supervisors and employees to address any issues and provide feedback. Encourage open and honest communication to foster a positive work environment.

v. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of the implemented policies and practices on employee engagement. Use employee feedback and performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of the changes.

vi. **Continuous Improvement:** Continuously review and update policies and practices based on feedback and evaluation results. Strive for continuous improvement in employee engagement and organizational performance.

6.5 Personal Learning Statements

This study has contributed valuable understanding into assessing the dynamics between job autonomy, supervisory support, and work-life balance, and how they affect employee engagement in Lagos State, Nigeria. Through this research, I have assumed an academic and expert skill set, gaining a profound appreciation of the elements that affect employee engagement in the hospitality industry, particularly in five-star hotels. This learning has greatly enhanced my capacity to conduct future research and undertake related projects with confidence and expertise. The researcher also explained methods employed to continue and expand this knowledge.

6.5.1 Personal Learning Outcomes

Acquiring knowledge about the role of personal learning has been instrumental in resolving what initially appeared to be conflicting findings in research outcomes, particularly concerning accuracy and success in learning. Before embarking on this program, conducting a study of this nature seemed daunting. However, through dedicated learning efforts, I familiarized myself with the research process before initiating the study. This experience served as a source of inspiration throughout the research period, enabling me to efficiently plan research projects and address potential challenges. Moving forward, I recognize the importance of dedicating ample time to learning and reflection as part of the ongoing learning process.

6.5.2 Capacity for Teamwork

Working on this research project has significantly enhanced my capacity for teamwork. Collaborating with my peers and research team to collect and analyze data, as well as to interpret the findings, has improved my ability to work effectively in a team setting. I have learned to communicate ideas clearly, listen actively to others' perspectives, and contribute meaningfully to group discussions. These skills will be invaluable in my future academic and professional endeavors, as they are essential for successful collaboration and team performance.

6.5.3 Skills for Personal Communication

This study has also enhanced my skills in personal communication. By writing the research report and presenting the findings, I have learned to communicate complex ideas in a clear and

concise manner. I have also improved my ability to articulate my thoughts and ideas effectively, both in writing and verbally. These communication skills are essential for academic success and will be invaluable in my future career, as they are crucial for conveying ideas, building relationships, and influencing others.

6.5.4 Skills for Human Management

Through this study, I have developed valuable skills for human management. By examining the association between job autonomy, WLB, supervisory support, and employee engagement, I have gained a deeper understanding of human behavior in the workplace. This knowledge will be instrumental in my future career as I seek to effectively manage and lead teams. I have learned the essence of creating a supportive work atmosphere, providing employees with autonomy, and offering them the necessary support to thrive professionally.

6.5.5 Conclusion of Personal Learning Plans

In conclusion, this research project has been a transformative learning experience that has significantly contributed to my personal and professional development. It has deepened my understanding of organizational behavior and effective management practices, equipping me with valuable skills for teamwork, personal communication, and human management. Moving forward, I plan to apply these learnings in my academic and professional pursuits, to foster positive work environments and promote employee engagement.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire for the Survey

Request for completion of an online survey questionnaire on the influence of the role of supervisory support and work-life balance on the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement among employees in five-star hotels in Nigeria.

SECTION A – GENERAL RESPONDENT'S DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Q1: Gender

Male	Female
1	2

Q2: please indicate your age group

25 years and below	26-35 years	36-45 years	46 years and above
1	2	3	4

Q3: What is your highest level of education completed?

High School	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	PhD
1	2	3	4

Q4: Marital status

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
1	2	3	4

Q5: How long have you been working?

2 years and below	3-5 years	6-10 years	Above 10 years
1	2	3	4

Q6: How would you describe your current employment status?

Full-time	Part-time	Contract
1	2	3

SECTION B

Please rate your level of understanding from the lowest level "Strongly Disagree (SD) to the highest level Strongly Agree (SA).

Strongly disagree – 1
Disagree – 2
Neutral – 3
Agree – 4
Strongly agree - 5

JOB AUTONOMY (JA)

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. I have the freedom to decide how to schedule my work.					
2. I can make decisions about how to do my work.					
3. I have control over the methods I use in my work.					
4. I have the freedom to decide on my own work pace.					
5. I have the authority to make decisions related to my work.					
6. I have the independence to determine how to accomplish my tasks.					

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT (EE)

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. I feel bursting with energy at work.					
2. I feel strong and vigorous at work.					
3. When I get up in the morning, I want to go to work.					
4. I am enthusiastic about my work.					
5. My work inspires me.					
6. I am proud of my work.					
7. When I work hard, I feel happy.					

	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am immersed in my work.					
9. I get carried away when I am working.					

SUPERVISORY SUPPORT (SS)

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. My supervisor takes the time to learn about my career goals and aspirations.					
2. My supervisor keeps me informed about different career opportunities for me in the organization.					
3. My supervisor makes sure I get the credit when I accomplish something substantial on the job.					
4. My supervisor gives me helpful feedback about my performance.					
5. My supervisor gives me helpful advice about improving my performance when I need it.					
6. My supervisor provides assignments that allow me to develop and strengthen new skills					

WORK-LIFE BALANCE (WLB)

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. My preferences are considered when they assign my work area.					
2. I have been given adequate freedom to carry out my work activities.					
3. I feel that the job and other activities are currently balanced.					
4. The retention of employees in the organization is high due to effective work-life balance.					
5. The work schedule of my organization enables all employees to maintain an effective work-life balance					

Thank you for your co-operation.