



EMERGING WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AND HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIAN FIRMS

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines the impact of emerging working arrangements on the productivity of Human Resources (HR) professionals in Nigerian firms, with the primary objective of determining whether remote work enablers mediate the relationship between emerging work configurations and HR productivity outcomes. Using a descriptive survey design, primary data were collected from 454 HR professionals drawn from firms across multiple industries in Nigeria through a convenience sampling technique. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach was employed using SmartPLS 4 to test the proposed model. The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.749–0.937; Composite Reliability: 0.857–0.954; Average Variance Extracted: 0.666–0.750), and acceptable discriminant validity based on HTMT ratios and the Fornell-Lacker criterion. The structural model revealed that emerging work arrangements significantly influence HR productivity for hybrid work ($\beta = 0.180$, $t = 3.376$, $p = 0.001$) and remote work ($\beta = 0.392$, $t = 9.225$, $p < 0.001$). Remote work enablers partially mediate the relationship between emerging work arrangements and HR productivity for hybrid work ($\beta = 0.028$, $t = 2.108$, $p = 0.036$) and remote work ($\beta = 0.060$, $t = 3.040$, $p = 0.002$). The findings emphasise the importance of adaptive organisational policies that support flexible work alongside adequate technological infrastructure, clear communication systems, and outcome-based performance standards. Recommendations are made for Nigerian organisations to invest strategically in digital infrastructure and HR capacity-building to optimise productivity under emerging work paradigms.*

KEYWORDS: Firms, Flexible Work, HR Productivity, PLS-SEM, Working Arrangements, Nigeria.



INTRODUCTION

The HR industry in Nigeria is facing significant challenges driven by the rapidly changing nature of work arrangements (Gbadamosi & Adisa, 2022). As the economy evolves, more flexible and remote options are replacing traditional workplace setups, enabled by technological advancements and shifting workforce expectations. The emergence of new working arrangements raises important questions about their impact on employee productivity, commitment, and overall organisational performance. Among the professionals most affected by this transformation are HR practitioners, who must simultaneously manage a dispersed workforce while themselves adapting to new modes of working. It is therefore essential to understand the implications of these changes in order to maintain or enhance organisational performance and employee well-being (Aepfel, 2015; Esther et al., 2022).

The corporate landscape's work arrangements have been rapidly evolving due to technological advancements, globalisation, and the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This evolution is evident in the proliferation of working arrangements such as remote work, hybrid models, and flexible hours. The impact of these emerging configurations on the productivity of HR professionals in Nigerian firms is becoming increasingly significant. Recent research has emphasised the importance of flexible work schedules, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Akash & Arvind, 2023). A survey conducted by Gartner (2020) revealed that 88% of organisations worldwide either encouraged or mandated employees to work remotely. According to CIPD (2020), employees granted access to flexible work arrangements during the pandemic reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction and well-being than those without such provisions.

Managers play a crucial role in driving organisational growth, and their openness to new technology and work arrangements can greatly impact success. Their experience and perspective positively influence willingness to promote alternative work arrangements, including remote, flexible, and hybrid options. Furthermore, this study is particularly important given the growing awareness among key talent and high-potential employees who desire work-life balance and have more options available to them. Research by Apascaritei and Elvira (2022) has highlighted the challenges faced by HR practitioners in Nigeria, who, despite being highly trained and frequently participating in knowledge-sharing sessions, experience some of the highest attrition rates among professionals. This presents an opportunity for organisations to review and improve their HR practices to reduce staff turnover and improve employee satisfaction. HR practitioners in urban areas also face unique challenges, including work-family conflict and other socio-cultural issues (Adegbite & Bawalla, 2023; Adegbite et al., 2020).

A study conducted by Adeosun and Adegbite (2023) highlighted the crucial role of flexible work arrangements, professional certification, and technology in the career development of HR professionals in Nigeria. The study revealed that HR professionals need access to flexible work arrangements to balance their work and personal lives, and that technology is crucial in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of HR work processes. These findings underscore the potential contribution of emerging work arrangements to the organisational performance and career development of HR professionals in Nigeria.

Despite the growing body of international literature on flexible and remote work, empirical studies specifically examining the relationship between emerging work arrangements and HR



professional productivity within the Nigerian context remain sparse. In particular, the mediating role of remote work enablers, such as access to technology, organisational support, policy flexibility, and communication systems, in this relationship has not been adequately explored using robust statistical methods. Existing studies largely focus on general employee populations or non-African contexts, leaving a significant gap in context-specific knowledge for Sub-Saharan African organisations.

Accordingly, this study aims to address this gap by: (i) investigating the direct impact of emerging working arrangements on HR professional productivity in Nigerian firms; (ii) examining the mediating role of remote work enablers in the relationship between emerging working arrangements and HR productivity; and (iii) identifying policies and best practices that can enhance productivity while ensuring employee well-being under emerging work paradigms.

CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Emerging Work Arrangements

Various non-traditional work arrangements, collectively referred to as emerging working arrangements, have gained prominence in the modern workforce. These arrangements are becoming increasingly prevalent in Nigeria, driven by improvements in technological infrastructure, shifting attitudes toward work, and the need for a better work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements encompass a variety of employment structures that enable workers to tailor their schedules and/or physical work environment to align with personal needs and preferences (Akash & Arvind, 2023). These arrangements can include remote work, compressed workweeks, flexible hours, and job sharing, among other options. By accommodating the diverse lifestyles and commitments of employees, such arrangements promote work-life balance, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. Navigating the intersection of personal and professional lives, flexible working arrangements are gaining traction as a practical and effective solution (Akash & Arvind, 2023; Renard et al., 2021). Experts have underscored the benefits of this emerging approach, including expanding women's access to the labour market, fostering work-life balance, and enhancing overall well-being in the workplace.

Maintaining a work-life balance can be challenging for many individuals, especially when work-related obligations and personal responsibilities collide. The solution to this problem lies in flexible work practices, policies that give employees more control over their schedules and improve time management. These practices can include telecommuting, job sharing, flexible schedules, and other arrangements to help employees meet their obligations while fulfilling work-related responsibilities (Tavares et al., 2020; Ajayi et al., 2022). Research conducted by Chung and van der Lippe (2020) demonstrates that favourable work schedules, including flexible working hours, compressed workweeks, or job sharing, are positively associated with increased productivity, better work-life balance, and higher levels of job satisfaction. Research indicates that employees with the flexibility to manage their work hours and arrangements according to their individual needs are more likely to experience increased productivity, maintain a better balance between professional and personal lives, and feel more satisfied with their jobs. This emerging approach to work aligns with the evolving



expectations of younger workers, particularly millennials (Brandl et al., 2019; Van Meel, 2011).

According to Vito and Mekuri-Ndimele (2021), flexible work practices help retain employees in Nigerian manufacturing companies. Surveying 200 employees across six different companies, they found that when companies adopt flexible work practices, employees are more likely to remain in their positions. The study recommends that organisations leverage these practices to improve employee retention. A related study by Akash and Arvind (2023), titled “Going Green with Flexible Work: A Sustainable HR Approach”, highlights the substantial benefits of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) for companies and the environment, emphasising the increasing demand for FWAs among millennials and urging organisations to prioritise this aspect. Adeosun and Adegbite (2022) assessed the readiness of HR professionals in Nigeria for the future of work in light of fourth industrial revolution technologies, finding that HR professionals need to proactively prepare for upcoming changes, particularly those at higher grade levels.

Human Resources Professional Productivity

In today's fast-paced business world, HR professionals are central to ensuring that organisations recruit, develop, and retain the right talent to drive success. The productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of HR professionals can directly impact an organisation's bottom line (Cascio & Boudreau, 2016). The field of Human Resources is responsible for managing an organisation's most valuable asset: its people. HR professionals oversee the effective management of people within an organisation to achieve predetermined organisational objectives. While financial resources, materials, technology, and methodologies are significant, human resources take priority, as they breathe life and vitality into the other elements of production (Obi, 2015). Human Resource Management (HRM) practices encompass the array of organisational activities focused on managing the human resource pool, with the overarching goal of aligning these resources to realise organisational objectives effectively. As noted by Nadarajah et al. (2012), HRM practices are essential for harnessing the full potential of human resources and ensuring they are optimally utilised to benefit the organisation.

The role of HR professionals in managing modern workplaces demands specific competencies. HR managers face the challenge of balancing the needs of virtual work settings with corporate culture, socialisation, and employee orientation. They must focus on attracting and retaining a skilled workforce by acting as performance experts and influencing employee behaviour, even without face-to-face interactions. The constantly evolving socio-economic, technological, and political landscape presents both challenges and opportunities for future HR managers in labour management. Nishii and Wright (2018) highlight the importance of diversity and inclusion in improving organisational performance, making this a central aspect of the HR role. Overall, HR professionals play a significant role in shaping an organisation's success by adapting to change and fostering a positive work environment.

**Table 1: Operationalisation of the key variables in this study**

S/N	Variable	Measurement	Source
1.	Independent Variable Emerging Work Arrangement (EWA)	Remote work arrangement Hybrid work arrangement Full Onsite Work arrangement	Akash and Arvind (2023)
2.	Dependent Variable HR Productivity (HRPFR/HRPFH)	Number of successful recruitment processes Employee Engagement Effectiveness in talent management and retention strategies Quality of HR services Performance Management System	Ajayi et al. (2022)
3.	Mediating Variable Enablers of Remote Work for HR (ERWHR)	Access to technology Organisational support Policy flexibility Communication systems	Demerouti & Bakker (2011); Adeosun & Adegbite (2022)
4.	Control Variables Organisation Size Sector Use of Technology/HR Software Organisation Culture	Number of employees Industry Work tools Teamwork	Adeosun & Adegbite (2022); Nishii & Wright (2018)

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025

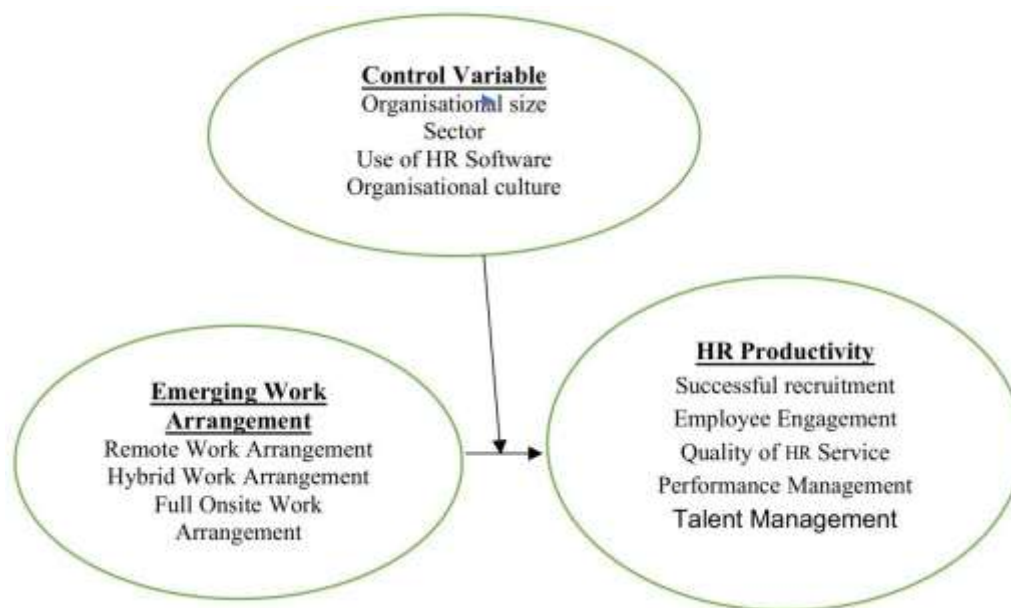
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study (Figure 1) proposes that Emerging Working Arrangements (EWA), comprising remote, hybrid, and full on-site work, directly influence the productivity of HR professionals, measured in terms of successful recruitment processes, employee engagement, quality of HR services, talent management effectiveness, and performance management. Critically, the framework positions Enablers of Remote Work for Human Resources (ERWHR) as a mediating variable in the relationship between EWA and HR productivity outcomes.

The rationale for this mediating role is theoretically grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011), which posits that job resources buffer the impact of working conditions on employee performance outcomes. In the present model, remote work enablers, including access to digital infrastructure, organisational policy support, communication platforms, and managerial flexibility, function as critical job resources. The adoption of emerging work arrangements does not automatically yield productivity gains; rather, the availability and quality of enabling conditions determine whether the potential benefits of flexible work configurations are realised in measurable outcomes. This indirect pathway (EWA → ERWHR → HR Productivity) is modelled and empirically tested through PLS-SEM mediation analysis (Hypotheses H6 and H7), ensuring full conceptual-methodological alignment.

Additionally, Control Variables, including organisational size, industry sector, organisational culture, and use of HR software, may influence the strength or direction of the main relationships but are not the primary focus of analysis. These variables are incorporated to account for contextual heterogeneity across Nigerian firms and to improve the robustness of the structural estimates.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Authors' own, 2025. EWA = Emerging Work Arrangements; ERWHR = Enablers of Remote Work for HR; HRPFH = HR Productivity (Hybrid); HRPFR = HR Productivity (Remote).

Theoretical Underpinning

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, pioneered by Becker (1964) and further developed by Rosen (1976), posits that individuals possess a unique set of skills that can be developed through education and training, ultimately contributing to enhanced productivity. Romer's (1990) new growth theory highlights the role of human capital in generating innovative ideas and accumulating scientific knowledge, while Lucas (1988) and Azariadis and Drazen (1990) emphasise that intentional and experiential knowledge acquisition contributes to a more skilled workforce. Arrow (1962) conceptualises intellectual and human capital as renewable sources of productivity, and organisations actively nurture them to promote creativity and innovation. However, a significant challenge associated with human capital is its mobility, unlike structural capital (Davenport & Prusak, 1998), which necessitates organisational efforts to retain valuable employees.

Human Capital Theory is relevant to this study because it provides a theoretical basis for understanding why investment in enabling conditions for emerging work arrangements—such as digital tools, training, and flexible policies—translates into productivity gains for HR professionals. When organisations create environments that allow HR professionals to apply



and develop their human capital effectively, regardless of physical location, the theory predicts measurable performance outcomes. Critics of Human Capital Theory have noted its narrow focus on individual-level investments and failure to account for systemic inequalities (Chiappero-Martinetti & Sabadash, 2014); however, these limitations are acknowledged and addressed in this study through the inclusion of control variables and context-specific analysis.

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011) assumes that each occupation has unique risk factors that contribute to job-related stress, categorised as job demands and job resources. Job demands are the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained effort and entail physiological and/or psychological costs. Job resources are those aspects of a job that help achieve work goals, reduce job demands and their associated costs, or stimulate personal growth, learning, and development. This is consistent with Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2001), which posit that maintaining and accumulating resources is a primary human motivation.

In this study, the JD-R Model directly informs the mediating role of remote work enablers. Emerging work arrangements generate both new job demands (e.g., digital communication expectations, self-regulation in remote settings) and new job resources (e.g., schedule autonomy, reduced commute time). Remote work enablers—including access to technology, organisational support, and policy flexibility—serve as critical job resources that determine whether HR professionals can translate flexible work arrangements into superior productivity outcomes. Personal resources such as optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience, identified through JD-R research (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009), further moderate these dynamics.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, developed by George Homans (1958), emphasises interactions that involve both costs and rewards. According to Redmond (2015), the theory proposes that long-lasting relationships are built on approval, respect, trust, and care. Homans' key propositions, as elaborated by Alnajim (2021), centre on the study of social behaviour around rewards and punishments: the success proposition holds that behaviours yielding positive outcomes are more likely to be repeated; the stimulus proposition suggests that behaviours rewarded in similar situations are reinforced; the value proposition posits that the more valuable the outcome to an individual, the more likely the action will be performed; the deprivation-satiation proposition introduces diminishing marginal utility; and the fifth proposition describes emotional responses to different reward situations.

Applied to the present study, Social Exchange Theory provides a framework for analysing the reciprocal relationships between HR professionals and their organisations. When organisations invest in the enabling conditions for emerging work arrangements, which HR professionals interpret as signals of organisational support and trust, employees reciprocate with heightened engagement, commitment, and productivity. The confirmed mediating role of remote work enablers in this study aligns with this logic: it is not merely the existence of flexible work policies but the quality of organisational support and exchange relationships behind them that drives HR productivity outcomes.



METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate for systematically describing the characteristics of a phenomenon and exploring relationships among variables without manipulating the research environment (Saunders et al., 2019). The survey approach was selected because it facilitates the collection of primary data from a large number of respondents across different organisations and industries, enabling both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

Population, Sampling Procedure, and Sample Size

The target population for this study comprised HR professionals employed in Nigerian firms across various industries, including financial services, professional services, manufacturing, construction, education, healthcare, and others. Given the difficulty of obtaining a complete sampling frame for HR professionals across all Nigerian firms, a convenience sampling technique was employed. This non-probability sampling approach allowed the researchers to reach accessible and willing HR professionals through professional networks, industry associations, and direct organisational contacts. While this approach limits strict generalisability to the wider HR population, it is commonly adopted in organisational research in developing country contexts where comprehensive sampling frames are unavailable (Saunders et al., 2019).

A structured questionnaire was administered to 454 HR professionals drawn from firms across multiple industries in Nigeria. The sample size was determined by the requirements of PLS-SEM analysis, which stipulate a minimum of 10 times the maximum number of structural paths directed at any latent variable in the model (Hair et al., 2019). With the most complex construct in the model receiving five paths, a minimum of 50 responses was technically required; however, the study targeted a substantially larger sample to improve statistical power and representativeness across industry sectors.

Research Instrument

Data collection was carried out using a structured, self-administered questionnaire adapted from validated instruments in prior literature. The questionnaire comprised two sections: Section A captured respondent demographic and organisational profile information (including age, educational qualification, marital status, gender, employment status, years of experience, work mode preference, industry, and organisation size). Section B measured the study's latent constructs using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The construct items were adapted from the following sources: Emerging Work Arrangements (EWA) items were adapted from Akash and Arvind (2023); HR Productivity (HRPFR/HRPFH) items were adapted from Ajayi et al. (2022); and Enablers of Remote Work (ERWHR) items were adapted from Adeosun and Adegbite (2022). The questionnaire was reviewed by two independent HR academic experts for face validity before administration.



Response Rate and Non-Response Bias

A total of 454 questionnaires were administered, and all 454 were returned and deemed usable, representing a 100% response rate. This high response rate is attributable to the use of digital survey administration (online form deployment through professional HR networks), which facilitated ease of completion and minimised incomplete responses. To assess the potential for non-response bias, the study followed Armstrong and Overton's (1977) widely adopted procedure, which involves comparing early and late respondents on key study variables on the assumption that late respondents approximate non-respondents. Independent sample t-tests comparing the first 20% and last 20% of respondents on the major construct measures revealed no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that non-response bias is not a significant concern in this study.

Ethical Considerations

The study took cognisance of the need to ensure ethical research practices throughout. Participants were provided with a research cover letter clearly stating the purpose of the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. No personally identifiable information was collected beyond the demographic variables necessary for contextual analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

To analyse the data derived from the administered questionnaires, this study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics employed include frequency distributions and percentages to characterise the sample. For inferential analysis, the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach was used to test the proposed model using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM was selected because of its suitability for complex models with multiple latent constructs and mediating variables, its flexibility with relatively small to medium samples, and its appropriateness for exploratory and predictive research contexts (Hair et al., 2019).

The analysis was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved evaluating the measurement model, assessing the reliability and validity of the constructs using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (ρ_c), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015) and the Fornell-Lacker criterion. The recommended thresholds applied were: Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.70 , Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70 , AVE ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019), and HTMT ratios < 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to test for multicollinearity, with values below 5 considered acceptable (Bui et al., 2024).

The second phase was the structural model analysis, which employed bootstrapping analysis using Generalized Structured Component Analysis (GSCA) to estimate the significance of path relationships and confidence intervals for model parameters (Cho & Hwang, 2024). GSCA resamples data multiple times to create new datasets, confirming the reliability of the original parameter estimates and the significance of construct relationships. Mediation analysis was conducted by examining the indirect effects of EWA on HR productivity through ERWHR, using bootstrapped confidence intervals to assess statistical significance.



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Respondent demographics

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Age Categories		
Below 26 (Generation Z)	18	4
26-41 (Millennials)	312	68.7
42-57 (Generation X)	112	24.7
58 and above (Baby Boomers)	12	2.6
Level of Education		
B.Sc/HND	254	55.94
Masters	194	42.74
Ph.D	6	1.32
Marital Status		
Single	184	40.5
Married	260	57.3
Divorced	4	0.9
Widowed	6	1.3
Gender		
Male	188	59.9
Female	272	40.1
Religion Affiliation		
Islam	28	6.2
Christianity	426	93.8
Traditional	-	-
Employment Status		
Full time	398	87.7
Part time	16	3.5
Self employed	18	4
Retired	2	0.4
Unemployed	18	4
Years of Experience		
Less than 1 year	4	0.9
1-5 years	148	32.6
6-10 years	154	33.9
More than 10 years	146	32.2
Over 30 years	2	0.4
Work mode preference		
Remote Work	70	15.4
Hybrid Work	350	77.1



Full Onsite	34	7.5
Industry		
Agriculture	12	2.33
Commerce	10	1.94
Construction	24	4.67
Education	16	3.11
Financial services	66	13.78
Professional services	58	12
FMCG	20	4
Manufacturing	34	6.89
Distribution/E-Commerce	4	0.78
Health services	16	3.11
Hospitality	18	3.56
Mining (coal; other mining)	4	0.78
Mechanical and electrical engineering	4	0.78
Oil and Gas	20	4
Energy	10	1.94
Postal and telecommunications services	10	1.94
Public service	8	1.56
Utilities	2	0.39
Others	118	22
Organization Size		
Small (1-50 employees)	176	38.8
Medium (51-200 employees)	108	23.8
Large (More than 200 employees)	170	37.4
	454	100

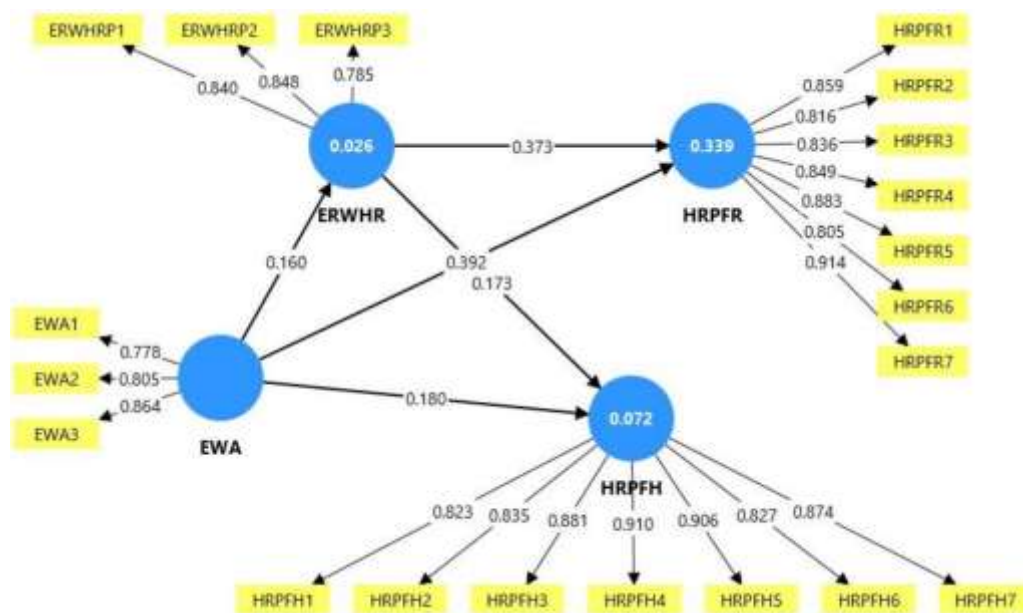
Source: *Field Work, 2025*

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the 454 respondents. Millennials (26–41 years) represent the dominant age cohort at 68.7%, reflecting the age profile of active HR professionals in Nigerian firms. The majority hold a B.Sc/HND qualification (55.94%), followed by a Master's degree (42.74%), indicating a well-educated sample. Married respondents constitute the largest marital-status group (57.3%), and full-time employment is predominant (87.7%). Hybrid work is the most preferred work mode (77.1%), followed by remote work (15.4%) and full on-site (7.5%), suggesting a strong appetite for flexible arrangements among Nigerian HR professionals. Respondents with 1–10 years of experience constitute over 66% of the sample. The top industries represented are Financial Services (13.78%), Professional Services (12.0%), and Manufacturing (6.89%), with 22% classified under 'Others,' indicating industry diversity. Organisation size is broadly distributed across small (38.8%), medium (23.8%), and large (37.4%) firms.

Measurement Model

The measurement model was evaluated in terms of reliability and validity of the constructs prior to structural analysis, following the two-step procedure recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Figure 2 depicts the final measurement model with outer loadings within the recommended benchmark range of 0.70–1.00 (Hair et al., 2019). The adjusted R-squared values for the endogenous variable EWA, as explained by its exogenous variables, are: ERWHR = 0.024, HRPFH = 0.068, and HRPFR = 0.337, indicating varying levels of predictive relevance across the outcome constructs.

Figure 2: Measurement Model



Note: EWA = Emerging Work Arrangement; ERWHR = Enablers of Remote Work for HR Productivity; HRPFR = HR Productivity (Remote Work); HRPFH = HR Productivity (Hybrid Work).

Source: Researchers' own, 2025.

Table 3: Reliability of Constructs

Latent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
ERWHR	0.765	0.865	0.680
EWA	0.749	0.857	0.666
HRPFH	0.944	0.954	0.750
HRPFR	0.937	0.949	0.727

Note: EWA = Emerging Work Arrangement; ERWHR = Enablers of Remote Work for HR; HRPFR = HR Productivity (Remote); HRPFH = HR Productivity (Hybrid). All values exceed recommended thresholds (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq 0.70$; CR ≥ 0.70 ; AVE ≥ 0.50).

Table 3 presents the reliability statistics for all four constructs. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with values ranging from 0.749 to 0.937, all exceeding



the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Composite Reliability (ρ_c) values range from 0.857 to 0.954, confirming good internal consistency of the reflective measurement model. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.666 to 0.750, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019), indicating that each construct explains at least 66.6% of the variance in its indicators and confirming convergent validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity – Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratios

Constructs	ERWHR	EWA	HRPFH	HRPFR
ERWHR	—			
EWA	0.212	—		
HRPFH	0.234	0.234	—	
HRPFR	0.514	0.538	0.466	—

Note: All HTMT values < 0.85 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015), confirming good discriminant validity.

Discriminant validity was assessed using two criteria. Table 4 presents HTMT ratios, all below the conservative threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015), confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct and measure different underlying concepts.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity – Fornell-Lacker Criterion

Construct	ERWHR	EWA	HRPFH	HRPFR
ERWHR	0.825			
EWA	0.160	0.816		
HRPFH	0.202	0.208	0.866	
HRPFR	0.435	0.452	0.440	0.853

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of AVE. Off-diagonal values are inter-construct correlations. Diagonal values exceed all off-diagonal values, confirming discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 5 presents the Fornell-Lacker criterion results, where the square root of the AVE for each construct (diagonal values) exceeds the inter-construct correlations in the corresponding rows and columns. The VIF values in the study ranged from 1.400 to 4.128, all below the benchmark of 5 (Bui et al., 2024), confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity among the constructs.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model was tested using bootstrapping (5,000 re-samples) within a GSCA framework to estimate path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. Table 6 presents the results of the direct hypothesis tests.

Table 6: Results of Direct Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Sample (β)	Mean	Standard Deviation	T statistics	P value
H ₁	ERWHR → HRPFH	0.173	0.170	0.052	3.314	0.001***
H ₂	ERWHR → HRPFR	0.373	0.369	0.040	9.276	0.000***
H ₃	EWA → ERWHR	0.160	0.163	0.049	3.257	0.001***



H ₄	EWA	▶	HRPFH	0.180	0.181	0.053	3.376	0.001***
H ₅	EWA	▶	HRPFR	0.392	0.396	0.043	9.225	0.000***

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$. SD = Standard Deviation.

Hypotheses H₁ and H₂ tested whether enablers of remote work for HR (ERWHR) positively predict HR productivity. H₁ confirmed a significant positive effect of ERWHR on HR productivity for hybrid work ($\beta = 0.173$, $t = 3.314$, $p = 0.001$), and H₂ confirmed a significant effect on remote work productivity ($\beta = 0.373$, $t = 9.276$, $p < 0.001$). Both H₁ and H₂ are therefore supported. These findings confirm that when organisations invest in technological infrastructure, policy flexibility, and communication systems, HR professionals working in both hybrid and remote modalities achieve demonstrably higher productivity outcomes. This is consistent with the JD-R Model's prediction that job resources amplify employee performance.

Hypothesis H₃ confirmed that emerging work arrangements significantly predict remote work enablers ($\beta = 0.160$, $t = 3.257$, $p = 0.001$), providing empirical support for the premise that the adoption of flexible work configurations stimulates the development and utilisation of enabling conditions. Hypotheses H₄ and H₅ confirmed the direct effects of emerging work arrangements on HR productivity for hybrid work ($\beta = 0.180$, $t = 3.376$, $p = 0.001$) and remote work ($\beta = 0.392$, $t = 9.225$, $p < 0.001$), respectively. The notably stronger effect on remote productivity (H₅) compared to hybrid (H₄) suggests that the productivity benefits of flexible arrangements are most pronounced in fully remote configurations when adequate enablers are present.

Table 7: Results of Indirect Effects (Mediation Analysis)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Sample (β)	Mean	SD	t- Statistics	p- Value
H ₆	EWA → ERWHR → HRPFH	0.028	0.028	0.013	2.108	0.036*
H ₇	EWA → ERWHR → HRPFR	0.060	0.060	0.020	3.040	0.002**

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$. Indirect effects estimated via bootstrapping (5,000 re-samples) in GSCA.

Table 7 presents the results of the indirect effects (mediation analysis). H₆ confirmed that ERWHR partially mediates the relationship between EWA and HR productivity for hybrid work ($\beta = 0.028$, $t = 2.108$, $p = 0.036$). H₇ confirmed a similarly significant mediating effect for remote work productivity ($\beta = 0.060$, $t = 3.040$, $p = 0.002$). The stronger mediation observed for remote work (H₇ > H₆) further underscores that enabling conditions play a more decisive amplifying role when HR professionals operate in fully remote configurations, compared to hybrid settings where some face-to-face organisational support remains available.

The R² value for HR productivity for hybrid work (HRPFH) is 0.339, indicating that 33.9% of the total variation in HRPFH is explained by EWA and ERWHR—classified as medium-to-strong effect according to Cohen's (1988) benchmarks (≥ 0.26 = strong effect). The R² value for HR productivity for remote work (HRPFR) is 0.072, indicating a weak effect and suggesting that additional contextual factors not captured by the current model contribute to remote productivity outcomes. These findings collectively affirm the appropriateness and explanatory relevance of the study model.



Unique Contribution to Existing Literature

This study makes several distinct and novel contributions to the existing body of knowledge on emerging work arrangements and HR professional productivity.

First, the study addresses a significant contextual gap by providing one of the first empirical investigations to examine the relationship between emerging work arrangements and HR professionals' productivity within the Nigerian corporate environment. While the majority of extant literature on flexible and remote work originates from developed economies, predominantly the United States, Europe, and Australia, this study extends the scope of inquiry to a Sub-Saharan African context. In doing so, it broadens the generalisability of established theoretical frameworks, including Human Capital Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and the JD-R Model, thereby demonstrating their relevance and predictive validity in emerging-market organisational settings.

Second, the study introduces and empirically validates the mediating role of remote work enablers in the relationship between emerging work arrangements and HR productivity – a pathway that has been theoretically proposed but rarely tested using robust multivariate statistical methods in the Nigerian context. The confirmation of partial mediation (H_6 , H_7) provides nuanced evidence that it is not the mere adoption of flexible or remote work configurations, but the quality of enabling conditions behind them, that drives HR productivity outcomes. These findings advance theoretical understanding of the mechanisms through which emerging work arrangements influence performance.

Third, the application of PLS-SEM with bootstrapping and GSCA provides a methodologically rigorous analysis of both direct and indirect effects in a model with multiple mediating pathways. This represents an advance over prior Nigerian HR studies that have predominantly relied on regression-based or descriptive analytical approaches and contributes to the growing literature on structural equation modelling in African organisational research.

Fourth, the study generates actionable, context-specific managerial insights for Nigerian organisations navigating the post-pandemic transformation of work. The findings provide evidence-based guidance for HR policy decisions at a time when Nigerian firms are actively deliberating the adoption of hybrid and remote work frameworks, particularly amid the digital infrastructure and governance challenges unique to the Nigerian business environment.

Implications for Research and Practice

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the explanatory power of the JD-R Model in organisational settings beyond Western contexts. The confirmed mediation of remote work enablers extends the JD-R framework by identifying specific job resources, technology access, policy flexibility, organisational support, and communication infrastructure that are most critical to HR productivity in flexible work environments. The alignment with Social Exchange Theory further highlights the reciprocal nature of organisational investment in work enablers and employee productivity outcomes. Future research may explore moderating variables such as leadership style, organisational culture, and digital literacy in this framework.



From a practical standpoint, the results suggest clear steps for HR professionals and organisations. Practitioners should proactively implement flexible work policies, including remote, hybrid, and flex-time arrangements, to harness the identified productivity gains. These policies must be supported by enabling resources: organisations should ensure reliable IT infrastructure, training, and communication tools so that HR staff can collaborate effectively off-site. Line managers should foster trust and autonomy, adjusting performance metrics to focus on outputs rather than hours worked. Firms might pilot flexible arrangements gradually, gathering employee feedback and refining support systems, for example, by improving collaboration tools or providing guidance on work-life balance. While adopting these practices, companies should remain mindful of contextual constraints such as specific job roles, regulatory environments, and digital infrastructure limitations within Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study collectively confirm that emerging working arrangements have a statistically significant and practically meaningful impact on the productivity of HR professionals in Nigerian firms. These results are interpretable through the lens of the three theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, thereby strengthening the research's contribution to the theoretical literature.

From the perspective of Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), the productivity gains associated with flexible work reflect the optimisation of human capital investments. When organisations provide enabling conditions for remote and hybrid work, they create environments that allow HR professionals to apply and develop their accumulated knowledge and competencies more effectively. The significant direct effects of emerging work arrangements on HR productivity ($H_4: \beta = 0.180, p = 0.001$; $H_5: \beta = 0.392, p < 0.001$) support the premise that adaptive work structures serve as mechanisms for realising the productive potential of human capital. This is consistent with the theory's view that investment in conditions that enable productive work yields measurable performance returns.

Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958, as cited in Alnajim, 2021) further illuminates these findings: when organisations invest in flexible work provisions, which HR professionals interpret as signals of organisational support, trust, and reciprocity, employees respond with heightened engagement, commitment, and productivity. The confirmed mediating role of remote work enablers ($H_6: \beta = 0.028, p = 0.036$; $H_7: \beta = 0.060, p = 0.002$) reinforces this logic: it is not the mere existence of flexible work policies but the quality of enabling conditions and the exchange relationships they signal that drive productivity outcomes. Organisations that invest substantively in work enablers create the conditions for a high-quality social exchange that motivates superior HR performance.

The JD-R Model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011) provides a structural explanation for the mediation pathway. Remote work enablers function as job resources that buffer the demands of flexible work configurations and amplify their motivational potential. The model predicts that well-resourced employees achieve higher engagement and productivity; the empirical evidence in this study, particularly the stronger mediation effect for fully remote arrangements ($H_7 > H_6$), confirms that the resource function of enablers is most decisive where organisational support is most distant.



In summary, this study establishes that Nigerian firms that strategically adopt and adequately support emerging work arrangements are better positioned to enhance HR productivity and sustain organisational performance in a dynamic business environment. Organisations are particularly encouraged to invest in digital infrastructure, clear communication frameworks, and outcome-based performance management systems to fully harness the benefits of emerging work paradigms. These investments, underpinned by theoretically coherent enabling mechanisms, represent a strategic pathway to human capital optimisation in the evolving world of work.

Limitations and Directions for Further Study

This research is not without its limitations. First, the study is limited to HR professionals in selected Nigerian firms accessed through convenience sampling, which may not fully represent the broader HR landscape across all Nigerian industries or other developing countries. The sampling approach limits the strict generalisability of the findings, and future studies should employ stratified random sampling to improve representativeness.

Second, the study relies on self-reported data collected via a cross-sectional survey, which may be subject to common method bias and social desirability effects. Although non-response bias assessment procedures were followed, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal directionality or to observe long-term effects of emerging work arrangements on productivity.

Third, while PLS-SEM is appropriate for the exploratory and predictive objectives of this study, the relatively modest R^2 value for remote work productivity (7.2%) suggests that additional explanatory variables not captured in the current model contribute to productivity outcomes in fully remote settings.

For future research, a longitudinal study is recommended to track the evolving impact of flexible work arrangements. Comparative studies between sectors (public versus private) and between countries can provide deeper insights into contextual differences. Further investigation into the moderating roles of organisational culture, leadership style, digital competency, and individual personality traits in the relationship between work arrangements, enablers, and HR productivity would be particularly valuable. Additionally, qualitative research using interviews or focus groups would complement the quantitative findings by providing richer insights into the lived experiences of HR professionals navigating emerging work arrangements in Nigeria.

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