

INFLUENCING TACTICS AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG EMPLOYEES OF RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT-OWNED AGENCIES

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between influencing tactics and work-life balance among employees of Rivers State government-owned agencies. The research specifically investigated how leadership influence affected absenteeism and turnover rates. Using a correlational research design, the study gathered data from a sample of 285 staff members across 15 government agencies. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate, indicating that when supervisors employed coercive or unsupportive influence strategies, employees were more likely to disengage from work. Similarly, a significant positive relationship was found between influencing tactics and turnover rate, suggesting that poor application of leadership influence contributed to employees leaving the organization. These results were supported by existing literature, including the works of Yukl and Falbe (1990), who highlighted the positive outcomes of rational persuasion and consultation, and Greenhaus and Allen (2011), who emphasized the role of leadership in maintaining work-life balance. The study concluded that while influencing tactics are necessary for organizational leadership, their effectiveness depends on how ethically and supportively they are applied. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government agencies adopt training programs on ethical influence, promote flexible work policies, and encourage leadership styles that prioritize employee well-being.

Keywords: Influencing tactics, work-life balance, absenteeism, turnover rate

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance has become a critical organizational concern globally, especially in recent times as employees strive to harmonize the competing demands of work and personal life. Work-

life balance refers to employees' ability to effectively manage their work responsibilities alongside personal and social obligations in a manner that promotes wellbeing and productivity (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). When employees achieve a healthy work-life balance, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, satisfaction and performance (Al Karani & Khan, 2021). Conversely, poor work-life balance creates stress and strain, which often manifests through increased absenteeism and the propensity to quit the organization (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2022).

In the public sector specifically, concerns regarding work-life balance are more pronounced due to the bureaucratic nature of administrative procedures, frequent political interference and limited flexibility in work roles (Okeke & Eze, 2020). Among Rivers State Government-owned agencies, anecdotal evidence and empirical reports suggest rising levels of employee absenteeism and turnover (Duru & Onuoha, 2023). High absenteeism rates pose serious threats to public service delivery, resulting in delays, poor response time and reduced productivity across various departments. Similarly, turnover rates negatively affect continuity in service delivery and result in increased costs associated with recruitment and training of replacement staff (Emeh & Ogbonna, 2021). Despite the relevance of these indicators in assessing the state of work-life balance, most existing studies within the public sector in Rivers State focus largely on issues such as salary, motivation and employee engagement, paying limited attention to work-life balance and its associated challenges (Amadi & Okwu, 2022). This reveals an empirical gap in understanding the extent to which work-life balance is constrained in Rivers State Government-owned agencies and the implications for employee outcomes.

One emerging concept that may explain variations in employees' work-life balance within public service environments is the use of influencing tactics. Influencing tactics refer to specific strategies used by individuals or supervisors to persuade others, shape behaviours and secure compliance towards particular goals (Yukl & Chavez, 2002). These tactics may be rational (such as use of logical arguments), consultative (involving participation) or pressure-oriented (based on assertiveness), and often influence employees' psychological wellbeing and behavioural responses (Higgins, Judge & Ferris, 2003). When influencing tactics are appropriately used, they may create positive workplace relationships and foster flexible working conditions that support work-life balance. However, excessive use of pressure-based tactics might increase psychological strain and promote counterproductive behaviours like absenteeism and turnover (Kiprotich & Tarus, 2020).

In spite of the strategic importance of influencing tactics, empirical documentation on how these strategies shape work-life balance within public sector organizations in Rivers State remains very scarce. Existing studies in Nigeria have either examined the relationship between influencing tactics and employee performance (Adeyemi & Akinola, 2019) or leadership style and job satisfaction (Nwosu & Akpan, 2021) without giving due attention to the outcomes relating to employees' work-life balance. Consequently, there is limited empirical evidence on whether the use of influencing tactics by managers and supervisors in Rivers State Government-owned agencies contributes to improved or deteriorated levels of work-life balance. This constitutes a clear knowledge gap which the present study intends to address.

Therefore, this study examined the impact of influencing tactics on work-life balance among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies, using absenteeism rate and turnover rate as measures of the criterion variable.

The specific objectives of the study include.

- i. To examine the relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate among employees of Rivers State Government-Owned Agencies.
- ii. To determine the relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate among employees of Rivers State Government-Owned Agencies.

Conceptual Framework



Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing influencing tactics, and work-life balance

Source: Desk Researc (2025) h

Research Questions

The Research questions are as follows

1. What is the relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate in Rivers State government-owned agencies?
2. What is the relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate in Rivers State government-owned agencies?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses are as follows

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate in Rivers State government-owned agencies.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate in Rivers State government-owned agencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Boundary Theory

Boundary theory provides a compelling framework for understanding how individuals navigate the complex interplay between their professional and personal lives (Sa'ad & Huda, 2023; Cobb *et al.*, 2022). This theory posits that individuals create and manage boundaries between different

life domains such as work and family to maintain a sense of balance and well-being. In the context of organizational politics, these boundaries can be particularly influenced by the behaviors, norms, and power dynamics prevalent within an organization. Boundary theory, as articulated by Bashir, *et al* (2019), emphasizes that individuals have varying degrees of permeability in their boundaries between life domains. These boundaries can be physical, temporal, or psychological, and the degree of flexibility or rigidity can significantly impact an individual's work-life balance. In a workplace characterized by high levels of organizational politics such as competition for resources, power struggles, and informal networks employees may find their boundaries increasingly challenged. Applying boundary theory to the study of influencing tactics and family work-life balance allows for a nuanced exploration of how employees manage their roles in different contexts (Cobb *et al.*, 2022; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2005). It highlights the importance of understanding individual differences in boundary management strategies, such as segmentation versus integration. This theoretical lens can also inform organizational policies aimed at fostering a healthier work environment, promoting practices that support employees in establishing effective boundaries (Muiruri, 2023; Mizruchi & Koenig, 1986).

Conceptual Review

Concept of Influence Tactics

Influence tactics refer to the strategies individuals use to shape the behaviors, attitudes, and decisions of others within an organization. These tactics are essential in managerial roles, leadership positions, and interpersonal workplace interactions, as they help in guiding organizational direction and fostering collaboration among employees (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Influence tactics have been widely studied within the domain of organizational behavior, particularly in the context of leadership, power dynamics, and decision-making processes.

Influence tactics encompass both direct and indirect methods of persuasion aimed at achieving specific outcomes. Direct tactics involve clear communication of requests, while indirect tactics may include subtle maneuvers such as building alliances or leveraging social norms (Kipnis *et al.*, 1980). Influence tactics are often used to gain compliance, secure resources, and navigate organizational politics, making them crucial tools for both employees and management. Influence tactics are strategies that individuals use to persuade, motivate, or coerce others to achieve specific outcomes within an organization. These tactics can vary widely in their approach and effectiveness, depending on the context and the individuals involved. Ansari and Wiltshire (2024) defined influence tactics as strategies grounded in demonstrable use of power. Its exercise is considered as the essence of leadership. They affect the behaviour, development, or thinking of others. An effective leader knows which tactics can be most effective in any given situation. Influence is a way of persuading someone to do something by changing their attitudes about it. This implies that influence is the ability to convince employees to support and implement plans and strategies (Duncombe, 2019; Bulger *et al*, 2007). The meaning of influence tactics extends beyond mere persuasion, as they also reflect power dynamics and social interactions within organizations. Employees and leaders utilize influence tactics to achieve goals, negotiate responsibilities, and foster cooperation. The effectiveness of influence tactics varies based on factors such as hierarchical position, organizational culture, and interpersonal relationships (Falbe & Yukl, 1992).

Concept of Work-life Balance

Work-life balance is a critical concept in contemporary organizational studies and human resource management, referring to the equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life. The increasing complexity of modern work environments, coupled with rapid technological advancements, has blurred the boundaries between work and personal time, making work-life balance an essential aspect of employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). The concept has gained prominence as businesses and employees recognize the need for sustainable work practices that enhance productivity while preserving mental and physical health. Achieving work-life balance is crucial for reducing stress, increasing job satisfaction, and fostering long-term career growth. The meaning of work-life balance extends beyond mere time management to include psychological, emotional, and social well-being. It entails the ability to meet professional demands without compromising personal relationships, leisure activities, and overall health (Guest, 2002). Work-life balance is not a one-size-fits-all concept but varies depending on individual priorities, job roles, organizational policies, and cultural expectations. In modern economies, where flexible work arrangements such as remote work and gig employment are becoming prevalent, maintaining work-life balance requires deliberate efforts from both employers and employees (Kossek et al., 2014).

Measures of Work-life Balance

Absenteeism rate is a critical metric in human resource management and organizational studies, referring to the frequency or proportion of employee absences from work within a given period. It is a key indicator of workforce engagement, job satisfaction, and overall organizational health. High absenteeism rates can lead to reduced productivity, increased operational costs, and workplace disruptions, making it a significant concern for employers (Johns, 2008). Understanding absenteeism and its underlying causes is essential for developing effective strategies to enhance employee attendance and organizational efficiency. The meaning of absenteeism rate extends beyond occasional absences to systematic patterns that may signal deeper workplace issues. It is typically measured as the percentage of scheduled workdays that employees fail to attend due to various reasons, including illness, personal obligations, workplace dissatisfaction, and disengagement (Cascio & Boudreau, 2011). Absenteeism can be classified into voluntary and involuntary categories, where voluntary absenteeism stems from avoidable factors such as low job motivation, while involuntary absenteeism arises due to uncontrollable circumstances like health issues (Steers & Rhodes, 1978). Organizations monitor absenteeism rates to assess workforce stability and implement corrective measures where necessary.

Turnover Rate

Turnover rate is a crucial metric in human resource management and organizational behavior, referring to the proportion of employees who leave an organization within a given period. It is an indicator of workforce stability, employee satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness (Griffeth et al., 2000). High turnover rates can lead to increased recruitment costs, loss of institutional knowledge, and disruptions in workflow. Conversely, a reasonable level of turnover can bring fresh perspectives and innovation into the organization. Understanding the causes and effects of turnover is essential for developing retention strategies that enhance organizational performance. The meaning of turnover rate extends beyond the mere act of employee departure to encompass voluntary and involuntary exits. Voluntary turnover occurs when employees leave an

organization by choice, often due to job dissatisfaction, better opportunities, or personal reasons (Hom et al., 2017). Involuntary turnover, on the other hand, happens when employees are terminated due to poor performance, downsizing, or restructuring (Shaw et al., 1998). Turnover can be further categorized into functional and dysfunctional turnover, where functional turnover benefits the organization by removing underperforming employees, while dysfunctional turnover negatively affects productivity by losing high-performing talent (Hancock et al., 2013).

Empirical Review

Khateeb (2021) study of influencing tactics and work-life balance explores how different influencing tactics employed by managers impact employee absenteeism, viewed through the lens of work-life balance. The study incorporates qualitative interviews with 50 respondents and quantitative data from 210 responses in a structured survey. Mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey on influencing tactics and absenteeism. The thematic analysis for qualitative data and statistical analysis for quantitative data were done. The qualitative results revealed that employees felt more engaged and less likely to be absent when managers used supportive influencing tactics such as empowerment and encouragement. While the quantitative analysis confirmed that supportive tactics were significantly associated with lower absenteeism rates ($p < 0.05$). Two implications can be drawn from this result. The first is that the nature of influencing tactics significantly affects employee well-being. While the second is that organizations that foster positive political behaviors may enhance work-life balance, leading to reduced absenteeism.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The population covered 15 state owned agencies in Rivers State. According to Rivers State Yellow Page 2025. The study took a census of all the fifteen (15) state owned agencies in Rivers State. Nineteen (19) staff of each agency was surveyed, making the total respondent two hundred and eighty-five (285) respondents. A total of two hundred and ninety (290) copies of questionnaires administered randomly to staff of studied agencies. ten (10) copies out of the distributed questionnaires were not retrieved. While only 280 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and was used for the analysis. The method of data analysis in this study involved using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient which was used to evaluate the strength and direction of relationships between key variables, with a significance level of 0.05.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Decision rule: The decision rule which applies for all bivariate test outcomes is stated as follows: where $P < 0.05$, reject hypothesis on the basis or evidence significant relationship; and where $P > 0.05$, accept hypothesis on the basis of insignificant relationship between the variables. The extent of influence is on this basis assessed using the rho interpretations provided by Bryman and Bell (2003).

Table 1: Description on Range of correlation Pearson values and the corresponding level of association

Range of Pearson with positive and negative sign values	Strength of Association
± 0.80 – 0.99	Very Strong
± 0.60 – 0.79	Strong
± 0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
± 0.20 – 0.39	Weak
± 0.00 – 0.19	Very Weak

Source: Adopted from Ahaiauzu & Asawo, 2016, *Advance Social Research Methods*

The positive (+) sign in the values of (*B*) indicates a positive relationship, while the negative (-) sign in the value of (*B*) indicates an indirect/negative or inverse relationship. Thus, the sign of the *B* explains the direction of association between the two variables. The above table forms our yardstick for the determination of the level of relationship between the variables of the dimensions and those of the measures as understudied. These relationships range from very weak to very strong.

Relationship Between Influencing Tactics and Work-life Balance

Table 2: Correlations for the relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate of Rivers State government owned agencies

		Influencing Tactics	Absenteeism Rate
Influencing Tactics	Pearson Correlation	1	.845
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	280	280
Absenteeism Rate	Pearson Correlation	.845	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	280	280

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data 2025, (SPSS output)

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies.

From the analysis, the result on table 2 showed the correlation coefficient of $\rho = 0.845$ which shows the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a very strong positive correlation between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies. This suggests that the way leaders apply influence significantly affected employee attendance in Rivers State government-owned agencies. When influence was not supportive or aligned with employees' needs, it likely contributed to increased absenteeism, possibly due to stress or lack of motivation. The test of significance shows that this relationship is significant at $p = .000 < 0.05$ which makes possible to the generalization of our findings to the study population. Therefore, based on observed findings, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship

between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies.

Table 3: Correlations for the relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate of Rivers State government owned agencies

		Influencing Tactics	Turnover Rate
Influencing Tactics	Pearson Correlation	1	.715
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	280	280
Turnover Rate	Pearson Correlation	.715	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	280	280

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data 2025, (SPSS output)

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies.

From the analysis, the result on table 3 showed the correlation coefficient of $\rho = 0.715$ which shows the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between influencing tactics and turnover rate, indicating that leadership influence impacted employees' decisions to remain in or leave the organization. Ineffective or coercive influence may have contributed to dissatisfaction, prompting higher turnover among staff. The test of significance shows that this relationship is significant at $p = .000 < 0.05$ which makes possible to the generalization of our findings to the study population. Therefore, based on observed findings, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate among employees of Rivers State Government-owned agencies.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between influencing tactics and absenteeism rate in Rivers State government-owned agencies. This suggested that the way supervisors influence employees significantly affected attendance behavior. When influence tactics such as pressure, excessive control, or lack of supportive communication were applied, employees were more likely to be absent from work, possibly as a coping mechanism for stress or disengagement. This aligns with the work of Kipnis et al. (1980), who emphasized that the misuse of hard influence tactics like pressure often leads to employee resistance and withdrawal behaviors. Similarly, Yukl and Falbe (1990) found that employees respond more favorably to rational persuasion and consultation, while coercive tactics tend to produce negative outcomes, including absenteeism and poor morale.

Additionally, the study found a significant positive relationship between influencing tactics and turnover rate, indicating that the way leaders interact with staff could influence their decision to remain in the organization. Employees who perceived the use of influence tactics as manipulative or lacking empathy were more inclined to seek employment elsewhere. This supports findings by Ganta and Manukonda (2014), who observed that employees in

organizations with unsupportive leadership and poor communication tend to have higher turnover intentions. Moreover, Greenhaus and Allen (2011) highlighted that leadership practices promoting work-life balance and respectful communication are essential for employee retention. Therefore, the use of appropriate influencing tactics not only fosters a healthier work environment but also reduces absenteeism and turnover by strengthening trust and engagement among employees.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concluded that influencing tactics significantly impact both absenteeism and turnover rates in Rivers State government-owned agencies. When influence is applied constructively—through rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals—it fosters a supportive work environment that enhances employee commitment and attendance. However, the use of coercive or unsupportive tactics contributes to increased absenteeism and turnover, as employees respond negatively to pressure and lack of empathy. These findings are consistent with existing literature that links leadership behavior to employee retention and engagement, underscoring the importance of ethical and supportive influence in public sector management.

Based on the relationship from the findings, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Government agency leaders should be trained to use rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals to improve employee morale and reduce absenteeism.
2. Regular workshops on ethical leadership and influence strategies should be organized to equip managers with skills that promote employee retention.
3. Agencies should strengthen and clearly communicate policies that support flexible work arrangements, as this can reduce stress-related absenteeism and turnover.

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