

Flexible Working Plans and the Commitment of Medical Doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of flexible working plan on the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, targeting a population of 531 medical doctors. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample of 228 respondents was selected. Simple linear regression analysis was employed to test the research hypotheses. The findings revealed that shift duty have a significant positive effect on doctors' commitment in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital. Similarly, compressed work weeks were found to positively influence their commitment. Based on these findings, the study concluded that flexible working plans play a vital role in promoting staff well-being and sustaining professional commitment, which ultimately enhances the quality of healthcare delivery. It is therefore recommended that the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital implement and maintain well-structured flexible shift systems tailored to the needs of medical doctors to improve commitment, job satisfaction, and overall performance. Furthermore, hospital management should formally adopt and institutionalize compressed work week schedules to promote better work-life balance, reduce burnout, and enhance employee motivation and retention.

Keywords: *Flexible Working Plans, shift duty, compressed work weeks, Doctors' Commitment and University of Uyo Teaching Hospital.*

INTRODUCTION

The growth and effectiveness of any organisation, particularly within the healthcare sector, largely depend on the commitment and disposition of its workforce. In recent years, employees have increasingly sought work environments that offer not only competitive remuneration but also job satisfaction, reduced stress levels, and a healthy work-life balance. In response to these evolving expectations, many organisations have adopted Flexible Working Plans (FWPs) as strategic tools to enhance employee well-being and overall performance.

Flexible Working Plans are structured work arrangements that provide employees with greater autonomy over how, when, and where they perform their duties (Austin *et al.*, 2020). These arrangements aim to boost productivity, alleviate job-related stress, and promote emotional

well-being. Common forms of FWP include remote work, flextime, job sharing, compressed workweeks, part-time schedules, and shift-based duties (Uford, et al., 2022). This study focuses specifically on two key forms: shift duties and compressed workweeks (Facer and Wadsworth, 2008).

Shift duty involves the rotation of job roles among employees with similar responsibilities to ensure continuous service delivery, an approach particularly vital in critical sectors such as healthcare. Compressed workweeks, in contrast, allow employees to work extended hours per day in exchange for fewer working days per week (O'Connell and O'Sullivan, 2016; Bambra *et al.*, 2008). Both arrangements are intended to foster better work-life integration and reduce burnout among staff. Despite the potential benefits of FWPs, healthcare professionals in Nigeria frequently contend with unstructured, excessive working hours that contribute to heightened levels of stress, fatigue, and burnout. These adverse conditions have been linked to negative coping behaviours such as substance use, as well as serious professional errors including misdiagnoses, incorrect prescriptions, and surgical mistakes (Buerhaus *et al.*, 2021; Bukola *et al.*, 2023). Such outcomes not only threaten the well-being of healthcare providers but also compromise patient safety and public health.

In light of these concerns, scholars such as Chiekezie *et al.* (2024) advocate for the adoption of sustainable and well-structured flexible work policies to improve healthcare delivery and workforce satisfaction. Within this context, employee commitment emerges as a critical factor influencing job performance and the quality of care. Commitment is the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee feels towards their organisation, which in turn affects their willingness to exert effort and remain with the organisation over time (Allen and Meyer, 1991; Abbais and Ahmed, 2023). It plays a pivotal role in organisational productivity, service quality, and staff retention.

Employee commitment is traditionally conceptualised in three dimensions: Affective commitment, reflecting an emotional attachment to, and identification with, the organisation; Continuance commitment, based on the perceived costs of leaving the organisation; and Normative commitment, stemming from a sense of obligation to stay due to personal or ethical reasons (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Noraazian and Khalip, 2016). Research consistently shows that high levels of employee commitment, particularly affective commitment, lead to reduced turnover, improved morale, and a stronger organisational culture (Fornes and Rocco, 2004). Given the increasing demands placed on medical professionals and the structural inefficiencies in Nigeria's healthcare system, especially in Akwa Ibom State, understanding how flexible work arrangements influence affective commitment is both timely and essential.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, there has been a noticeable decline in the commitment of medical doctors to their duties within the Nigerian healthcare system. This low level of commitment is a significant concern, particularly in public health institutions such as the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital in Akwa Ibom State. Several factors have been identified as contributing to this trend, including inadequate remuneration, poor physical working conditions, lack of modern medical facilities, and limited career advancement opportunities.

One of the major consequences of this low commitment is the continued deterioration in the quality of healthcare services, leading to increased medical tourism, as financially capable Nigerians seek treatment abroad in countries like India, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the system is facing a critical brain drain, as a growing number of

Nigerian-trained medical doctors migrate to foreign countries in search of better working conditions and job satisfaction.

This lack of commitment often manifests in various ways, such as increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, low morale, poor patient care, and high turnover rates among medical doctors. These outcomes further weaken the already fragile healthcare system and hinder the Nigerian government's efforts to improve access to quality healthcare and reduce poverty through reduced medical costs. While previous research has mostly focused on tangible factors like salaries and infrastructural deficits as the main causes of low commitment, there has been limited attention given to the role of work-life balance, particularly the impact of unplanned or rigid working hours. The potential influence of flexible working plans on improving doctors' commitment remains underexplored, representing a significant gap in the literature. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by examining the influence of flexible working arrangements on the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to examine the influence of flexible working plans on the commitment of medical doctors in university of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives were to:

- iv. assess the influence of shift duty on commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State;
- v. examine the effect of compressed work weeks on commitment of medical doctor in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of shift duty on the commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

H₀₂: Compressed work weeks has no significant influence of on the commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Flexible Working Plans

The concept of a flexible working plan does not have a universally agreed definition, but it generally emphasizes where, when, and how work is performed. It allows employees a degree of autonomy over their working hours and conditions, depending on organisational policies (Kell and Keler, 2019; Henry and Lambert, 2020). For instance, some organisations may permit work to begin at 6:30 am and end at 4:30 pm, while others follow a standard 8:00 am to 4:30 pm schedule. These variations reflect each organisation's approach to flexibility and are structured to help employees work within clearly defined yet adaptable frameworks.

Flexible work arrangements aim to support a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal life (Uford, 2017). By allowing employees to adjust work times or engage in remote work, organisations help reduce stress from family-related or personal obligations (Palkisetia, 2020). When properly implemented, such policies foster higher employee morale, job satisfaction, and organisational stability. They also provide room for employees to align their work commitments with personal priorities without compromising productivity (Kossek and Ozewwi, 2018).

Moreover, flexibility in work plans includes provisions for telecommuting, part-time roles, and temporary leaves, especially beneficial for employees in remote areas or those managing complex family obligations. Ultimately, flexible working plans serve as strategic

tools for organisations to retain talent, increase productivity, and promote a supportive work culture (Bukola *et al.*, 2023).

Shift Duty

Shift duty is a type of flexible work arrangement in which employees work in scheduled time blocks to ensure continuous operations, particularly during non-standard hours such as 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. This system requires proper handovers and rotation to maintain efficiency and performance. It is commonly employed in sectors that operate 24/7, such as healthcare, emergency services, security, utility services and production (Wagner, 1988; O'Connell and O'Sullivan, 2016). Shift duty contributes to enhanced supervision, increased productivity and effective service delivery.

In healthcare, for instance, both doctors and nurses work in rotating shifts: morning, afternoon and night to provide uninterrupted care. This arrangement not only supports organisational goals but also enhances employee satisfaction by offering flexible scheduling options (Badia, 2023).

Despite the benefits of this system, individual experiences vary by age, with common negative effects including physical fatigue, sleep disorders and depression. These issues can be mitigated through flexible scheduling aimed at improving work and life balance (Skýpalová *et al.*, 2022).

Compressed Work Weeks

The concept of a compressed work weeks dates back to the early 1970s as an alternative to the traditional five-day, 40 hours work schedule (Mauhew, 2019). It involves working the same number of hours over fewer days, for instance, four 10 hours days, three 12 hours days, or nine-hour days Monday to Thursday with an alternating Friday off. This model is particularly suitable for organisations that operate around the clock, such as hospitals, as it allows for extended service hours and more efficient use of resources by reducing frequent start-ups and shutdowns (Werner *et al.*, 2019).

Compressed workweeks can enhance employee satisfaction, work life balance and retention by providing longer periods of personal time during the week. However, challenges may arise, including difficulties in scheduling training, meetings, and arranging cover during unplanned absences such as illness. Extended shifts can also raise concerns related to occupational health and safety. Therefore, before implementation, it is essential for organisations to assess the suitability of each department or role for this type of flexible arrangement (Durairaj, 2017).

Commitment

Commitment is defined as a steadfast dedication to a particular cause or responsibility, characterized by perseverance and a sustained effort despite challenges or setbacks. It embodies a psychological attachment and a sense of obligation that drives individuals to prioritize their goals and uphold their responsibilities over time (Allen and Meyer, 1991; Abbais and Ahmed, 2023).

In the healthcare context, particularly among doctors in hospitals, commitment is crucial for delivering high-quality patient care. Physicians' commitment extends beyond technical proficiency to encompass emotional resilience, continuous professional development, and the ethical responsibility to serve patients effectively. This dedication is essential for managing the demanding workload, complex decision-making, and the high-stress environment typical in clinical settings (Fazekas *et al.*, 2024).

Thus, the commitment demonstrated by doctors is foundational to the operational success of healthcare institutions. It not only ensures adherence to clinical standards but also fosters

trust and compassion in patient care, reflecting the professional and moral obligations inherent in the medical vocation (Mohammadnejad *et al.*, 2024). Such commitment ultimately contributes to improved patient outcomes and the overall sustainability of health services.

Theoretical Framework

Expectancy Theory

This study is anchored in Expectancy Theory, developed by Victor H. Vroom in 1964, which posits that individuals are motivated to act based on the expected outcomes of their actions. According to the theory, motivation is a function of three key elements: expectancy (the belief that effort will lead to performance), instrumentality (the belief that performance will lead to a desired outcome), and valence (the value an individual places on that outcome) (Van Eerde and Thierry, 1996). In the context of the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Expectancy Theory provides a useful lens through which to examine the relationship between flexible work plans and employee commitment, particularly among medical doctors. These professionals are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment when they perceive that their efforts, such as dedication to clinical duties, are recognised and rewarded through organisational practices that align with their personal and professional needs (Van Eerde and Thierry, 1996).

A flexible working plan can be seen as a form of instrumental and valued reward. When medical doctors are offered work flexibility that supports work-life balance, they are more likely to feel that their organisation understands and values their personal needs. This perceived alignment between effort and reward increases the likelihood that they will remain committed to the organisation (Ondieki *et al.*, 2017). From this theoretical standpoint, flexible work arrangements are not merely operational decisions but strategic tools that can influence motivation and commitment. By integrating flexible work policies that accommodate the individual needs of medical professionals, the hospital enhances the expectancy that personal well-being is linked to professional performance, the instrumentality that high performance will be rewarded with valued outcomes, and the valence of such outcomes in the eyes of employees (Van Eerde and Thierry, 1996).

Thus, Expectancy Theory supports the notion that a well-structured flexible work plan can serve as a motivational driver, promoting organisational commitment among medical staff. In turn, this heightened commitment is expected to reflect in the quality of healthcare service delivery, as motivated health professionals are more likely to demonstrate dedication, responsibility, and improved patient care.

Empirical Review

Kangogo and Wanarnbiro (2019) conducted a study on flexible working schedules and organisational commitment within security companies operating in Kenya, employing a descriptive survey research design. Their findings revealed a significant relationship between flexible working schedules and organisational commitment among these companies. They concluded that flexible working schedules can determine organisational commitment in security companies and recommended that such flexibility should be considered as a strategy to enhance employee commitment. Similarly, Wilela (2021) undertook a survey to investigate the impact of flexible working arrangements on organisational success in private hospitals in Italy. The findings demonstrated that flexible working arrangements significantly influenced the success of these hospitals. Based on this, the researcher concluded that flexible working arrangements can determine organisational success in private hospitals and recommended that all private hospitals operating in Italy should support and encourage flexible working arrangements to boost organisational success.

In a related study conducted in Akwa Ibom State general hospitals, Nwoko *et al.* (2025) examined the impact of flexible work practices on nurses' affective commitment, focusing on job sharing and flexi-time arrangements, utilising a survey research design. They found that job sharing had a significant positive influence on nurses' affective commitment, while flexi-time also indicated a significant positive effect. Consequently, the authors concluded that flexible work arrangements significantly influence nurses' affective commitment and recommended that hospital management promote job sharing and allow flexi-time options as strategies to enhance nurses' commitment to their duties.

Furthermore, Etim *et al.* (2024) examined the effect of work-life balance on employee commitment within the Nigeria Immigration Service, Akwa Ibom State Command. Using a survey research design, their findings revealed a statistically significant effect of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) on employees' job commitment. Additionally, wellness programmes also showed a significant impact on job commitment. They concluded that work-life balance significantly affects employee commitment in regimented organisations such as the Nigeria Immigration Service and recommended that managers should consider implementing work-life balance practices to improve employee commitment. Moreover, Mgbemena *et al.* (2022) conducted research on flexible work and employee performance in manufacturing companies in Nigeria, adopting a survey research design. Their findings indicated that flexible work, proxied by shift work, exerted a significant influence on employee performance. Thus, the researchers concluded that shift work, as a component of flexible work, can positively influence employee performance in manufacturing companies and recommended that such companies prioritise flexible work, particularly work shifts, to enhance employee performance.

Additionally, Oyio *et al.* (2022) investigated the influence of flexible work practices on employee performance in business organisations in Abuja, Nigeria, using a survey research design. Their findings showed that flexibility in work practices positively influenced employee performance. Based on these results, the researchers concluded that flexible work practices are powerful enough to positively affect employee performance in business organisations and recommended that businesses adopt flexible scheduling to improve employee attitude and performance.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was adopted for this study. This approach enabled the researcher to efficiently elicit responses from the target respondents and facilitated generalizations about the larger population. The survey research design was adopted for this study. This approach enabled the researcher to efficiently elicit responses from the target respondents and facilitated generalizations about the larger population. The population of this study consisted of 531 medical doctors working in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo (see Table). These figures were obtained from the official nominal rolls of the hospital. The University of Uyo Teaching Hospital was selected because it is the largest healthcare provider in the state, underscoring the importance and relevance of the data collected. To determine the appropriate sample size for the study, Taro Yamane's formula was employed. This technique provides a simplified method for calculating sample sizes from a known population, ensuring the results are statistically significant while maintaining manageable data collection. The formula is expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n	=	Sample size
N	=	Population
e	=	Sampling error (0.05)

$$1 = \text{Constant}$$

Applying the formula:

$$\frac{531}{1+531(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{531}{1+531(0.0025)} = \frac{531}{2.3275}$$

$$= 228.14$$

$$= 228$$

The sample was distributed proportionately across all groups based on population size, after which respondents were selected using convenience sampling technique, (see table 1)

Proportionate allocation formula:

$$H = \frac{y \times (n)}{N}$$

Where;

H = Proportionate Sample Size

y = Number of elements for each stratum

N = Total Population Size

n = Representative sample size derived for the study

Table 1: Population Distribution and Sample of Medical Doctors at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital

S/N	Cadre of Medical Doctors	Population of Medical Doctors	Allocated Sample
1.	Consultants	45	19
2.	Honorary Consultants	68	29
3.	Sectional Consultants	9	4
4.	Medical Officers	44	19
5.	Registrar	303	130
6.	House Officers	62	27
	Total	531	228

Source: Official nominal roll, University of Uyo Teaching Hospital

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through questionnaire administered to the respondents selected for the study, while secondary data were gathered from the Internet and peer-reviewed journals. The questionnaire, which served as the main instrument for data collection, sought respondents' opinions on flexible working plans and doctors commitment. It consisted of closed-ended questions and used a modified five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). To assess the reliability of the instrument, the test-retest method was used. In addition, Cronbach's alpha was employed to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire, yielding a coefficient greater than 0.7, which indicates an acceptable level of reliability. Convenience sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents for the study. The study hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression analysis with the aid of SPSS (Version 27)

Model Specification

The empirical model was developed for the two objectives/hypotheses in this study as follows

$$CMD=f(SD) \dots\dots\dots 1$$

$$CMD= \beta_0+ \beta_1SDY+ e_1\dots\dots\dots 2$$

$$CMD= f(CWW)\dots\dots\dots 3$$

$$CMD=\beta_0+\beta_2 CWW+e_2\dots\dots\dots 4$$

Where:

CND = Commitment of Medical Doctors

SD = Shift Duty

CWW= Compressed Work Week

β_0 = intercept or regression constant term

β_1 - β_2 = Regression coefficient

e_1 - e_2 = error terms for equations

Presentation of Data, Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2: Analysis of Questionnaire Administration and Response Rate

Designate	Copies of Questionnaire Administered	Copies of Questionnaire filled and Returned	Percentage (%)
Consultants	19	11	57.89
Honorary Consultants	29	21	72.41
Sectional Consultants	4	3	75.00
Medical Offers	19	10	52.63
Registrar	130	109	83.85
House Officers	27	20	74.07
Total	228	174	76.32

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2025

Table 2 shows that a total of two hundred and twenty-eight (228) copies of number, were administered to respondents. Out of which one hundred and seventy-four (174) copies were properly filled and returned, indicating 76.32% response rate.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of shift duty on the commitment of medical doctors at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

H₁₁: There is significant influence of shift duty on the commitment of medical doctors at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Result on the influence of shift duty on the commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.626 ^a	.392	.353	0.10096

Goodness of Fit ^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	33.274	1	931.101	3.012	.000 ^b
	Residual	41.381	172	140.281		
	Total	74.655	173			

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.002	.306		0.031	.000
	Shift duty	.713	.338	.446	2.109	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Medical Doctors' Commitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), Shift duty

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2025

Table 3 presents the results of a regression analysis examining the influence of shift duty on the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State. The model summary shows an R² value of 0.392, indicating that shift duty accounts for 39.2% of the variation in doctors' commitment. The regression model demonstrated a good fit, with a statistically significant result at the 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$). This confirms that shift duty has a significant positive influence on the commitment of medical doctors in the hospital. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis which stated that shift duty has no significant positive influence on doctors' commitment was rejected. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis, asserting a significant positive influence of shift duty on medical doctors' commitment, was accepted.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: Compressed work weeks have no significant influence of on the commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

H_{i2}: Compressed work weeks have a significant influence on the commitment of medical doctors at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Result on the influence of Compressed Work Week on the commitment of medical doctors in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.596 ^a	.355	.319	0.0329

Goodness of Fit ^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	37.371	1	1012.022	3.163	.000 ^b
Residual	32.246	172	104.107		
Total	69.631	173			

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	1.218	.326		1.005	.000
	Compressed Work Week	.622	.236	.463	2.636	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Compressed Work Week

b. Dependent Variable: Medical Doctors' Commitment

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2025

Table 4 present results of regression analysis evaluating the impact of compressed work week on the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital in Akwa Ibom State. The model summary shows an R² value of 0.355, indicating that 35.5 percent of the variation in doctors' commitment is explained by the compressed work week. The model demonstrates a good fit and is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, as indicated by a p-value less than 0.05. This confirms that the compressed work week has a meaningful and statistically significant influence on the commitment of medical doctors. Based on this result, the null hypothesis, which stated that a compressed work week has no significant positive influence on doctors' commitment, is rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis, which states that a compressed work week has a significant positive influence on the commitment of medical doctors, is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of hypothesis one indicates that shift duty significantly influences the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, with 39.2% of the variation in commitment explained by shift duty (R² = 0.392, p < 0.05). This suggests that the structure and management of shift schedules play an important role in shaping doctors' dedication to their work. The positive and significant relationship supports existing research linking work schedules to employee engagement and performance. For instance, Nwoko *et al.* (2025), in their study of Akwa Ibom State general hospitals, found that flexible work practices such as job sharing and flexi-time had a significant positive effect on nurses' affective commitment. They concluded that flexible work arrangements enhance healthcare workers' commitment and recommended their adoption to boost job dedication. Similarly, Mgbemena *et al.* (2022) reported that shift work, as a form of flexible work, significantly influenced employee performance in Nigerian manufacturing companies. Their findings emphasized the importance of well-structured shift systems in improving work outcomes. Together, these studies reinforce the conclusion that well-managed shift duties not only support employee

performance but also foster stronger organizational commitment. Consequently, hospital administrators should ensure that shift duties are structured in ways that promote staff well-being and sustained professional commitment.

Also, the findings of hypothesis two reveals that a compressed work weeks has a significant positive effect on the commitment of medical doctors in the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital. With an R^2 value of 0.355, the model explains 35.5 percent of the variation in doctors' commitment through the compressed work schedule. The statistical significance (p -value < 0.05) confirms the robustness of this relationship. This finding indicates that flexible work arrangements can enhance doctors' commitment by improving work-life balance and reducing burnout. In high-demand healthcare settings, such adjustments are likely to increase motivation and job satisfaction. The rejection of the null hypothesis supports the assertion that compressed work weeks meaningfully contribute to employee commitment. This has practical implications for hospital management, emphasising the importance of flexible scheduling as a strategy to strengthen workforce dedication and enhance healthcare delivery.

These results are consistent with previous empirical research demonstrating the positive impact of flexible work arrangements on employee commitment in healthcare and related sectors. For instance, Nwoko *et al.* (2025) found that flexible work practices, including job sharing and flexible hours, significantly improved nurses' affective commitment in general hospitals across Akwa Ibom State. This aligns closely with the current study's conclusion that compressed work weeks, as a form of flexible scheduling, positively influence medical doctors' commitment by fostering work-life balance and alleviating burnout. Similarly, Etim *et al.* (2025) reported that flexible work arrangements increased employee commitment within the Nigeria Immigration Service by promoting a better work-life balance, further highlighting the vital role of flexible scheduling in enhancing job dedication. Collectively, these studies underscore the practical value of implementing flexible work schedules such as compressed work weeks to strengthen workforce commitment and improve service delivery in demanding environments like healthcare.

Conclusion

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that flexible work arrangements, specifically shift duties and compressed work weeks, significantly enhance the commitment of medical doctors at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital. Well-structured shift schedules and compressed work weeks contribute to improved work-life balance, reduced burnout, and increased motivation, all of which foster stronger dedication to their roles. These results align with existing research emphasizing the positive impact of flexible scheduling on employee engagement and performance across healthcare and other sectors. Overall, flexible work practices play a crucial role in supporting staff well-being and sustaining professional commitment, which can positively influence the quality of healthcare delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- viii. it is recommended that the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital implement and maintain well-structured, flexible shift duty systems tailored to the needs of medical doctors. Such systems should incorporate options like flexible start and end times, job sharing, and opportunities for shift swapping to accommodate individual preferences and reduce work-related stress. By doing so, the hospital can enhance doctors' commitment, job satisfaction, and overall performance, ultimately improving patient care quality.

- ix. it is recommended that the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital formally adopt and institutionalize compressed work week schedules as a flexible work arrangement. This approach should be integrated into workforce management policies to promote better work-life balance, reduce burnout, and enhance employee motivation and retention.

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