International Journal of Management Technology, 13(3),55-66, 2026
Print ISSN: ISSN 2055-0847(Print)
Online ISSN: ISSN 2055-0855(Online)
Website: https://www.eajournals.org/
Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK

Impact of Artificial Intelligence, Hybrid Work Models and The Gig Economy On Employee Performance in Nigeria

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doi: https://doi.org/10.37745/ijmt.2013/vol13n35566 Published August 25, 2026

Citation: Anyanwu J.S., Joshua S.S., Usman E.I., Eze U.D., Ezeumenwa C. (2026) Impact of Artificial Intelligence, Hybrid Work Models and The Gig Economy On Employee Performance in Nigeria, *International Journal of Management Technology*, 13(3),55-66

Abstract: *The commencement of digital technologies and evolving labour structures has transformed the modern work structures especially in developing economies such as Nigeria. This study examines the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI), hybrid work models, and the gig economy on employee performance. The research employed a quantitative approach, and structured questionnaires were administered for data collection from employees across various corporate organisations, hybrid work settings, and gig platforms. The findings reveal that AI adopters had positive impact on employee performance by the enhancement of task automation, making decisions and efficiency. The Hybrid work models reveal the flexibility of its users and the improvement in their work-life balance. Although there are barriers to communication and social isolation, the model showed increase in motivation. Similarly, the gig economy offers employment opportunities to individual irrespective of their skills, as well flexibility. But no career progression or insurance plans for the uses of this model, no job security and there are no workers' rights. The conclusion of the study and revealed how these models contribute to employee performance, but their effectiveness in Nigeria is limited due to inadequate infrastructure poor digital skills, and weak regulatory structures. The research recommends that organisations including the government and private sectors invest in digital infrastructure, build training centres train employees. The research also recommended policymakers to amend the current polices by protecting gig workers and support other various work structures. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive analysis of the effects of AI, hybrid work, and the gig economy on employee performance within the Nigerian context.*

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, hybrid work, gig economy, employee performance, human resource management, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

In today's time, the work culture has transitioned from traditional work culture due to technology advancements and globalisation (Klaus Schwab, 2016; International Labour Organization, 2021). These technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), hybrid work models, and gig are used as employment systems, adopted by organisations in Nigeria. This shift has remained competitive in a dynamic global economy (World Bank, 2023; PwC, 2022). After the COVID-19 pandemic, this shift to AI through revolutionizing human resource management by automating recruitment, training, and

performance assessment processes are considered to be the ever-increasing competition in today's world (McKinsey & Company, 2021; Deloitte, 2020). Hybrid work models; remote and physical work have equally gained prominence during this time (Microsoft, 2022; International Labour Organization, 2021). Additionally, the gig economy according to World Bank (2019); International Labour Organization (2021) has undergone substantial expansion, providing flexible employment alternatives via digital platforms.

Despite these developments, concerns remain regarding their implications for employee performance, including productivity, motivation, job security, and workplace relationships (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2021; CIPD, 2020). This study seeks to examine the combined impact of AI, hybrid work, and the gig economy on employee performance in Nigeria. Notwithstanding these advancements, there have been raised concerns surrounding these technologies adoption and their effects on employee performance (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2021; CIPD, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The world's work structure evolved over the past years, where workers would leave their homes to their offices and interact face to face with their colleagues every day, but the COVID-19 pandemic changed the work life daily routine, by enabling organisations to change their practices, due to globalisation and technological advancement. Organisations embraced the change and transformation processes especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, specifically Nigeria (Okereafor et al., 2021; Akinwale et al., 2022). The traditional work culture such as the physical presence of employee at work and the centralised office culture had adopted the use of AI in human resource (HR) functions, hybrid work models and the GIG economy. These developments have increased researcher's interest in understanding the implications for employee performance, organisational effectiveness and team cohesion (Adeyemi & Okafor, 2022; World Bank, 2021).

In Nigeria, these models have reduced stress and increased efficiency in duties (Ojo & Adebayo, 2023), but the cons such as poor technology infrastructure, barriers in communication and no team cohesiveness have affected the optimal performance in remote work settings (Nwachukwu, 2022; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021. Challenges such as poor infrastructure, inadequate skills and oversight deficiencies affects performance in Nigeria. These mixed discoveries have highlighted the urgency to evaluate the effectiveness of flexible work structures in Nigeria. Traditional practices namely; recruitment and selection, training and performance management have all been replaced with new technologies like AI in HR functions, but concerns around job placement and security, poor regulatory framework.

Skill gaps, etc, has a negative effect on the employee's performance and lowers morale. (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021). Flexibility, platform-based work and short- term contracts are characterised in the gig economy, where organisation's findings and employee efficiency gives valuable insight on the effect on employee performance.

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CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Hybrid Work Model: During the covid 19 pandemic, many employers quickly implemented this type of hybrid work structure, a model where one work remotely form the comfort of their homes, the pandemic impact had affected the global economy forcing many employers to switch to this model due to government restrictions (Lund, Madgavkar, Manyika, Smit, Ellingrud & Robinson, 2021; Tran, 2022, even the Public sectors had to adapt to this working remote structure. Hybrid work model gained fame during the pandemic and its' structure incorporates performing tasks or duties for an employer either in the library, at home or local café, in an employee's schedule (Hopkins & Bardoel, 2023). This type of work structure favours the worker due to its flexibility and gives the worker some level of control and work life balance as well independence (Hopkins & Bardoel, 2023). This type of flexibility is called flexible hybrid work model (Vidhyaa & Ravichandran, 2022), a model where an organisation builds trusts with workers, giving them freedom to choose where to work. The result of this type of arrangement produces happy satisfied workers, leading to high performance and efficient workers (Davidescu et al; 2020). It is a win-win situation for both the organisation and their employees (Malatjie et al., 2021; People in Government Lab,2022). Although companies are moving towards this trend, Sokolic (2022) believes that there are trials and errors using this model structure such as social isolation and lack of job visibility where only few employees have access to information. On the long run, this could lead to the detriment of their careers, promotions and opportunities to grow, then job dissatisfaction.

The Gig Economy: Due to technology advancement, people find it a lot easier to seek employment and connect to recruiters directly without hassle. After the Covid 19 pandemic, there have been an increase interest of individuals to work remotely, thereby eliminating the traditional way of work structures. These digital platforms commenced as a result of advance in technology and has transformed the labour market by making it flexible in diaspora (Kalleberg, Arne L. & Vallas, Steven P., 2020; Wood, Alex J. et al., 2020). Digital platforms such as Uber, Bolt, Glovo, and Kwik have since changed the employment relations in third world countries such as Nigeria.

Gig clearly represents short term flexible work arrangements where people operate independently. Employees using this type of technology are seen as efficient, productive and render high quality services within these digitalised mediated platforms mentioned above (Garg et al., 2020). Algorithmic management systems are the type of technology used to evaluate the performance of workers in these platforms. Other systems in the GIG model includes rating mechanisms, automated task allocation and monitoring performance tools are employed data driven tools for performance assessment and evaluation (Garg et al., 2020).

However, the legal and social setbacks that workers encounter by adopting this GIG model is a major problem under Nigerian labour law. Nwambuko's (2025) findings pinpointed the conceptual confusion between workers and their employers and the Nigerian constitution where workers see parade themselves as employees and therefore expecting the employment labour law such as pensions, rights, insurance and job security be administered to them. These platforms see these workers as self-employed contractors, therefore exercise control over their work and earnings (Ogboe & Sowande, 2024). The Nigerian Labour Act excludes the GIG model in Nigeria, recently a case was dismissed in court even with evidence presented, this has raised concern for equity and accountability (Ekuma,

2023). Apart from legal concerns, there are social setbacks that affects workers' productivity, this setback occurs when there are no provisions for career development, no health care or pension scheme in place (Ogboe & Sowande, 2024).

Artificial Intelligence (AI): According to Chukwuka & Igweh (2024), defined AI as the intelligence shown by digital computers, controlled by robot's capacity to perform tasks. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation of Human Resource function have transformed the dynamics of workforce. Currently, organisations in Nigeria use AI drive tools to improve talent acquisition, recruitment and training. Job applicants are screened through an AI system called the automated resume screening, an app that matches the resumes of the candidates to the job roles. This reduces bias in recruitment process. Selected applicants are further trained and monitored using personalised training and monitoring systems, (Minbaeva, 2021). This integration of AI into HR has pros and cons especially the effect it has on employee performance, there is no doubt that this adoption has made recruitment more efficient and interactive (Dima et al., 2024). AI has improved employee development and performance by identifying the employees who lack skills and recommending tailored training programs to bridge that skill, but there are limitations due to infrastructural and skill limitations, especially in Nigeria, being a 3rd world country where we have low power outages, internet network issues (Nwambuko, 2025; Ogboe & Sowande, 2024).

Furthermore, the impact of AI on performance management gauges employee's satisfaction and proactively addresses workplace conflicts (Garg et al., 2020). It provides feedbacks on employee's tasks, assess their attitudes and engagement levels, predicts performance evaluation and through powered decision-making tools assists managers in linking HR initiatives with organisation's goals (Cheng & Hackett, 2021).

Theoretical Review

There are models adopted in Nigeria that transformed working structure during and after the pandemic, these models namely; AI in human resource management, GIG Economy and the Hybrid remote work models are explained via the following behavioral theories below:

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM): TAM is a framework that explains how people adopt and use innovative technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2020). This theory in AI addresses how Human resource activities such as recruitment, selection, training are carried out via new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2020). For instance, organisations use e-recruitment based methods to attract applicants, this is performed via internal technologies such as face book, twitter, LinkedIn (Kucherov & Tsybova, 2022).This social influence has affected consumers perception and acceptance of technology adoption (Al-Emran & Teo, 2021; Dwivedi et al).If users view AI systems as complicated or difficult to use, many will resist the change, thereby causing under performance. TAM explains this dimension of technology at the work place transformation.

Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) – This is an occupational stress model that determines the positive and negative effects of some job specifications on employee's well-being. Studies have revealed that the performance of employees as a result of the two types of this model namely**;** job resources and job demand (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023; Demerouti & Bakker, 2023). Job demands are those job

specifications that need mental or physical effort, causing harm to the employee's wellbeing such as stress or strain, whilst job resources aid employees to achieve their goals and reduces -0he problems associated with job demands and promotes career development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023; Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Bakker et al., 2022; Lee et al., 20. Although recent studies reveal that job demand are flexible and positively affects employee performance, when resources are exceeded, it could cause low productivity, social isolation and techno stress in hybrid work structures (Wang et al., 2022; Ipsen et al., 2021. The JD-R model is used to understand how organisations design their hybrid work structures; flexible work structure that makes employees to be productive even though the world's work structure evolves work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2023; Knight et al., 2024).

Labour Market Precarity Theory: This theory reveals the flexibility of gig jobs which have no security, no insurance plan and unstable income. Gig workers are treated as independent contractors and not employees, they have no rights, no career growth and tend to face financial struggles from time to time (Veen et al., 2020; Sutherland et al., 2020). Although GIG workers depend on the digital platforms, their earnings are unpredictable. This could be stressful and unstable, exposing the workers to a term called 'labour precarity, where the worker's condition is unstable (Montgomery & Baglioni, 2021). There are always uncertainties between GIG workers and employers, the ongoing debate in many countries to issue full employee rights for these workers have been battled in court (Woodcock & Graham, 2022). These workers have no voice I the system and no representatives in the unions, no identity and do not possess the power to negotiate better working conditions for themselves.

Labour Market Precarity Theory describes how gig economy has effect on the right of their workers leaving them with financial challenges which leads to job insecurity and aids in precarious work (Kellogg et al., 2023; Joyce et al., 2024). Organisations are also affected by this on the long run, especially when they face public criticism and may be forced to alter these polices to improve the workers condition. Algorithm is a digital technology that assigns and monitors jobs on platforms given to these gig workers for efficient management of their work, it indirectly controls the worker and abuses their rights.

Empirical Review

This review provides evidence on how hybrid work models, AI and GIG economy influences on employee performance in Nigeria.

AI and Employee Performance: AI has significantly transformed the work structures in Nigeria by improving performance in Organisations. Amaugo(2024) discovered that manufacturing companies such as Dangote Cement Plc and Nigerian Breweries were able save money in operations and still increased their efficiency. Eze (2023) also discovered that telecommunications and bank industries used AI to improve decision making, even though the challenged they encountered on the long run include high costs and limited expertise (Adeyemi, 2023). Even in the banking sector, another researcher known as Osagie (2020) found the AI made work easier and faster in Lagos banks, he also discovered that employees performed better due to the decision support systems and automation technology. Although he insisted that the study depended on the employee's ability to understand and use digital tools effectively. More recent research highlights the positive possibilities of using AI in the Labour market, but also pin points the problems of it's inequality if polices are not put in place.

Ndukwu and Ozuzu (2024) discovered the increase in productivity and the job opportunities AI could open, but when there is no adequate training, it could lead to job displacement.

Finally, Acemoglu et al. (2022) adopted a new module known as 'ABS', this module was gotten from the US Census Bureau's 2019 and was used to investigate perceptions of how AI would affect labour needs and skills, it was discovered that 15% of AI users say that employment levels have increased, whilst 6% say that AI has reduced them. Less than 2% of the organisation saw a decrease in training needs and 41% AI users indicates an increase in training needs.

Hybrid Work Models and Employee Performance: Ayogoi, 2026 discovered how MTN employees were productive and efficient in their jobs and could see how they embraced this model. The study concluded that there was an existence of WLB- work life balance, due to the flexibility of their jobs and this increased motivation and high performance. The study concluded that their job was supported with an effective digital infrastructure that made their work easier. Nwankwo, 2022 concluded that job satisfaction in Nigeria has been improved by employee productivity since AI adoption. Even Okafor & Ibrahim 2022 found that employees are less stressed due to work flexibility, however the no team cohesion, low power supply and no internet or network tends to affect the effectiveness of AI. Nwambuko et al., 2025 research also found similar problems with AI adoption in Nigeria where poor internet connectivity and minimal informal communication was discovered. These researchers found this by surveying 1200 workers from public organisations which revealed the high performance of employees that adopted the hybrid and remote model. On the contrary, there were draw backs at both employee and organisation, these draw backs include 'work isolation'. Many employees may loose their sense of belonging due to isolation, this promotes anxiety, stress and would affect productivity according to Ferrara et al., 2022.When there is no support system from work colleagues, the employee feels isolated and rejected and this leads to depression, thus affecting performance (Ferrara et al., 2022). Slavkovic, Sretenovic &Bugarcic (2022) also indicated that employee performance depleted due to inadequate formal training and lack of skill experience to do perform the task because the organisation did not administer trainings, nor prepare them for the specific work arrangements. The employees lacked the experience to do the job.

Gig Economy: Balogun (2024) noted that gig economy had opened opportunities by creating employment and increasing flexibility in Nigeria. This platform supports entrepreneurship and income generation. Even though Ogunleye (2024) had highlighted the difficulties such as no benefits or insurance, no job security, no legal protections or rights, which poses a threat to employee performance, even Ndukwu & Ozuzu 2024, added that employees in this gig may not committed because they are not treated as independent contractors who have no job security, this reduced their commitment to their job. In addition, recent global research (2026) shows that algorithmic management in these platforms can enhance efficiency but increase work pressure, and reduce the worker's autonomy (Chigbu, 2026)

Literature Gap

The research was limited to Nigeria, and being the developing country from the sub-saharan Africa, studies were conducted within the shores. Some studies investigated how ai, gig and hybrid affected employee performance. There were insufficient empirical data that addresses the infrastructural problems and regulatory challenges unique to Nigeria. The following below has been broken down to

explain the gaps in this literature. Most studies discovered that examining these work structures namely; AI, hybrid work, and the gig economy together was better than studying them alone. This is because each of these work structures worked better when combined together and developed a positive impact on employee performance. When these systems are combined within the modern work system, it increased motivation and employees would be satisfied with their jobs.

In the **G**eographical gap, most of the findings from the literature were centred on developed countries with powerful economies, technological infrastructures, but no enough evidence from Nigeria where there are network challenges, no power supply, different labour regulations. Another Gap is the studies that lack consensus on how these work structures improve the performance of employees, even though there are pros and cons of using them. Ai may improve efficiency when adopted but there is no job security, hybrid on the other hand is known for giving users flexibility but there is no team cohesion. Lastly, gig adopters have income opportunities but there is room for precarity. The theoretical models in this literature namely; TAM, JD-R, and Labour Market Precarity, thoroughly provides the insights on the performance of employees in emerging work environs, but only few studies have linked combined these models. Lastly, the research is limited and tailored to just Nigeria's labour market with inadequate technology and regulatory environment, because it provides actionable recommendations. Therefore, there is policy and practical gap.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach using secondary data. Important literatures that explain the study was reviewed; literatures from reports and publications, journals from the year 2020 to 2026 were all reviewed. The sources used were credible ad relevant to this study. The quantitative research design was employed to examine the connection between using AI, hybrid work models, gig economy, and employee performance, using a survey method.

Number of employees are working in Hybrid roles/ remote, Gig platforms such as delivery services, uber, bolt and corporate organisations such as the banking sector. A sample size of 200 to 400 respondents is ideal using a sampling method known as the stratified random sampling in other to capture the diversity across all the sectors. Through a structured questionnaire, primary data will be collected and put in different sections namely; demographics, hybrid job experience, ai adopters at the work place, gig workers on platform and employee performance. The responses will be measured via a 5-point Likert scale. Techniques used in analysing data include the Multiple Regressional analysis, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The statistical tools namely; SPSS or STATA will be employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

AI: Organisations and users who adopt AI has seen the positive impact it has on employee's performance and efficiency, but there is need for investment and technical expertise.
Hybrid Work: The flexibility and job satisfaction depends on the provision of adequate infrastructure and communication networks. Even though there is a work life balance for the employee, the downsides such as miscommunication and no interpersonal relationships affects the efficiency of the

employee. There are pros and cons using this model, although it saves costs for both the employer and employee.

Gig Economy: This promotes employment opportunities and autonomy, but job security and employee welfare are not put into consideration. Nigeria being a case study has weak labour regulations, power shortage, poor network and limited digital skills to use this type of model.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AI, hybrid work models, and the gig economy have transformed the work culture and enhanced employee performance in Nigeria, but them to perform better, there should be proper policies and technological infrastructures and trainings.

For Organisations, they should do the following: Provide training accredited centres that will be used to train their employees on AI usage, this will improve AI knowledge among workforce; They should reduce isolation for workers who work remotely, by implementing a support system; There should be investment on digital infrastructures and tools that are reliable, this is to support employees who are in the hybrid work structure.

For the Government, the following needs to be done; Government should provide training accredited centres or partner with established centres to train workers on the usage of AI; They should ensure worker's rights are protected at all cost, their wellbeing is paramount, they should have polices in place that protects worker's rights; There should be a national investment in infrastructures such as electricity, internet.

For Future researchers, do the following; Endeavour to explore the impacts of these models on specific industries; Conduct an extensive investigation on the psychological effects of digital work models in Nigeria; Longitudinal research should be conducted.

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International Journal of Management Technology, 13(3),55-66, 2026
Print ISSN: ISSN 2055-0847(Print)
Online ISSN: ISSN 2055-0855(Online)
Website: https://www.eajournals.org/
Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK