PROTEN

People • Process • Technology

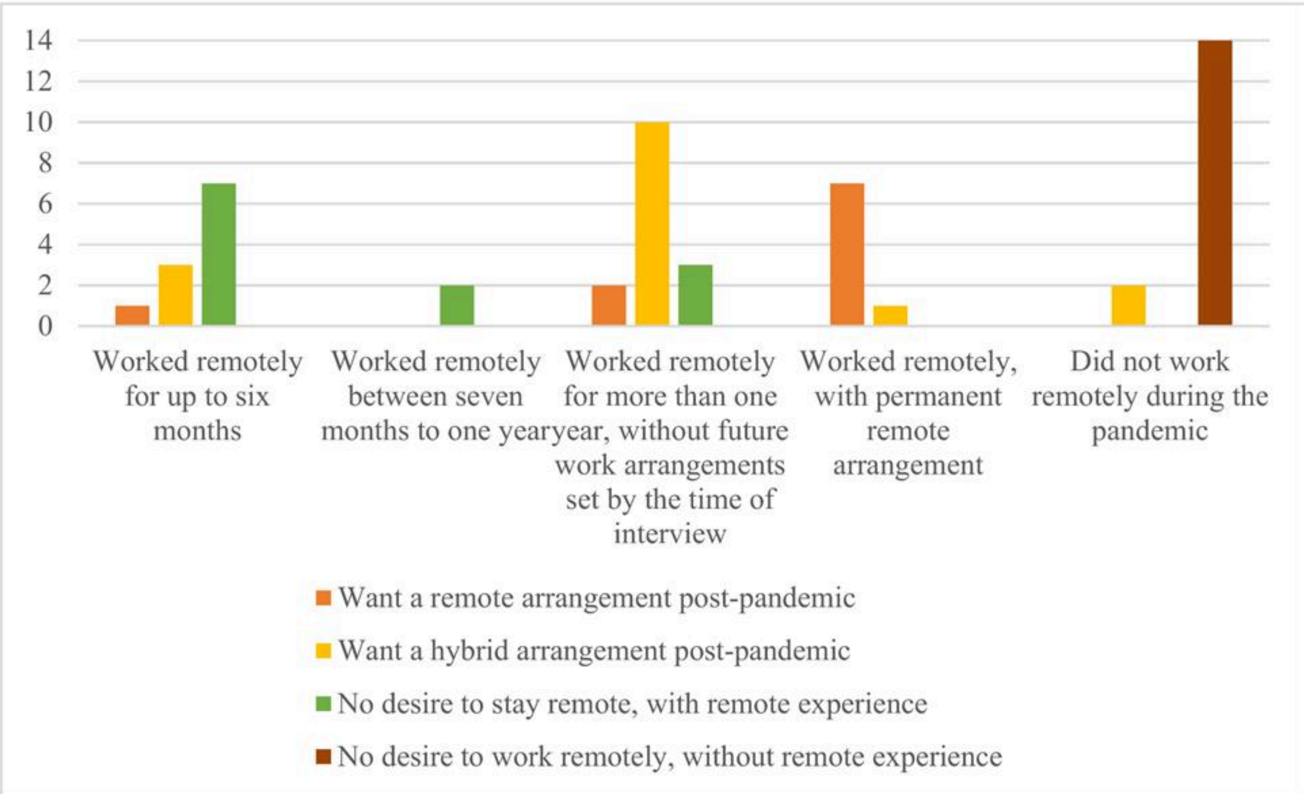
NAVIGATING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION IN ONSITE, REMOTE, & HYBRID WORK ENVIRONMENTS.

Introduction

The shift to flexible work models has been one of the most enduring legacies of the COVID-19 pandemic. Globally, remote work surged from 5% pre-pandemic to peaks of 60% during lockdowns, stabilising at 35-40% hybrid or remote arrangements by 2024. In Nigeria, the transition has been influenced by a growing tech sector, high urban congestion, and economic factors like fuel costs exceeding NGN 800 per litre in 2025.

A 2024 Zoho survey of over 500 Nigerian organisations revealed that while 55% remain fully onsite, 31% have embraced hybrid models and 14% fully remote, reflecting a gradual evolution amid infrastructure challenges such as inconsistent electricity and poor internet access.

Preferences for Remote and Hybrid Work



Source: MDPI

Employee engagement—defined as the emotional commitment to organisational goals—and retention are critical for productivity and business sustainability. Disengaged employees cost economies billions; in Nigeria, with unemployment at 33% in 2020 (rising among youth to 42%), retaining talent is vital for sectors like finance, tech, and oil. This Scenario Analysis compares engagement and retention across onsite (full-time office-based), remote (fully off-site), and hybrid (blended) environments, using global statistics and insights.

Overview of Work Environments

Onsite work involves employees working exclusively at a company office, traditional in Nigeria's formal sector (e.g., banking, manufacturing). It fosters direct collaboration but is hindered by traffic in the major cities (average commute: 2-3 hours) and power outages.

Fully remote work allows employees to operate from home or any location, popular in Nigeria's gig economy (e.g., ride-hailing via Bolt or Uber) and tech startups. It suits Nigeria's 39% internet penetration but is limited by rural-urban divides and connectivity issues.

Hybrid combines onsite and remote days (e.g., 2-3 office days/week), as seen in 31% of Nigerian firms per Zoho. It balances collaboration with flexibility, aligning with preferences for reduced commuting amid economic pressures.

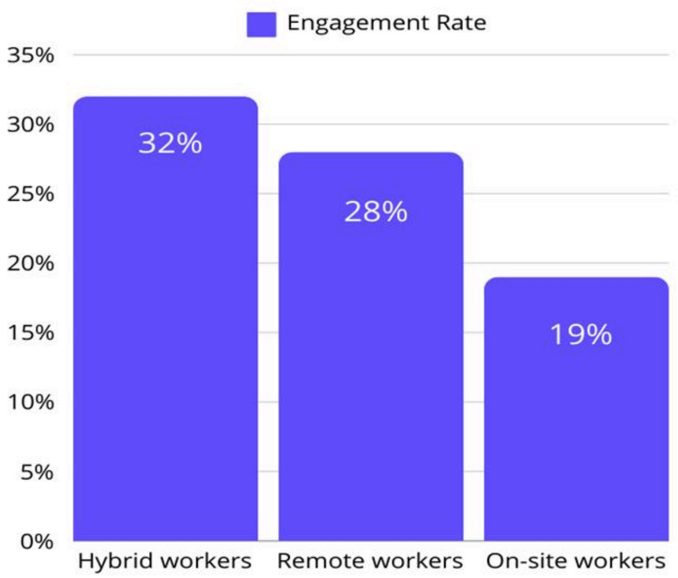
Analysis and Comparison of Engagement and Retention Rates

Employee Engagement Rates

Engagement levels vary significantly by model, with hybrid outperforming others. Globally, Gallup's 2024 State of the Global Workplace report shows:

Work Environment	Engagement Rate	Key Insights
Onsite	**27%**	Lowest due to burnout from commutes and lack of flexibility; in Nigeria, onsite workers report higher stress from traffic and costs.
Remote	**33%**	Higher autonomy boosts focus, but isolation erodes connection; Nigerian remote workers (14% of firms) cite productivity gains but face infrastructure barriers.
Hybrid	**35%**	Highest, combining collaboration and flexibility; 82% of hybrid workers feel more connected and energised. In Nigeria, hybrid adopters see 20% higher morale.

In Nigeria, a Lagos Business School study (2022-2024) echoes this: hybrid workers report 15% less burnout than onsite counterparts, with 90% valuing flexibility for family time amid economic hardships. Onsite engagement suffers from "commute fatigue," with 55% of Lagos workers spending over NGN 10,000 monthly on transport. Remote engagement is strong in tech, but 37% of remote Nigerian workers feel disconnected due to poor internet.



Source: Krisp

Analysis and Comparison of Engagement and Retention Rates

Employee Engagement Rates

Retention is closely tied to engagement, with hybrid models reducing turnover by 25-35%. Global data from Owl Labs and Brookings:

Work Environment	Retention Impact	Key Insights
Onsite	**Baseline (high turnover: 20-25%)**	Rigid schedules increase attrition; in Nigeria, 65% of onsite firms report higher quits due to costs and stress.
Remote	**15-20% reduction in turnover**	Autonomy aids retention, but isolation raises job-seeking (57% of remote workers watch opportunities)
Hybrid	**25-35% reduction in turnover**	Best balance; 75% of millennials/Gen Z (Nigeria's youth bulge) would quit without it. Hybrid Nigerian firms see 20% lower attrition.

Most Effective Model: Hybrid Work

Based on data, hybrid work is the most effective for engagement and retention in Nigeria. It achieves 35% engagement (vs. 27% onsite, 33% remote) and 25-35% lower turnover, per Gallup and Brookings. Globally, 64% of leaders use hybrid, with 90% reporting cost savings (IWG: 50% on real estate). In Nigeria, 31% adoption yields 20% retention gains (Zoho), addressing local pains like traffic while leveraging tech growth (e.g., 39% internet access).

Unlike pure remote (isolation risks) or onsite (burnout), hybrid fosters collaboration (e.g., 2-3 office days/week optimal per Gallup) and flexibility, aligning with 83% employee preference (Statista).

Scenario Analysis: Implications for Nigerian Organisations

Scenario 1: Full Onsite Mandate (e.g., Traditional Banking Sector)

Engagement/Retention:

Employee engagement can drop to as low as 27% in fully onsite work models. Also, a Zoho survey revealed that nearly 65% of Nigerian workers have left their jobs due to rigid work policies, underscoring the critical link between flexibility and retention. For large firms, this trend translates into significant financial losses, as a 20–25% churn rate can cost an estimated NGN 355 million annually in replacement and onboarding expenses, not to mention the hidden costs of lost productivity and institutional knowledge.

Recommendation:

Avoid a full onsite model where possible; instead, transition to a hybrid model for a 20% morale boost.

Scenario 2: Full Remote (e.g., Tech Startups)

Engagement/Retention:

When managed effectively, flexible work models can strengthen employee loyalty, with studies showing a 33% boost in engagement and up to a 15% reduction in turnover. However, the benefits are not without drawbacks. Prolonged remote arrangements have led to 57% of employees actively seeking new opportunities due to feelings of isolation, highlighting the need for intentional connection and support.

Recommendation:

Viable for digital natives; supplement with virtual team-building.

Scenario 3: Hybrid Implementation

Engagement/Retention:

Hybrid work models demonstrate strong potential for boosting organisational outcomes, with engagement levels peaking at 35%, alongside a 25–35% reduction in turnover and an 18% increase in productivity.

Outcome:

Optimal work model; According to Zoom, 90% CEOs said flexibility aids their recruitment.

+234 901 278 1155 info@protenintl.com protenintl.com

Conclusion

In Nigeria's dynamic economy, hybrid work stands out as the most effective model for navigating engagement and retention challenges. With 35% engagement rates and 25-35% turnover reductions, it outperforms onsite (27%, high churn) and remote (33%, isolation risks) models. Amid infrastructure hurdles and economic pressures, hybrid's flexibility—evident in 31% of Nigerian firms—drives productivity, saves costs, and retains youth talent.

By prioritising inclusive policies and digital tools, organisations can harness hybrid's potential for sustainable growth. As global trends affirm, the future is flexible; organisations must adapt to thrive.

How Proten International Can Help

At Proten International, we understand that navigating employee engagement and retention in today's evolving work landscape requires more than generic solutions—it demands strategies tailored to your organisation and your people. Whether you are considering a shift to hybrid models, seeking to reduce costly turnover, or looking to boost productivity and morale, our team provides practical frameworks to help you succeed.

Partner with us to reimagine your workplace strategy and unlock measurable gains in engagement, retention, and cost efficiency. Reach out today to explore how Proten can help your organisation stay ahead.

+234 901 278 1155

info@protenintl.com

protenintl.com

PROTEN
People • Process • Technology