

JOB ENRICHMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATIVE BEHAVIOUR OF TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the association of job enrichment and Organizational innovative behavior of Telecommunication companies in Port Harcourt. Data were gathered from 127 employees of the Telecommunication Organizations with the use of questionnaire. The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (Rho) was used to test the hypotheses. The result shows that job enrichment is significantly associated with employee innovative behaviors. The study concluded on the premise that job enrichment influences the extent to which work behavior can be described as innovative by impacting significantly on measures such as opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing. The study further recommended that Job enrichment practices should be enshrined in the job design to expose the workers to other facets of the workplace; this will eventually enhance their work content, increase their job autonomy and expands their network across the organization.

Keywords: Job, Enrichment, Organizational, Innovation, Behavior, Telecommunication, Companies, Workplace, Port Harcourt.

1. INTRODUCTION

A substantial amount of research has been carried out on the imperatives for workplace innovation (De-Jong and Den-Hartog, 2008; Dorenbosch *et al.*, 2005; Ramamoorthy *et al.*, 2005). Previous research endorses the view that the innovative potential of employees is a salient factor for organizational competitiveness and organizational growth (Dorenbosch *et al.*, 2005; Hammond *et al.*, 2011). In the same vein, organizations rely on their employees to meet the rapid changes and demands within their environment (Ramamoorthy *et al.*, 2005). Thus, employees can contribute in helping their organizations to adapt rapidly to changing environments (Ng and Feldman, 2011).

Job enrichment had been identified as an important antecedent of an employee's creativity and innovative behaviours (Hammond *et al.*, 2011; Ramamoorthy *et al.*, 2005). Also, these studies report that feedbacks from the job significantly influence employees' behaviours to engage in innovativeness (Battistelli *et al.*, 2013). Finally, task variety and task significance was supported to increase employee's performance (Hammond *et al.*, 2011). Despite the strong evidence research on the independent constructs of job enrichment in relation with innovation, a coherent model which addresses this relationship in the context of the telecommunication sector in Nigeria still inadequate.

The current study departs from previous studies as it has focused only on job enrichment, a component of job design as a one-dimensional variable in adding value to its detailed understanding of job enrichment with innovative workers behavior. This study enhances the underlying understanding between motivations from the job to the motivation to innovate (Dorenbosch *et al.*, 2005). Hence the purpose of this study is to ascertain the extent to which job enrichment influences innovative work behaviour in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. In doing this, the study shall pursue the following objectives

1. To determine the relationship between job enrichment and opportunity exploration in telecommunication firms in Rivers State
2. To ascertain the relationship between job enrichment and idea generation in telecommunication firms in Rivers State
3. To determine the relationship between job enrichment and championing in telecommunication firms in Rivers State

2. LITERATURE

2.1. Job Enrichment

Job enrichment is one of the most common interventions to improve performance at the individual level of analysis. [Herzberg \(1967\)](#) offered one of the earliest definitions of job enrichment as he described it as that type of advancement in the environment of the job which may give a worker more challenge, more complete task, more responsibility, more prospect for progression, and more chances to contribute his or her ideas to the organization's development. [Cummings and Worley \(1997\)](#) argue that job enrichment efforts have been discreetly but dependably successful in achieving their intended objectives. Similarly, [Ongori \(2007\)](#) states that job enrichment and employee empowerment coupled with compensation mechanisms have had a positive effect on employee commitment and loyalty. The implication of this argument is that job enrichment is not necessarily a stand-alone as a determinant of employee productivity but never-the-less is an important determinant of such workplace productivity.

Perhaps one of the strongest persuasions in favor of job enrichment as a structural intervention lies in the fact that it meets employee's psychological and social needs besides increasing employee motivation to work, which consequently has the benefit of increasing an employee's work satisfaction levels. The overall effect of such a motivated employee is workplace productivity. The aforementioned argument resonates well with that of [Kopelman \(1985\)](#) who argues that job enrichment influences the quality of employee task performance principally through satisfying an employee's lower level hierarchy needs.

Attainment of employees' higher level needs thus is seen to be predicated on work designs such as job enrichment interventions. Further, it is also important to point out that job enrichment fundamentally meets its objectives through reversing the effects of repetitive tasks which would otherwise lead to employee dissatisfaction [Leach and Wall \(2004\)](#) hence lowered employee productivity.

2.2. Innovative Work Behaviour

Innovation theorists have repeatedly stressed that innovation is broader than creativity and also includes the implementation of ideas ([King & Anderson, 2002](#)). Thus, innovative work behaviour does not only include idea generation, but also behaviors needed to implement ideas and achieve improvements that will enhance personal and/or business performance. Following [Farr and Ford \(1990\)](#), we define innovative work behavior as an individual's behavior that aims to achieve the initiation and intentional introduction (within a work role, group or organization) of new and useful ideas, processes, products or procedures.

The measure of innovative work behavior developed here thus captures both the initiation and implementation of creative ideas. The construct of innovative work behavior is closely related to employee creativity. Creativity is defined as the production of new and useful ideas concerning products, services, processes and procedures ([Amabile, 1988; Oldham and Cummings, 1996](#)). However, some differences between the constructs exist ([Scott and Bruce, 1994; West and Farr, 1990](#)). Unlike creativity, innovative work behaviour is explicitly intended to provide some kind of benefit. It has a clearer applied component and is expected to result in innovative output. Creativity can be seen as a crucial component of innovative work behaviour, most evident in the beginning of the innovation process, when problems or performance gaps are recognized and ideas are generated in response to a perceived need for innovation ([West, 2002](#)). We shall consider the dimensions of innovative work behavior next.

2.2.1. Opportunity Exploration

The realization of something new begins with a person identifying new opportunities ([Amabile, 1988; Basadur, 2004; Parnes et al., 1977](#)). The start of an innovation process is often determined by chance: the discovery of an opportunity, a problem arising or a puzzle that needs to be solved. The trigger may be a chance to improve conditions or a threat requiring immediate response. [Drucker \(1985\)](#) identified seven sources of opportunities, including: unexpected successes, failures or outside events; incongruities or gaps between 'what is' and 'what should be'; process needs in reaction to identified

problems or causes of failure; changes in industrial- and/or market structures; changes in demographics such as birth rates or labor force composition; changes in perception; and, new knowledge. An opportunity is often a serendipitous event and intentionally discovering such events may seem a logical impossibility.

2.2.2. Idea Generation

Idea generation is the next element of innovative work behavior and forms a first step in the exploitation of opportunities. Mumford (2000) suggests that ultimately, the individual is the source of any new idea. To be able to innovate, besides being aware of a need or an opportunity, the ability to construct new ways to address the need is also crucial Kanter (1988). Idea generation refers to generating concepts for the purpose of improvement. The generation of ideas may relate to new products, services or processes, the entry of new markets, improvements in current work processes, or in general terms, solutions to identified problems (Amabile, 1988; Kanter, 1988; Van de Ven, 1986).

2.2.3. Championing

Championing is a relevant aspect of innovative work behavior. Most ideas need to be sold. Although ideas may have some legitimacy and appear to fill a performance gap, for most ideas it is uncertain whether their benefits will exceed the cost of developing and implementing them, and resistance to change is to be expected (Kanter, 1988). Coalition building is often needed to implement an innovation; this involves acquiring power by selling an idea to potential allies. In many cases, the prospective users of a proposed innovation (colleagues, leaders, customers) may feel uncertain about its value and such innovations will often need to be 'sold' to users.

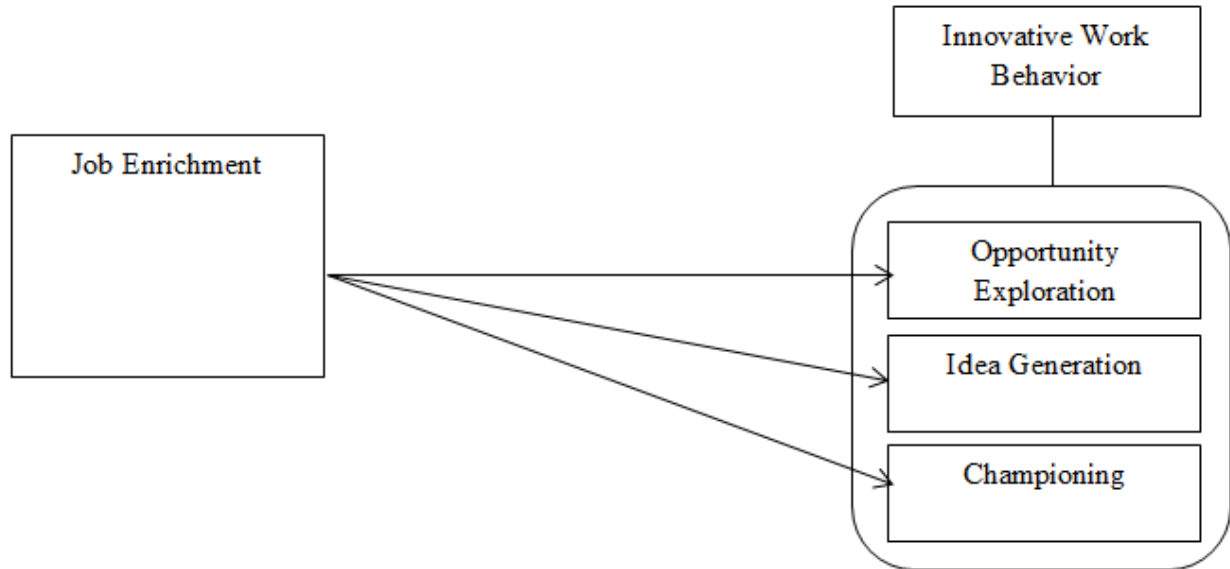
The innovative individual who takes prime responsibility for the introduction of innovations is often not formally appointed, but rather someone who feels a strong personal commitment to a particular idea and is able to 'sell' it to others (Kanter, 1988). A champion has been described as someone in an informal role that pushes a creative idea beyond roadblocks within the organization or as someone who emerges to put efforts into realizing creative ideas and bringing them to life. This can involve the champion's own or other people's ideas. Championing includes behaviours related to finding support and building coalitions, such as persuading and influencing other employees or management, and pushing and negotiating (King and Anderson, 2002; Van de Ven, 1986).

2.2.4. Job Enrichment and Innovative Work Behaviour

Grant (2008) suggests that experiencing a job as meaningful enables employees to make a psychological link between their actions and the potential for a positive outcome for others. Gabriel *et al.* (2016) reported job enrichment as a predictor of job satisfaction. Grant (2008) also suggests that employees are more motivated to expand their effort when they recognize that their action can benefit others and they feel that they can make significant contribution to their work. Moreover, feedback from the job is reported to increase performance and reduces employee's sense of uncertainty at the workplace. Employees who receive signals regarding their performance from their job are more likely to regulate their behaviours towards more adaptive change-oriented action and they would be more willing to engage in innovative courses of action Battistelli *et al.* (2013). Going by these assertions, we hereby hypothesize as follows:

- Ho1: there is no significant relationship between job enrichment and opportunity exploration in telecommunication firms in Rivers State
- Ho2: there is no significant relationship between job enrichment and idea generation in telecommunication firms in Rivers State
- Ho3: there is no significant relationship between job enrichment and championing in telecommunication firms in Rivers State

Figure 1. Operational framework for the relationship between job enrichment and innovative work behavior



Source: Conceptualized by authors (2020) based on [Oldham et al. \(1976\)](#) operationalization of job design and [Dorenbosch et al. \(2005\)](#) operationalization of innovative work behaviour

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study examines concepts which can be considered as premised on theories concerned with social or human behaviour; hence, this study is designed as follows-

Type of study- quantitative

Purpose of study-causal research

Time dimension-cross sectional

Research environment-field research in a non-contrived setting

3.2. Population of the Study

The population for this study comprises a total of 189 full time employees of the main branches of the four telecommunication firms in Rivers State. This comprise of GSM mobile telecommunication firm recognized by the Nigerian Communications Commission in Rivers State, namely: MTN, Globacom, Airtel, and 9Mobile. The population size was sourced through correspondence with the main branches of all four telecommunication within Rivers State.

3.3. Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this study is determined using the Krejcie and Morgan 1979 sample size determination table ([Sekaran, 2003](#)). The table as opined by [Sekaran \(2003\)](#) allows for a convenient way of deriving sample sizes without reference to form convenient way of deriving sample sizes without reference to formulas since such have been duly computed and sizes obtained. Presented in the table 3.1 below is the population and sample size for the study

Table 1. Proportionate sample distribution for the Study

Telecommunication Firms	Staff	Sample Size
MTN	66	44
GLOBACOM	48	32
AIRTEL	41	28
9Mobile	34	23
Total	189	127

Source: Correspondence with main offices, 2020

The proportionate sampling for each of the telecommunication firm is carried out using the Bowley's sampling formula. The formula is specified as follows:

$$n_i = n \frac{N_i}{N}$$

Where:

n_i = Unit sample size

N_i = Unit population

n = Total sample size

N = Total population

3.4. Sampling Technique

The sampling technique to be adopted in this study is the simple random sampling technique which according to [Bryman and Bell \(2003\)](#) describes a form of sampling which is probabilistic in nature and affords all members of the population which fall within the sampling frame of the study an equal chance of being selected and included as units of measurement in the investigation.

3.5. Data Instrument

The instrument for data collection for this study is the structured questionnaire. Primary data for the study will be obtained through personal administration of questionnaire instruments to all four telecommunication firms in Rivers State. [Sekaran \(2003\)](#) describes the questionnaire as a popular and well accepted data instrument within the social sciences given its capacity for capturing data from diverse sources and cases within limited time frames. The instrument adopts the Likert Scaling format for variables specified as follows:

1 = No extent; 2 = Small extent; 3 = moderate extent; 4 = Great extent; 5 = Very great extent

3.6. Operational Measurement of Variables

This study investigates the influence of job enrichment on innovative work behavior in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. The study also examines the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between the variables. In order to achieve this, it is necessary that all three variables are adequately operationalized so as to allow for the application of summaries and quantifiable measurements ([Sekaran, 2003](#)).

This is the predictor variable in this study and it is operationalized drawing from the original work of ([Oldham et al., 1976](#)) on job design. Three indicators of job enrichment were used and scaled on a 5point Likert rating scale where respondents are asked about the extent of manifestations of the indicators. On the other hand, the criterion variable in this study is measured using three measures namely: Opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing ([Dorenbosch et al., 2005](#)). A 9 item innovative work behaviour instrument (3 indicators for each dimension) is used for this study, and the 5point Likert scale was used to ascertain the extent to which respondents identify with the indicators of the variables.

3.7. Validity Test

The validity test for this study will be carried out using the content and face validity. For the content validity, indicators for each variable will be sourced from their operational definitions and descriptions within the content of the theories used in describing or conceptualizing those ([Bryman and Bell, 2003](#)). The instrument was also shown to various scholars and other experts in the field of management for review and necessary corrections.

3.8. Reliability Test

The reliability test for the study was done using the Cronbach Alpha reliability. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient describes a form of internal reliability which emphasizes on data consistency as a result of instrument preciseness and clarity ([Sekaran, 2003](#)). [Sekaran and Bougie \(2010\)](#) furthered observed that argued that the Cronbach Alpha assesses not only the extent of data consistency but the extent to which such instruments can be replicated across other cases which share similar attributes.

Table 2. Reliability Coefficient Table

Variables	Number of indicators	Alpha coefficient
Job enrichment	3	0.902
Opportunity exploration	3	0.893
Idea generation	3	0.888
Championing	3	0.753

Source: Research data, 2020

Table 3.2 is the reliable result for the study. The result for the reliability for the instruments are revealed to be substantial given the high alpha coefficients observed for each instrument (where each > 0.70); hence it can be affirmed that all instruments utilized are clear and have the capacity to be replicated.

3.9. Data Analysis Technique

The tools for data analysis in this study are of the descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. First the demographic data was assessed using simple percentage and frequencies to describe distributions across selected items or categories. Then, distributions for variables were assessed using central tendencies and measures of dispersion (e.g. mean and standard deviation). The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (Rho) was used for obtaining the degree or extent of influence of the dimensions of job enrichment on innovative work behavior. This tool is used in the test for the hypothesized bivariate relationships. The formula is expressed as:

$$R_s = \frac{1-6\sum d_i^2}{N(N^2-1)}$$

Where, $\sum d_i^2$ = sum of squared differences in the ranking of the subject on two variables.

N = Number of subjects being ranked.

It is used in testing hypotheses (1) to (3).

All analysis shall be carried out with the aid of the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 21.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Questionnaire Distribution

The distribution for the results of the field survey is presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 3. Distribution of Questionnaire

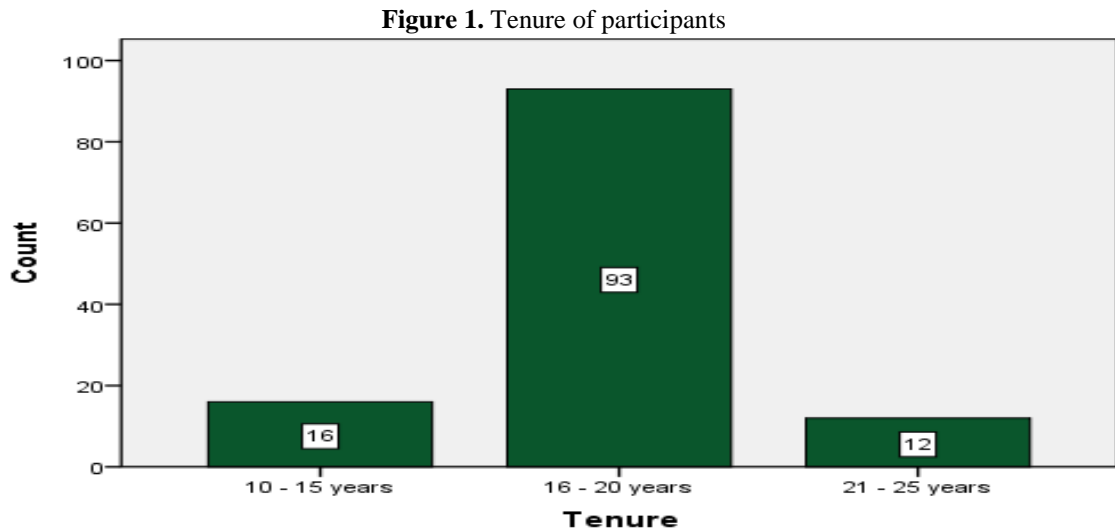
Firms	Distributed copies	Retrieved copies	Used copies
MTN	44	43	43
GLOBACOM	32	32	32
AIRTEL	28	25	25
9Mobile	23	21	21
Total	127	121	121

Source: Research Data, 2020

Presented in table 4.1 above is the result for the field survey of the study. The result indicates that at a successful retrieval rate of 121 the study accounts for a success rate of 95% of the survey work. This suggests that only six (6) copies of the total number of questionnaire copies distributed were actually retrieved.

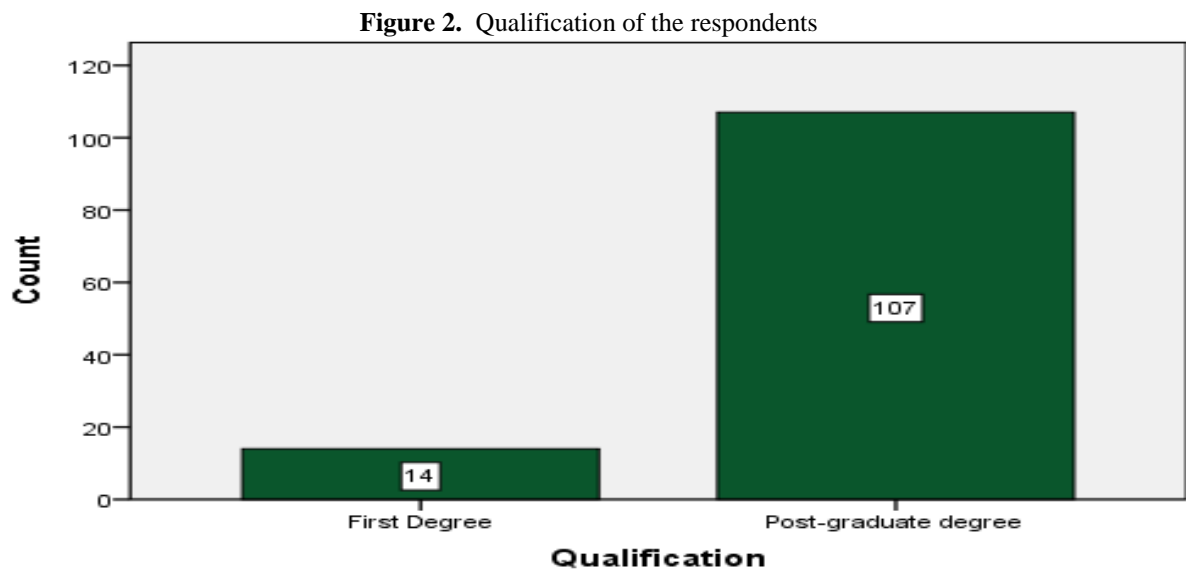
4.2. Demographic Distribution

This section of the study addresses the demographic characteristics of the sample. The data analysis in this section assessed the extent to which respondents were distributed based on identified demographic characteristics. The results on these distributions are presented using bar charts.



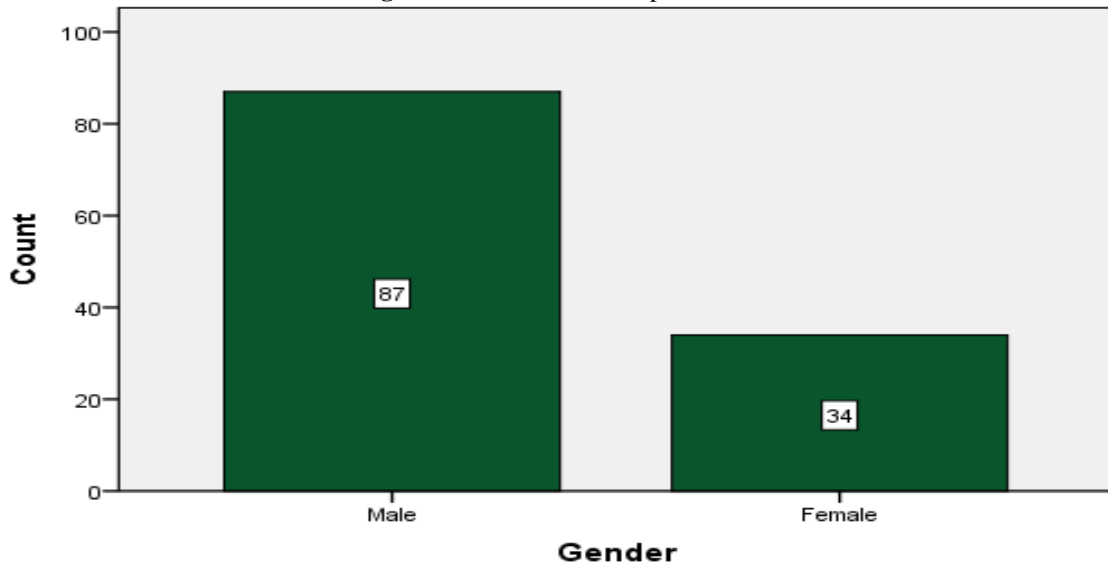
4.2.1. Tenure of the Participants

The first demographic feature addressed is the tenure for the participants of the study. The evidence shows that a higher frequency is observed for respondents who have been with the organization between 16 – 20 years ($n = 93$) followed by the frequency for those who have been with the organization between 10 – 25 years ($n = 16$) and finally the frequency for those that have been with the organization between 21 – 25 years ($n = 12$).



4.2.2. Qualification of Participants

The second demographic feature assessed is the distribution for the qualification of the respondents, with a more dominant percentage frequency at the post-graduate degree level ($n = 107$) this is followed by the distribution for the frequency for the first-degree level ($n = 14$).

Figure 3. Gender of the respondents

4.2.3. Gender of the Participants

The third demographic distribution is for the gender characteristic of the sample. The distribution shows the male gender as having a more significant frequency ($n = 87$), while the female gender has a lower frequency ($n = 34$). This suggests that the organization is dominated by male workers.

4.2.4. Univariate Distribution

The result on the distributions for each of the variables (job enrichment and innovative work behaviour) is presented in this section of the study. The section describes the distributions for each variable by assessing the mean distributions and standard deviations for each. Each assessment is based on three levels of distributions – the distribution for the indicators of the dimensions or measures for each variable, the grand mean distributions for the dimensions/measures of each variable and finally, the distribution for the main latent constructs or variables for the study.

Table 4. Distribution for the indicators of Job Enrichment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Enrich1	121	1.00	5.00	3.6364	1.14746
Enrich2	121	1.00	5.00	3.5785	1.08591
Enrich3	121	1.00	5.00	3.2810	.88716
Valid N (listwise)	121				

Source: Research Data, 2020

Table 4.3 above establishes that the indicators for the dimensions of job enrichment which is the predictor variable for the study. The analysis reveals that job enrichment practices are evident within the identified telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Table 5. Distribution for the indicators of Innovative Work Behaviour

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Explore1	121	1.00	5.00	3.2562	1.04506
Explore2	121	1.00	5.00	2.9587	1.17896
Explore3	121	1.00	5.00	3.2975	1.20861
Ideas1	121	1.00	5.00	2.9008	1.21384
Ideas2	121	1.00	5.00	3.3554	1.10196
Ideas3	121	1.00	5.00	3.3802	1.18502
Champ1	121	1.00	5.00	3.5455	1.06458
Champ2	121	1.00	5.00	3.7686	1.10121
Champ3	121	1.00	5.00	3.2231	1.24825
Valid N (listwise)	121				

Source: Research data, 2020

The distribution as evidenced in table 4.4 above describes the distributions for the measures (opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing) of innovative work behavior as substantial. The result shows that the respondents affirm to the statements describing the features of innovative work behavior as characterizing their firms. The evidence reveals that all indicators for the three measures – opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing are substantial; suggesting that innovative work behavior is well expressed by workers in the telecommunication firms in their activities and role performance within the telecommunication firms. This is as all indicators register mean distributions of $x > 2.00$. The evidence identifies innovative work behavior as a well-recognized and appreciated by the workers in the examined telecommunication firms.

Table 6. Summary distribution for the measures of Innovative Work Behaviour

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Explore	121	3.1708	.86615	-.191	.220	-.626	.437
Ideas	121	3.2121	.86174	-.128	.220	-.816	.437
Champion	121	3.5124	.89343	-.446	.220	-.702	.437
Valid N (listwise)	121						

Source: Research Data, 2020

Table 4.5 above describes the distribution for the summaries on the measures of innovative work behaviour. The result shows that all three measures (opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing) are well evident within the telecommunication firms. The evidence shows that the workers within the identified telecommunication firms' express activities and behaviour which are considered as new and inventive especially in their role duties and dealings with workplace issues.

4.3. Bivariate Analysis

The result on the test for the bivariate hypotheses of the study is presented in this section of the study. A total of 3 bivariate hypothetical statements were tested assessing the relationship between job enrichment and the measures of innovative work behaviour.

The statements are all tested at a 95% confidence interval using the 0.05 level of significance as threshold in the assessment of significant correlations between the variables. The Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient is adopted as the statistical tool in the assessment of the correlations between the variables. The Spearman is considered appropriate given its low emphasis on data parameters such as normality of distribution and the homogeneity of variance, hence its applicability in most social and behavioural related studies.

4.3.1. Decision Rule

The decision criterion for the assessment of the significance of correlations or relationships is based on the probability value criterion where $P < 0.05$ indicates significant relationship between the variables and as such a rejection of the null hypothesis and $P > 0.05$ would indicate an insignificant relationship and as such an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Table 7. Test of correlation for the association of job enrichment and organisational innovative behavior

			Enrichment	Explore	Ideas	Champion
Spearman's rho	Enrichment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.287**	.387**	.574**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001	.000	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Explore	Correlation Coefficient	.287**	1.000	.658**	.434**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.	.000	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Ideas	Correlation Coefficient	.387**	.658**	1.000	.651**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	121	121	121	121
	Champion	Correlation Coefficient	.574**	.434**	.651**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	121	121	121	121

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3.2. Relationship between job enrichment and opportunity exploration

The results indicate that job enrichment has a significant impact on opportunity exploration. The evidence indicates that at a $\rho = 0.287$ and a $P < 0.05$, job enrichment can be described as significantly enhancing the features of opportunity exploration as expressed by the workers within the telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

4.3.3. Relationship between Job Enrichment and Idea Generation

The results indicate that job enrichment has a significant impact on idea generation. The evidence indicates that at a $\rho = 0.387$ and a $P < 0.05$, job enrichment can be described as significantly impacting and contributing positively towards idea generation as expressed by the workers within the telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

4.3.4. Relationship between Job Enrichment and Championing

The results indicate that job enrichment has a significant impact on championing. The evidence indicates that at a $\rho = 0.574$ and a $P < 0.05$, job enrichment can be described as significantly influencing the manifestations of championing as expressed by the workers within the telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Job Enrichment Significantly Influences and Enhances Innovative Work Behavior in Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State

The findings indicate that job enrichment has a significant and positive impact on innovative work behaviour, and thereby enhances measures such as opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing within the specified telecommunication firms in Rivers State. The evidence suggests that practices which translate or reflect job enrichment have a significant effect on the quality of the workers experience and as such contribute towards their capacity for learning and being more innovative. The findings are in line with the assertions of [Ongori \(2007\)](#) who described job enrichment as being essential for workers innovativeness and identification with the organization.

Other studies ([King and Anderson, 2002](#); [Leach and Wall, 2004](#)) have also prescribed job enrichment as being fundamental and important health of the workers as well as for the overall wellbeing of the organization. [Dessler \(2005\)](#) noted that it does not come at any extra cost as workers are basically apportioned more interesting roles or responsibilities in a fashion that enriches and adds more meaning to their jobs or roles, thus emphasizing on their relevance within the organization.

6. CONCLUSION

The relationship between job enrichment and innovative work behavior is evidenced to be significant based on the data presented from the analysis. Therefore, job enrichment influences the extent to which work behavior can be described as innovative by impacting significantly on measures such as opportunity exploration, idea generation and championing in GSM telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATION

This study in line with its findings and conclusions recommends as follows:

- i. Job enrichment practices should be designed to expose the worker to other facets of the workplace that detail not only the changes and additional roles of the employee but also enhance their work content and expands their network within the organization.

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