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Original Article

Worker Empowerment and Innovative Work Behaviour in Multinational Oil and Gas Companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This paper examined the relationship between worker empowerment, using proxies as structural and psychological empowerment and innovative work behaviours of employees. The sample size of 60 workers from three (3) major multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. A purposive sampling technique was adopted in sampling the companies, and the workers were randomly sampled. Kendall's tau-b test statistic was used in analyzing the collected data through the distribution of a structured questionnaire. The study infers that both structural and psychological empowerment will prompt an increase in employees' problem-solving skills and creativity, respectively. Following this finding, it was recommended that multinational oil companies in Port Harcourt should adopt a system that will properly empower workers both structurally and psychologically (through effective communication, encouraging worker development, worker participation in decision-making and delegation of authority) so as to attain the desired innovative work behaviours in an organization.*

Keywords: *Creativity, Empowerment, Innovative Work Behaviour, Problem-Solving Skills, Psychological, Structural.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumers and suppliers are more informed because of the wave of globalization, resulting in changes in shape and trends in needs and demands (Xerri & Brunetto, 2011), resulting in a stir in the method of production, ethical standards, workers' aspirations and organizational practices in order to remain competitive. On this premise, Zawislak and Marines (2008) adjudged that in order to remain competitive, organizations' strategies must be innovative so as to meet international standards that will support good corporate image and patronage. In as much as workers are the main assets of an organization, their behavior is what defines their productivity, performance and a host of other necessary organizational growth factors (Yuan & Woodman, 2010). In the same vein, it was noted that organizations of today need workers who can easily devise solutions to organizational challenges innovatively (García-Goñi, Maroto, & Rubalcaba, 2007).

Innovative work behavior is individual employees' behavior that is performance-driven through the generation of new ideas or solutions to organizational challenges (Yuan & Woodman, 2010). Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson (2009) averred that innovative work behaviours are geared towards the initiation or generation of an idea (possibly from past experiences), introducing the newly thought idea or solution, and applying the idea or solution. Furthermore, they noted that most organizations today fail because workers lack the capability to act innovatively. Janssen (2004:12) averred that behaving innovatively is central to "the production of usable products, processes, or services that originate from the identification of problems and generation of ideas".

Similarly, Yidong and Xinxin (2013) noted that workers could be involved in an array of behaviors or combinations of varying work behaviors, but for organizational growth and development, only innovative work behaviours should be encouraged. Furthermore, they mentioned that in order to attain these behaviors, employees need to assume and take responsibility for their actions, which can come through worker empowerment. On the above conception of worker empowerment, Baird and Wang (2010) advanced that for the maintenance of higher levels of productivity and performance, worker empowerment must be one of the key concepts that will be in place organizationally. Furthermore, they mentioned that companies that motivate their workforce stand the chance of accomplishing and attaining their set organizational goals and objectives that will grant them the needed competitive advantage.

Voegtlin, Boehm and Bruch (2015:9) explained that "Worker empowerment is one of the compelling methods for expanding efficiency in worker and the ideal utilization of both individual and group capabilities so as to accomplish organizational objectives". This implies that workers' empowerment is a procedure wherein, through the turn of events, it helps extend the capacities of workers and groups and challenges them for consistent work improvement and greater performance responsibility. Following the foregoing line of discussions, worker empowerment has an exceptional centrality because of its

link to significant organizational development issues, such as, motivation, collaboration, and the participatory decision-making processes and so on and so forth.

As proposed by "Wilkinson (1998), Although empowerment is frequently linked to the redistribution of power, in reality, it is typically viewed as a type of employee involvement that is created by management with the goal of fostering dedication and entangling employee contributions to the company." (Ollikainen & Varis, 2006:27). A progressively expressed definition by Baird and Wang (2010) sees worker empowerment as liberating somebody from thorough control by directions, approaches, and requests and giving the individual an opportunity to assume responsibility for his/her thoughts, choices, and actions. "Its purpose is to make hidden resources available that the organization and the individual would not otherwise be able to access." (Melhem, 2004:13).

Giving someone the authority and accountability to make decisions that impact their work is another way to empower them. They accept accountability for their deeds and labor without being burdened by insignificant bureaucratic formalities that rob productivity and squander time (Ollikainen & Varis, 2006). Giving someone power, allowing them to reach their full potential, and recognizing their involvement in their work and their enrichment in it in numerous ways are all parts of empowerment. Organizations are now searching both domestically and internationally for these assets to supplement their current ones, as the innovation process demands a greater variety of knowledge, skills, and resources (Caloghirou, Kastelli & Tsakanikas, 2004).

Fagerberg (2005) observed that businesses are looking for efficient ways to use the knowledge, skills, and dedication of their personnel within their borders to fuel their innovation efforts. Workers whose previous responsibilities involved applying innovation are being urged to take the initiative to look for fresh approaches to workplace issues (Kesting & Ulhøi, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Individuals that exhibit innovative behavior at work have a direct impact on an organization's inventiveness and success because innovation is increasingly recognized as an organizational-wide function (Laursen & Foss, 2005). This study examined the relationship between worker empowerment and innovative work behavior in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt as conceptualized in fig. 1 and is guided by the following research objectives and hypotheses;

i. To ascertain the relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skills in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.
ii. To examine the relationship of structural empowerment and creativity in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.
iii. To ascertain the relationship of psychological empowerment and problem-solving skills in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.
iv. To examine the relationship of psychological empowerment and creativity in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

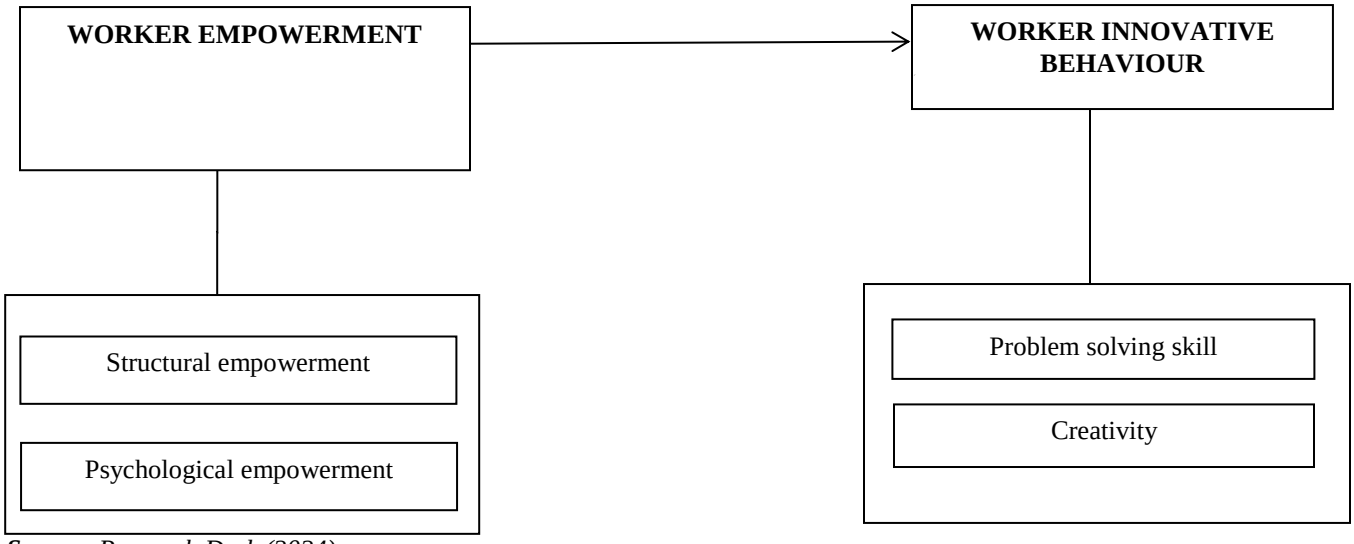
Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skills in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and creativity in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and problem-solving skills in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and creativity in multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework



Source: *Research Desk (2024).*

II. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

A) Employee Empowerment

According to Meyerson and Dewettinck (2012), employee empowerment focuses on fostering motivation, trust, and participation in decision-making. An employee is more likely to be driven, devoted, and content when they have the authority to make decisions. They are also more likely to help satisfy client needs (Saif & Saleh, 2013), and as such, they feel empowered. According to Jacquiline (2014), empowering employees allows them the freedom to handle routine work tasks. Employee empowerment strategies and procedures are helpful in bolstering belief because they give subordinates a sense of support and boost their self-assurance (Barsi, Ziglari, & Abadi, 2013).

Customer happiness, quality enhancement, and organizational performance are all significantly impacted by employee empowerment, as per Mukwakungu, Mankazana, and Mbohwa (2018). They reach the conclusion that since good working conditions boost productivity, organizations should focus on the workplace. Nadeem et al. (2018) assert that there is a strong correlation between staff empowerment and organizational effectiveness. According to Celik et al. (2014), organizations in Turkey's Konya Organized Industrial Zone are more inventive and creative when their employees are empowered. They came to the conclusion that managers should use a systematic strategy to empower individuals since it simultaneously fosters organizational creativity and innovation. Employee empowerment, according to Hunjra, UlHaq, Akbar, and Yousaf (2011), fosters success, productivity, and company growth.

According to Stark (2005), there are six advantages to empowering employees: (a) they feel appreciated; (b) they can make better decisions; (c) they feel more responsible for the decisions they make; (d) they take on future problem solving; (e) morale and motivation rise; and (f) managers can contribute in other ways. Spreitzer (1995) distinguished two outcomes of empowerment, managerial effectiveness and creative behaviors, in a study of views of empowerment at the management level (Turner, 2006). Employee empowerment, according to Kumar and Kumar (2017), is a motivational method that encourages people to feel satisfied with their work and organization. They go on to state that employees who feel empowered are satisfied with the training they get, the opportunities for personal growth, staff gatherings, engagement in different events, and the respect given to their ideas and perspectives. According to existing research, "employee empowerment has a direct impact on both job satisfaction and employee performance" (Meyerson & Dewettinck, 2012, 7; Wadhwa & Verghese, 2015). As a result, management should inform all employees about the company's strategic direction in order to track business performance.

Numerous factors support the strategic decision to empower employees. According to Turner (2006), there are two categories for these: "(a) a moral responsibility for the workforce's well-being, or (b) the belief that empowerment will directly or indirectly enhance the financial bottom line." One of the most significant advantages of putting an empowerment project into action is that an empowered workforce is more flexible and adaptive to the outside world. "This alignment, combined with increased flexibility and greater autonomy, allows workers to solve their own issues and work with customers and suppliers to

meet and exceed expectations" (Turner, 2006, 9). Empowerment is viewed from two perspectives: "Structural empowerment" and "Psychological empowerment":

B) Structural Empowerment

It includes organizational frameworks, processes, and policies that give workers more freedom to decide for themselves and to have a say in how they do their jobs (Mills & Ungson, 2003; Greasley et al., 2008). The empowerment structural dimension sees empowerment as a power redistribution model in which cooperation and trust are generated by power equality. Scholars have recognized as empowering organizational practices and structures those that transfer power through the development of knowledge and skills, information availability, resources, support, and accountability.

The ability to learn and develop, as well as the availability of resources needed to complete tasks, assistance, and information access, are other organizational structures that foster empowerment. Formal power originates from jobs that give discretion and are essential to the organization's mission, which makes them easier for employees to obtain. (Kanter, 1977). According to Kanter (1977:18), "a flattening of hierarchy, decentralization, and increased employee participation results in empowerment." Conversely, "strong networks among peers, superiors, and other organizational members are acknowledged as conferring unofficial authority on employees due to their heightened access to empowering structures."

C) Psychological Empowerment

The content of psychological empowerment theories involves identifying the primary characteristics of empowerment, the motivations for implementing such practices, and the conditions that facilitate them (Yulk & Becker, 2006). Psychological empowerment is "conceptualized as the increased task motivation that results from an individual's positive orientation to the work role" (Yulk & Becker, 2006, 211). There are four characteristics of empowerment: impact, meaningfulness, competence, and choice. A person's feeling of empowerment increases with their "scores" in each of these areas (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Yulk & Becker, 2006). According to Thomas & Velthouse (1990, 9; Yulk & Becker (2006), meaningfulness is "about the extent to which an individual values a given task, and that regarding his own values and norms." "The degree to which an individual possesses the necessary skills and qualifications to accomplish the job's tasks and activities" is what competence is defined as. According to Yulk and Becker (2006):211, choice "refers to the causal responsibility for a person's actions and whether the behavior is perceived as self-determined." "Impact is the degree to which a person satisfies the task objectives, influencing the results of the work." (Yulk & Becker, 2006, 7).

D) Innovative Work Behavior

While development that is championed by innovation occurs inside organizations, it does not occur in a vacuum. Either alone or in gatherings, individuals take part in imaginative exercises resulting in innovation (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby and Herron, 1996). Subsequently, a vital part of the accomplishment of development and innovation in organizations is the imaginativeness of the person. Individual innovativeness is commonly seen in the writing as the space of few specialists, particularly those in the Research and development division (Boonyarit, Chomphupart and Arin, 2010).

As per Bysted and Jespersen (2014) and Boonyarit, Chomphupart and Arin (2010), individual innovativeness is characterized as conduct in which every individual from the association purposely attempts to give novel plans to better their work job or overall organizational objectives. Expressed unexpectedly, the moves people make while playing out their positions are regarded as innovativeness, and they bring about developments that could be profitable for their positions, groups, and the organization overall. Accordingly, this study utilizes the accompanying meaning of "an employee's purposeful presentation or utilization of new ideas, products, processes, and strategies to their work, work unit, or association" is innovativeness as defined by De Spiegelaere, Van Gyes, Vandekerckhove and Hootegem (2012: 324).

As per Amabile, Barsede, Mueller, and Staw (2005), individual innovativeness is a way to smart thoughts or curiosities that can cultivate organizational growth as opposed to an end all by itself. People give valuable thoughts that lead to genuine outcomes. Individual creativity can be seen as an outcome in the execution of new products, processes, working procedures, advances, plans, or promoting methodologies that enhance the firm are this way viewed as innovativeness (Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi, 2015: Anna, Tanya and Koen, 2017). According to Scott and Bruce (1994), Hang and Yang (2011), and Tao and Kang (2012), an innovative way of behaving is the demonstration of making, empowering, and carrying out creative reasoning inside the organization for the objective of individual and the execution of organizational objectives. Innovative behaviour empowers workers to utilize their imaginative perspectives in responding quickly and exactly to changes in client interest.

Individual innovative way of behaving was sorted into five phases by Gu and Peng (2010): opportunity chasing, idea generation, research backing, and utilization of creative ways of behaving. Subsequent to testing it in genuine situations, Huang and Zhikai (2004), Lu and Xiaojun (2007), and others portrayed imaginative conduct in representatives as follows: During the work cycle, representatives think of inventive thoughts or answers for issues, and they will invest energy into the training. One can arrange inner and outside factors as the main thrusts behind a worker's creative lead. Inventive character attributes and the

limit with respect to innovativeness are viewed as inward components, while strong pioneers and an open group climate are viewed as outer elements. The enhancement of employees' innovative efficacy and creative willingness has been facilitated by the interaction of both internal and external elements (Yang et al., 2011).

A study by Sweetman, Luthans, Avey, and Luthans (2011) sought to investigate the reasons behind employees' inventive behavior despite it being risky. The connection between the Self-Monitoring Roles and the Antecedents of Innovative Work Behavior. A total of 350 employees participated in the survey, of whom 270 were chosen to measure innovative work behavior. In particular, we regressed predicted image hazards and gains on the precedents, respectively, using a single ordinary least square (OLS) model. Furthermore, individual variations will have a significant impact on an individual's desire to engage in innovative behavior. Thus, using the self-monitoring theory as a guide, the authors attempted to investigate the significance of individual differences. The findings indicate that creative work practices carry a higher weight in terms of expected image gains, and both expected image risks and gains were statistically significant. Employees that engage in innovative work behavior are those who generate and implement fresh ideas." The multi-step process of creating new concepts to address issues within a business or enhance goods, services, or procedures" is how Carmeli et al. (2006) characterized creative work behavior.

Zehra and Waheed (2017) talked about the extent of innovative work behavior, which goes beyond just coming up with new ideas and includes motivating staff members to put such ideas into practice. The process of innovative work behavior, which includes idea generation, development, and realization, was described by Scott and Bruce (1994) as follows. Innovative work behavior was defined by Janssen (2000) and Zhu et al. (2019) as having four parts: idea generation, concept promotion, and idea implementation. According to Yidong and Xinxin (2013:6), "creative conduct encourages staff members to consider an issue and come up with creative solutions". According to Dugar (2000), employees can play a crucial role in sustaining and igniting innovation, which can enhance an organization's competitive advantage.

E) Problem-Solving Skill

Problem-solving skills are essential for organizational growth since organizations can only adapt to new processes and approaches through problem-solving abilities (Incebacat & Ersoy, 2016). Employers respect workers who can assess situations, solve problems, and make judgments by using critical and logical thinking. Effective planning, mental organization, inventiveness, creativity, and the capacity to generate fresh concepts that enhance the work environment are all examples of problem-solving abilities (Saygili, 2017). Saygili (2017:4) states that "addressing problems is a method of making progress toward a goal when the path to the goal is uncertain". According to Cai and Lester (2010), solving problems is a complex process that necessitates the coordinated use of a range of skills. This process included identifying the problem, choosing the relevant information from the available possibilities, and coming up with a solution after doing the necessary steps.

Similarly, Abazou (2016) said that effective problem-solving requires the ability to recognize an issue, pinpoint its core, weigh various solutions, take action to address the issue, and look for lessons to be learnt. According to Gomez (2017), problem-solving skills include the following: the capacity to recognize problems, evaluate them impartially, make decisions based on the facts, generate innovative and practical solutions, and adhere to a process to resolve them without becoming overwhelmed by them or relying on others to do so. Even the most challenging issues may be overcome with the right mindset and methodical approach.

F) Creativity

Runco (2004) defined creativity as mental processes leading to innovative and adaptable insights, ideas, or solutions. Akinboye (2004) continues by characterizing creativity as a tool that sparks companies' launches professions and generates strong growth and practical outcomes. According to Simonton (2000), "one way humans demonstrate optimal functionality is through creativity." All workers, especially those in Nigeria, need to be creative in order to compete with other countries, claim Al-Madadha and Koufopoulos (2014).

Everyone is creative to some extent; it's not a quality that comes naturally to a chosen few. What counts is how creative each individual is. Creativity can be taught, developed, and exercised through the use of tried-and-true techniques that support and encourage creative abilities, concepts, and outcomes (Amabile, 2004). In order to assess a multitude of possibilities, boost output, and enhance the quality of work, individuals must venture beyond their conventional paradigm for problem-solving. Therefore, creativity is understood as a learned ability that allows us to find new relationships between concepts and events that did not previously seem to be connected, creating a whole new body of knowledge (Pot, Totterdill, & Dhondt, 2017).

G) Worker Empowerment and Innovative Work Behaviour

Research on worker empowerment and innovative work behaviour: The moderating effect of leader-member interchange in Kenyan manufacturing enterprises, by Kanake and Kemboi (2020). The study used a causal-comparative research design and used self-administered paper-based questionnaires to collect data from 470 employees, who were selected using stratified and basic random sampling techniques from a population of 9915 employees in order to create the necessary

sample of employees. The study's findings show that innovative work practices are positively and significantly impacted by leader-member exchange and employee empowerment. The findings also show that there is a strong moderating effect of leader-member exchange on the relationship between creative work practices and employee empowerment.

Yadav, Prakash, and Dalal's (2023) empirical study measured psychological empowerment's impact on creative work practices in relation to leadership empowerment. Using AMOS 21 test statistics, the study used the structural equation modeling technique to assess the hypothesized link between the variables under investigation over a sample of 438 university employees that were gathered using the snowball sampling technique. Empowering leadership was proven to have a large and favorable impact on innovative behavior. Additionally, noteworthy and advantageous was the mediating role that psychological empowerment played between creative work practices and empowering leadership. The study's conclusions give stakeholders helpful guidance when crafting policies to support their workers' creative work practices for the success of the organization.

Marane (2012) studied how innovative work practices are impacted by psychological empowerment. According to him, psychological empowerment is giving employees the chance to come up with ideas by supporting them. The study looked at 341 Kenyan employees in the oil industry. According to the study, a person's perception of the wisdom of authority greatly encourages them to act creatively in order to achieve organizational objectives. Additionally, research indicates that employees who feel psychologically empowered behave in a more inventive manner than those who do not. Psychologically empowered workers are more likely to share their expertise with enthusiasm and take great pleasure in doing their jobs well. Psychologically empowered workers also benefit from autonomy in making decisions and acquiring new skills through trial and error.

III. METHODOLOGY AND CONCLUSION

"Population of a study is defined as the accessible components of the census normally established in numbers" (Baridam, 2001, 45). With specific reference to oil exploration firms in Port Harcourt, this study concentrated on significant international oil and gas businesses operating in the state of Rivers. The main international oil exploration corporations' justification is based on the quantity of oil produced daily in conjunction with the NNPC/Shell/Total/NAOC joint venture in relation to oil exploration quoted. Shell makes up 30% of the quota, Total 10%, and NAOC 5%. "A business that operates and has assets and facilities in at least one country other than its home country is considered a multinational company." These significant international oil and gas businesses were also chosen based on the number of employees, extent of operations, and presence of their corporate structures in Port Harcourt. In Port Harcourt, this equated to three (3) significant international oil and gas corporations. For this study, we adopted the purposive sampling technique. 20 employees from each major oil and gas multinational company were selected. This gave the researcher an accessible population of 60 respondents at the various understudied companies.

Table 1: Table showing Population distribution

S/N	Names of Multinational Oil and Gas Companies	Respondents
1	Total E & P	20
2	Slumberger	20
3	Halliburton	20
		60

The sample consisted of sixty workers from the main international oil and gas corporations in Port Harcourt. Purposive sampling involves the researcher purposefully choosing the sample units to be included in the study because the researcher believes the units to be representative of the intended audience (Baridam, 2001). A structured questionnaire was designed to elicit data from respondents, and the questions adopted the Likert 5-point scaling ranging from 1 – 5 (1 = very low extent, 2 = low extent, 3 = moderate extent, 4 = high extent, and 5 = very high extent). Tables were used to help classify the data into several groups during the analysis of the study. Percentages were used in this investigation, and the findings were appropriately interpreted. Using the statistical software for social sciences (SPSS), Kendall's tau-b test statistic was employed to examine the proposed hypotheses. Since a correlation needs to have been measured and the study topics were posed in an ordinal format, Kendall's tau-b test statistic was selected as the statistical technique.

A) Data Analysis

The answers from the copies of the questionnaire were used to test the study hypotheses that were previously presented in Chapter One. Here, the research hypotheses are discussed and examined.

B) Decision rule

The decision rule which applies to all bivariate test outcomes is stated as follows: where $P < 0.05$, reject the hypothesis on the basis of evidence significant relationship; and where $P > 0.05$, accept the hypothesis on the basis of insignificant

relationship between the variables. The extent of influence is on this basis, assessed using the tau_b interpretations provided by Bryman and Bell (2003) as shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Description of Range of correlation (Tau_b) values and the corresponding level of association

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

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

A positive association is shown by the positive (+) sign in the values of (Tau_b), whereas an indirect, negative, or inverse link is indicated by the negative (-) sign in the values of (Tau_b). Consequently, the direction of association between the two variables may be explained by the tau_b's sign. Our benchmark for assessing the degree of correlation between the variables of the dimensions and those of the measures as understudied is the table above. As the above illustrates, these interactions can be either weak or quite powerful.

Table 3: showing the correlation result between structural empowerment and the measures of innovative work behaviour

			Structural	Prob_Solving	Creativity
Kendall's tau_b	Structural	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.761**	.740**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	60	60	60
	Prob_Solving	Correlation Coefficient	.761**	1.000	.486**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	60	60	60
	Creativity	Correlation Coefficient	.740**	.486**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	60	60	60
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Source: *Survey data, 2024.*

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skills in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.

The statistics gave Kendall's tau-b value of 0.761, which gives from our scaled list a highly marked correlation between the variables under investigation. This suggests that the two variables have a strong association with one another. This shows a strong relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skills in major multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. The probability value from the table is 0.000, which implies that the variables are statistically significant for a 5% level of significance test, owing to the fact that the probability value is lesser than 0.05. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skill in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt", and accept the alternative hypothesis, "there is a significant relationship between structural empowerment and problem-solving skill in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt''.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.

The statistics gave Kendall's tau-b value of 0.740, which gives from our scaled list a substantial correlation between the variables under investigation. This suggests that the two variables have a strong association with one another. This demonstrates how structural empowerment and innovation are strongly correlated in large international oil and gas enterprises in Port Harcourt. Given that the probability value is less than 0.05 and the table's probability value is 0.000, it may be concluded that the variables are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance test. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between structural empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt", and accept the alternative hypothesis, "there is a significant relationship between structural empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt''.

Table 4: showing the correlation result between psychological empowerment and the measures of innovative work behaviour

			Psychological	Prob_Solving	Creativity
Kendall's tau_b	Psychological	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.696**	.649**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	60	60	60
	Prob_Solving	Correlation Coefficient	.696**	1.000	.486**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	60	60	60
	Creativity	Correlation Coefficient	.649**	.486**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	60	60	60
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Source: *Survey data, 2024.*

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and problem-solving skills in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.

The statistics gave Kendall's tau-b value of 0.696, which gives from our scaled list a substantial correlation between the variables under investigation. This suggests that the two variables have a strong association with one another. This shows a strong relationship between psychological empowerment and problem-solving skills in major multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. The probability value from the table is 0.000, which implies that the variables are statistically significant for a 5% level of significance test, owing to the fact that the probability value is lesser than 0.05. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and problem-solving skill in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt", and accept the alternative hypothesis, "there is a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and problem-solving skill in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt''.

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.

The statistics gave Kendall's tau-b value of 0.649, which gives from our scaled list a substantial correlation between the variables under investigation. This suggests that the two variables have a strong association with one another. This shows a strong relationship between psychological empowerment and creativity in major multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. The probability value from the table is 0.000, which implies that the variables are statistically significant for a 5% level of significance test, owing to the fact that the probability value is lesser than 0.05. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt", and accept the alternative hypothesis, "there is a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and creativity in the various understudied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt''.

The study analysis revealed the following discussion.

i. Structural empowerment had a significant and positive correlation on both employees' problem-solving skills and creativity in the studied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.
ii. In like manner, psychological empowerment had a positive influence on both employees' problem-solving skills and creativity in the studied oil and gas multinational companies in Port Harcourt.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of worker empowerment on innovative work behaviours of multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. Worker empowerment was seen from the dimensions of structural and psychological empowerment as focus, while innovative work behaviour was looked at from the measures of problem-solving skill and creativity. The results proved that worker empowerment through its reviewed dimensions influences employees' problem-solving skills and creativity as seen from the quantitative analysis. Therefore, it was reasonable to conclude that worker empowerment positively and significantly impacts employees' innovative work behaviours in the understudied multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt.

A) Recommendations

The conclusion derived from the study point on the importance of worker empowerment in the context of innovative work behavior led to the following recommendations;

i. Multinational oil and gas companies should endeavour to prioritize worker psychological empowerment (via delegation of authority, inclusion in decision-making and goal setting) with the knowledge that it is a prerequisite for enhanced innovative work behaviours in an organization.
ii. In an environment of high-volume activity, multinational oil companies in Port Harcourt should adopt a system that will properly empower workers structurally (through encouraging worker development, effective communication on feedback, and worker incentives) so as to attain the desired level of creativity and problem-solving skills in the employees.

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