

## **WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA**

**Douglas Sampson (Ph.D)**

*E-mail: [Benascoagri@yahoo.com](mailto:Benascoagri@yahoo.com)*

**Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences,  
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Rivers State. Nigeria.**

### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria. The study was operationalized by workplace flexibility as the predictor variable with dimensions of temporal flexibility, locational flexibility, and operational flexibility while the criterion variable was employee performance with measures of innovativeness, waste minimization, goal attainment. Three research questions, three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. In this study, a cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. The population of this study was 2764 employees across 4 major telecommunication firms operating in South-South. For this study, the simple random sampling technique was used. Thus, the sample size of this study is 349 using the Taro Yemane formula. The structured questionnaire was used in data collection. The study used structured questionnaire as a source of data collection. The Cronbach's Alpha indicates a reliability index of .804 indicating that the instrument was reliable. Univariate analysis was done using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, Bivariate analyses was done using Pearson product moment Correlation Coefficient and partial correlation was used to determine the relationship between the variables to test null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The study revealed that there is a strong significant relationship between Temporal flexibility and measures of employee performance of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria, there is a significant relationship between locational flexibility and measures of employee performance of telecommunication in South-South, Nigeria, there is a significant relationship between operational flexibility and measures of employee adaptability of commercial banks in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria. The findings indicate that workplace flexibility framework significantly contributes to the employee performance of telecommunications. The study recommended among others that temporal flexibility should be reinforced through organized shift practice to encourage employee innovativeness.

**Keywords:** *Workplace flexibility, temporal flexibility, locational flexibility, operational flexibility, employee performance, innovativeness, waste minimization and goal attainment*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Competitive marketplaces, like the Covid-19 stay at home epidemic period, needs flexibility in the workplace. Human Resources Management (HRM) methods that encourage more flexible work schedules are used by firms in order to better adapt to the unpredictable environment (Stavrou, 2005). Practices that might increase productivity by using flexible work schedules are referred to as flexible working practices (De-Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). Human resources may be more effectively used if the workplace is flexible enough to allow workers and their time to be allocated in accordance with the nature of the task (Berkery *et al.*, 2017).

Increasingly common in European Union (EU) and OECD member nations, workplace flexibility has lately acquired some traction (Battisti & Vallanti, 2013). Many large-scale surveys, including the European Working Conditions Surveys, the Workplace Employment Relations Series and the Work-

Life Balance Study, as well as a recent comparative analysis by Gialis & Taylor (2016), confirm the enormous popularity of flexible working arrangements in both highly developed countries like the United Kingdom, Italy, and the Netherlands as well as less developed EU countries such as Greece. According to other surveys, flexible working arrangements are becoming more common in several nations throughout the globe, including Japan, the United States and Canada (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2017).

Workplace flexibility was first studied in earnest in the 1970s, with an emphasis on the influence on individual productivity (De-Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). In recent years, research on workplace flexibility's influence on productivity has broadened to include work-life difficulties, health outcomes, and job engagement (Rudolph & Baltes, 2017). The influence of specialized workplace flexibility on company productivity, goal attainment, turnover, absenteeism, and other factors has lately been studied (Berkery *et al.*, 2017). Employer-driven flexible working arrangements aimed at reducing costs are an important aspect of workplace flexibility. Also, flexible working arrangements aimed at lessening the friction between work and personal life are welcome (employee-driven). As the corporate world becomes more global and technological advances become more prevalent, the demand for new working techniques has become more urgent. Since the 1970s, people-oriented techniques have been a part of corporate life as a result of these developments, known as the flexibility concept.

Businesses have devised new ways of working to keep up with the rapid pace of change, while also increasing the output of their employees. Increasingly, companies are required to treat their workers in such a way that they are content with their job and their employer. Businesses want to maintain their best employees while adapting to new business trends. Competitive advantage: Businesses that focus on employee happiness have loyal staff. As a result, workers are more motivated and productive, and firms are able to compete with one another for the best staff (Altindag & Sillor, 2014). Job creation and unemployment management, on the other hand, are critical issues nowadays. It is the primary goal of developing new work models and employment options to create jobs and reduce unemployment. Employees' personal well-being is also becoming more and more of a consideration. Employees who previously had to deal with traffic in their daily commute, particularly in large cities, might benefit from flexible working arrangements. With greater control over their personal lives outside of the workplace, workers are able to increase their level of job satisfaction. Employees who arrive on time, who are not weary, who are focused on their task, and who are devoted to their work all contribute to a company's ability to function efficiently (Altindag & Sillor, 2014).

Many workplaces are adapting to a variety of changes in order to remain competitive in their various markets lest they be deemed irrelevant (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). As these businesses continue to rapidly adapt to the changing business conditions, smart workplaces are keenly seeking to reduce costs they incur in terms of workspace so as to avoid the ever-rising expenses as they expand and thus are turning into more flexible conditions of work. There is myriad of benefits that come with flexibility in working as there are the types of flexible workplaces. These, range from savings that come as a result of real estate savings, lighting and heating savings, and improvement in employee innovativeness to employee retention and productivity (Regus, 2011). Flexible working is also in line with sustainable development as reports show that each employee in the service industry generates an average equivalent of two tons of greenhouse emissions annually, Regus further observes. Furthermore, not many businesses would like to pay for energy consumed in unused space in their workplaces.

Workplace flexibility embraces the idea that employees can be productive no matter when or where they perform their work, rather than enforcing a rigid workplace environment. Or schedule workplace flexibility acknowledges individual needs and supports better work-life balance and employee well-being (Claire, 2022). Also, workplace flexibility emphasizes the willingness and ability to adapt to change, particularly regarding how and when work get done (Alison, 2022).

Flexibility is defined as the opportunity organization provides to their employees regarding choice of where and when to work (Allen, et al. 2013).

Flexible workplace generally refers to a practice in organizations where employees are able to choose when they work and where they work from so long as they fulfill their working obligations in doing so (Grzywacz *et al.*, 2008). According to Giannikis and Mihail (2011), flexible workplaces are among the many Work-Life Balance (WLB) initiatives being advanced by many organizations as they seek to enable their employees reconcile their work life and family responsibilities. Work-Life Balance initiatives can also be referred to as family-friendly workplace practices, Giannikis and Mihail further note. This is because these arrangements allow workers to adjust their working schedules to their family engagements like taking children to school, childcare and even taking care of the aging in society. According to (OECD, 2010), apart from flexible workplace, other family-friendly practices include extra-statutory leaves, employer provided childcare and elderly care supports.

In Nigeria, flexible working is being embraced (Muli *et al.*, 2014, Oloiptip *et al.*, 2014). This is especially due to the fact that the country seeks to advance economically by embracing a 24-hour system of service. Furthermore, the ever-changing demographics in the labour market is another element pushing organizations to embrace flexibility as they make efforts to arrest any top talent outside despite the barriers that may limit these skilled individuals from working in a fixed way (Mukururi & Ngari, 2014). The nature of work available sometimes also calls for more flexible workplace than fixed working (Muli *et al.*, 2014). This include many projects that are being initiated by the government and other non-governmental organizations as they both work towards Vision 2030. The goal of this research is to fill a need in the existing body of knowledge on the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It does not amount to mere gainsaying that employee has been considered a strategic resource for gaining competitive advantage. The thinking aptly suggest that the performance of the employee in work organisations must be considered as a prime phenomenon that should be consistently given attention as their performance necessarily culminate to overall performance of the organisation. Most of the emerging sectors especially the telecommunication sector in Nigeria, has to contend with a performing workforce that does not compromise optimizing organisational resources while at same time demonstrate innovative ability for competitiveness.

It is commonly observed that disillusioned employees gets withdrawn therefore does not show passion in handling tasks that are formally assigned. The increased rate of insensibility to the performance of the organisation is traceable to the degree of non-affective and unwillingness to be fully associated with the organisation. Further, employees in the sector readily evaluate why they must remain with their organisation especially where other alternatives exist. This demonstrates clearly that the premise of remaining and showing performance revolves around weighed gains. The absence of such gains tends to depreciate and diminish employee willingness to support organisational effort at goals. The dissatisfied employee gets psychologically and, in some instances, socially detached therefore exhibits low sense of obligation to the organisation. It also accounts for non-performance to work values, norms and in most cases, poor ethical adherence.

The telecommunication sector in the light of the services they render, requires a committed workforce for efficient and quality service delivery. However, Dusenge and Julius (2021) noted that the enormity of quality service delivery lies on a committed workforce in the hotel subsector especially with increased rate of migration and global socialization. With this in mind, there is a renewed focus on what are the likely triggers of performance amongst employees. Multiple studies have examined some workplace variable like leader behaviour (Gupta 2020); organisation justice (Ibidunni, 2022); pay structure (Eze & Ogiji, 2020) and employee performance in work organisation. Apart from sectional variance in these studies which is a gap, they have largely

treated employee performance as a mono-construct without recourse to the theoretical composition of the construct. This was also a considered gap. In addition these studies do not take into consideration the place of moderating factor in channeling human behaviour. All of these require further search. In this vein, this study considered workplace flexibility which is a phenomenal behaviour amongst employers that likely shape behaviour and outcomes as it relates with the employees therefore this study is a copious attempt at investigating the empirical link between workplace flexibility and employee performance in the telecommunication sector in South-South, Nigeria.

### Conceptual Framework

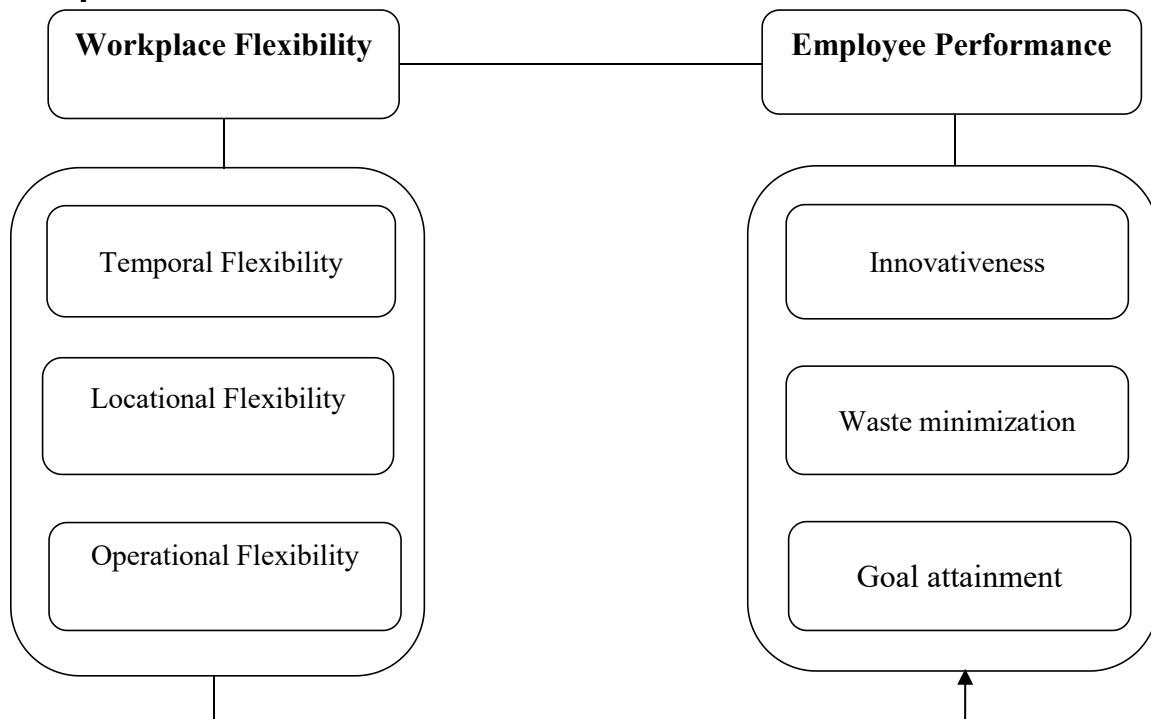


Figure: 1.1: Conceptual Framework of Workplace Flexibility and Employee Performance  
Source: Adapted from (Rastogi et al., 2018; Mordi et al., 2013), and Hanaysha, 2016; Yunus & Ernawati, 2018; Mohammed et al., 2019). Researcher conceptualization (2025)

### Aim & Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- 1) Determine the relationship between temporal flexibility and innovativeness of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria
- 2) Investigate the relationship between locational flexibility and waste minimization of telecommunications firms in South-South, Nigeria.
- 3) Evaluate the relationship between operational flexibility and goal attainment of telecommunication firms in Rivers State

### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

- 1) What is the relationship between temporal flexibility and innovativeness of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria?

- 2) What is the relationship between locational flexibility and waste minimization of telecommunications firms in South-South, Nigeria?
- 3) What is the relationship between operational flexibility and goal attainment of telecommunication firms in Rivers State?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and will be tested at a significant level of 0.01.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between temporal flexibility and innovativeness of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between locational flexibility and waste minimization of telecommunications firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between operational flexibility and goal attainment of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

### Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is discussed under content scope, geographical scope, and unit of analysis.

**Content Scope:** This study covers literature domain of workplace flexibility and employee performance. Workplace flexibility is the independent variable and the dimensions studied are, temporal flexibility, locational flexibility and operational flexibility. The dependent variable is employee performance, with its measures which includes innovativeness, waste minimization and goal attainment.

**Geographical Scope:** The geographical scope is the telecommunication sector in South-South, Nigeria..

**Unit of Analysis:** It is the employees of the firm which also means a micro level study.

### Significance of the Study

This research will be useful to the management of telecommunication firms in the sense that it would further enlighten the management on ways in which the staff productivity can be improved upon to achieve their goals and targets.

Furthermore, the study will be significant to the telecommunication industry as it will show the need for the working environment in the industry to be flexible in order to enhance the employees' productivity and overall performance.

The study will be significant in showing telecommunication firms the importance of establishing a convenient working environment for private sector employees.

Moreover, the study will contribute to the expansion of existing knowledge on this area of study. It would also provide useful starting/reference points for future researchers and a sound basis for intellectual exercise.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section reviews various extant literatures related to the study under investigations under the headings of conceptual review, theoretical review and empirical review.

### Conceptual Review

#### Concept of Workplace Flexibility

Workplace flexibility has been increasingly recognized as a critical component of modern organizational practices, particularly in the context of balancing work and personal life. According to Hill et al. (2008), workplace flexibility is defined as the degree to which employees can control when, where, and how they work. This definition highlights the importance of autonomy and choice, allowing employees to tailor their work schedules and environments to better suit their individual needs and preferences. The authors argue that such flexibility not only benefits

employees by reducing work-life conflict but also enhances organizational performance by fostering higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity.

Workplace flexibility refers to the various ways in which organizations can adapt their work environments and schedules to meet the diverse needs of their employees while still achieving organizational goals. This concept encompasses a range of practices, including flexible working hours, telecommuting, job sharing, and part-time work arrangements. The primary aim of workplace flexibility is to enhance employee satisfaction and productivity by allowing individuals to balance their professional responsibilities with personal commitments. Research indicates that when employees have the autonomy to manage their work schedules, they often experience reduced stress levels and increased job satisfaction (Hill et al., 2008). Furthermore, organizations that embrace flexible work arrangements are more likely to attract and retain top talent, as modern workers increasingly prioritize work-life balance in their employment decisions.

## **Dimensions of Workplace Flexibility**

### **Temporal Flexibility**

Temporal flexibility refers to the variability and adaptability of work hours and schedules, allowing employees and employers to adjust working times to meet both organizational demands and personal needs. According to Kossek, Lautsch, and Eaton (2006), temporal flexibility encompasses a range of practices, including flexible working hours, compressed workweeks, part-time work, and job-sharing. These arrangements enable employees to have control over their working hours, which can lead to improved work-life balance and increased job satisfaction. Temporal flexibility is particularly beneficial in modern workplaces, where the traditional 9-to-5 workday is often no longer feasible due to the diverse needs of the workforce and the global nature of business operations.

Moreover, Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, and Weitzman (2001) argue that temporal flexibility is a key factor in reducing work-life conflict, as it allows employees to align their work schedules with their personal responsibilities. This alignment can reduce stress and enhance overall well-being, which in turn can lead to greater productivity and engagement at work. Temporal flexibility is especially important for employees with caregiving responsibilities, as it provides them with the necessary autonomy to manage both work and family demands effectively. According to Clifton and Shepard (2004), offering temporal flexibility can also improve employee retention, as it demonstrates an organization's commitment to supporting the diverse needs of its workforce.

### **Locational Flexibility**

One of the primary reasons employees seek flexibility in location is because it allows employees to work and/or live away from the central work site. This offers employees the ability to integrate their work and nonwork domains, and therefore more quickly and easily transition between roles (Ashforth et al., 2000; Kossek et al., 2006). Having employees who are geographically distant from the main work site may be advantageous for clients' needs as well as organizations may benefit from having customer service available for remote clients. Dell uses virtual call centers to allow full-time employees to work from home. After conducting benchmark assessments, Dell executed a 6-month pilot program, launching additional call centers at home sites across North America. By expanding slowly, the company was able to capitalize on the program, taking advantage of pockets of labor sources and retaining quality employees whose life changes would have otherwise forced them to leave. Benefits from this program include enhanced productivity and reduced facility and real estate costs (Boston College Center for Work & Family, 2007).

Flexplace policies differ as to how frequently and intensely employees use telework and work away from the central worksite, and the degree of contact and space they have at the central worksite/other employees. Employees may be able to work offsite frequently or on an as-needed basis or for only a day or two. Some of the most common forms of flexibility in location include: home-based telework, where employees work from home some or most of their work-week;

neighborhood work centers, satellite offices, or telecenters, whereby multiple employees utilize a single location to perform the majority of their work but do not have space at the main worksite, offering a traditional office environment at a location away from the main site. While telecenters or neighborhood centers allow someone to go to a corporate office nearest them and telework, one hundred percent remote work includes an employee who might work out of their home all of the time. This allows these kinds of remote workers to conduct work full-time from great distances away from the central worksite, or typically at the client's location such as a tax auditor reviewing a company's books or a consultant. Hoteling refers to the idea that an employee gives up their formal work desk but shares a desk with workers when they come in.

### **Operational Flexibility**

The concept of operational flexibility is more comprehensive than that of "manufacturing flexibility" and includes all the operations which take place at the company, not only the manufacturing ones. However, in the literature, the term manufacturing flexibility is often used to refer to all the operations involved in the manufacture of a product De-Toni and Tonchia (2005). Moreover, operational flexibility has become an essential capability which an organization seeks to have because it enables companies to respond quickly and effectively to dynamic environments. In all dimensions, operational flexibility refers to a company's capability to respond to uncertainty in their business environment, either proactively or reactively; this capability has many dimensions which may differ in importance across various environments Stevenson and Spring (2007).

### **Concept of Employee Performance**

Employee performance is a multifaceted concept that has been extensively studied in management and organizational psychology. It refers to the extent to which an employee meets or exceeds job expectations, contributing to the overall goals of an organization. Employee performance is not just about completing tasks but also encompasses the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness with which these tasks are executed. The measurement of employee performance often involves both objective and subjective criteria, including output quality, productivity, and the degree to which an employee demonstrates behaviors that align with organizational values (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993).

A key determinant of employee performance is motivation. Motivation drives employees to engage in their work with energy and commitment, directly influencing their performance outcomes. Theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959) provide insight into what motivates employees. While intrinsic motivators such as job satisfaction, recognition, and personal growth are crucial for sustained high performance, extrinsic motivators like pay, job security, and working conditions also play a significant role. According to Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, employees are likely to perform better when they believe that their efforts will lead to desirable outcomes. Another critical factor influencing employee performance is the alignment between individual skills and job requirements. This alignment, often referred to as person-job fit, ensures that employees have the necessary competencies to perform their tasks effectively. When employees are well-matched to their roles, they are more likely to excel in their performance. Conversely, a poor fit can lead to dissatisfaction, reduced performance, and higher turnover rates (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

### **Measures of Employee Performance** **Innovativeness**

Innovativeness, as a measure of employee performance, encompasses the ability of employees to generate new ideas, processes, or products that contribute to the organization's overall growth and competitive advantage. In a rapidly changing business environment, the ability to innovate is not only desirable but crucial for survival. Employees who exhibit a high level of innovativeness

are typically proactive, creative, and willing to take risks, which can lead to significant improvements in organizational processes and outcomes (Amabile, 1997).

Organizations today operate in an environment where technological advancements and market dynamics evolve at an unprecedented pace. Innovativeness, therefore, becomes a critical attribute that differentiates high-performing employees from others. As Damanpour (1991) suggests, innovation within an organization is often the cumulative result of individual contributions. Thus, employees who consistently bring innovative solutions are valuable assets to the organization, driving not just performance but also fostering a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability. Moreover, innovativeness is closely linked to the concept of intrapreneurship, where employees act like entrepreneurs within the organization. Pinchot (1985) describes intrapreneurs as those who take responsibility for creating innovation within the organization. These individuals often display a high degree of autonomy, initiative, and resilience. Their performance is marked by their ability to transform ideas into tangible outcomes that benefit the organization, whether in terms of new product development, process optimization, or market expansion.

### **Waste Minimization**

As organizations face growing pressures to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs, minimizing waste in all its forms has become a vital strategy. Waste, in this context, encompasses not only physical resources but also time, energy, and effort. Employees play a pivotal role in ensuring that organizational processes are lean and efficient, thereby contributing to the overall sustainability and profitability of the organization (Juran, 1988). The notion of waste minimization is rooted in lean management principles, which emphasize the elimination of non-value-adding activities (Ohno, 1988). By focusing on reducing waste, employees are encouraged to optimize their work processes, leading to enhanced productivity and quality of output. This approach aligns with the broader goal of continuous improvement, where employees are actively engaged in identifying inefficiencies and implementing solutions. In this regard, employee performance is not merely about achieving set targets but also about contributing to the reduction of waste within the organization (Womack & Jones, 1996).

Employee involvement in waste minimization is crucial for fostering a culture of efficiency and innovation. According to Deming (1986), employees are the closest to the work processes and are therefore in the best position to identify areas where waste occurs. By empowering employees to take ownership of their work and encouraging them to suggest improvements, organizations can tap into a wealth of knowledge and experience. This participatory approach not only enhances employee performance but also drives organizational growth by continuously refining processes and reducing waste (Deming, 1986). Moreover, waste minimization as a dimension of employee performance is linked to the concept of sustainability. As organizations strive to meet environmental and social responsibility goals, reducing waste becomes a key performance indicator. Employees who are trained and motivated to minimize waste contribute to the organization's sustainability efforts, thereby enhancing their performance in a broader sense. This alignment between individual performance and organizational sustainability objectives is critical in today's business environment, where stakeholders demand greater accountability and transparency (Hart, 1995).

### **Goal Attainment**

Goal accomplishment as a measure of employee performance has been a focal point in organizational behavior and human resource management literature. The concept revolves around the idea that the achievement of specific, measurable objectives is indicative of an employee's effectiveness and productivity within an organization. According to Locke and Latham (2002), goal-setting theory posits that clear goals enhance performance by directing attention, mobilizing effort, increasing persistence, and motivating strategy development. This framework suggests that

when employees have well-defined goals, they are more likely to focus their efforts on achieving those targets, thereby improving overall performance.

The relationship between goal accomplishment and employee performance can also be understood through the lens of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that while extrinsic rewards can drive performance in the short term, intrinsic motivation stemming from personal satisfaction and fulfillment plays a crucial role in sustained high performance. Employees who set personal goals aligned with their values are more likely to experience job satisfaction and commitment to their roles. This intrinsic motivation is often reflected in the quality of work produced, which may not always correlate directly with quantifiable outcomes but is nonetheless essential for long-term organizational success.

### **Theoretical Review**

The study focuses and reviewed Job Characteristic Theory by Hackman and Oldham in the year 1970s

### **Job Characteristic Theory**

Job Characteristics Theory (JCT), developed by Hackman and Oldham in the 1970s, posits that certain job characteristics can lead to higher employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The theory identifies five core dimensions of jobs: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These dimensions influence three psychological states: experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results. In the context of workplace flexibility where employees have control over their work schedules and environments these dimensions become particularly relevant. For instance, autonomy is a critical component of both JCT and flexible work arrangements; when employees have the freedom to choose how they complete their tasks, they are likely to experience greater job satisfaction and performance (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Workplace flexibility can enhance the core dimensions outlined in JCT. For example, when employees are allowed to work remotely or adjust their hours according to personal needs, they may experience increased skill variety as they engage in different tasks or projects that align with their interests (Kossek et al., 2014). This increase in skill variety not only contributes to a more fulfilling work experience but also enhances overall employee performance. Moreover, flexible work arrangements can foster a sense of task significance as employees feel empowered to contribute meaningfully to their organizations while balancing personal commitments (Hill et al., 2008). Thus, integrating JCT into studies on workplace flexibility provides valuable insights into how these arrangements can positively impact employee outcomes.

Furthermore, research has shown that workplace flexibility can significantly affect employee performance through its interaction with the psychological states identified in JCT. Employees who perceive their jobs as meaningful due to high levels of autonomy are more likely to exhibit proactive behaviors and higher levels of engagement (Bakker et al., 2011). This aligns with JCT's assertion that when individuals feel responsible for their work outcomes—enhanced by flexible working conditions—they tend to perform better. Additionally, feedback mechanisms within flexible work environments can be tailored to suit individual preferences and schedules, further reinforcing the positive relationship between job characteristics and performance outcomes (Roe et al., 2012).

Therefore, Job Characteristics Theory provides a robust framework for understanding the implications of workplace flexibility on employee performance. By emphasizing core job dimensions such as autonomy and skill variety within flexible working contexts, organizations can foster an environment conducive to enhanced motivation and productivity. As workplaces continue to evolve towards more flexible models post-pandemic, integrating insights from JCT will be crucial for optimizing employee engagement and performance.

### **Assumptions of Job Characteristics Theory**

1. Core Job Dimensions: The theory posits that certain core job dimensions—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—are fundamental to understanding how jobs can be designed to enhance employee motivation and satisfaction.
2. Psychological States: It assumes that these job dimensions lead to three critical psychological states: experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of the actual results of the work activities.
3. Individual Differences: The theory assumes that individual differences (such as growth need strength) influence how employees respond to job characteristics. Employees with higher growth needs are more likely to benefit from enriched jobs.

### **Implications for Job Characteristic Theory**

1. Job Design for Flexibility: Organizations can design jobs with flexibility in mind by incorporating autonomy into roles, allowing employees to have control over their work schedules and methods, which aligns with the autonomy dimension of job characteristics theory.
2. Enhanced Motivation through Flexibility: Providing flexible work arrangements can enhance employees' feelings of meaningfulness and responsibility, leading to higher levels of intrinsic motivation and engagement in their tasks.
3. Impact on Performance Outcomes: When employees experience greater autonomy and flexibility in their roles, they are likely to exhibit improved performance outcomes due to increased motivation and satisfaction derived from their work experiences.

### **Empirical Review**

Adeyemi and Ojo (2020) worked on the impact of workplace flexibility on employee performance in the banking sector. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance within selected banks in Lagos State, Nigeria. The objectives included assessing how flexible work arrangements influence employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall performance metrics within the banking sector. The research employed a descriptive survey design targeting employees from five major banks in Lagos State. The population consisted of approximately 2,000 employees, with a sample size of 400 respondents selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different levels of employment. Data were collected using structured questionnaires designed to measure perceptions of workplace flexibility and its impact on performance indicators. To ensure validity, the instrument was pre-tested with a small group outside the main sample, leading to necessary adjustments based on feedback. Reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, yielding a score above 0.7, indicating acceptable reliability. The administration involved distributing questionnaires both physically and electronically to accommodate varying preferences among employees. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to determine relationships between variables. The findings indicated a significant positive correlation between workplace flexibility and employee performance metrics such as productivity and job satisfaction. Employees who reported higher levels of flexibility also demonstrated enhanced commitment to their roles and improved performance outcomes compared to those with rigid work schedules. The study concluded that implementing flexible work arrangements can lead to improved employee performance in the banking sector in Nigeria. It highlighted that flexibility not only enhances productivity but also contributes positively to employee morale and job satisfaction levels. Based on the findings, it was recommended that banks should adopt more flexible working policies tailored to meet the diverse needs of their workforce while ensuring that performance standards are maintained.

Ezeani and Nwankwo (2021) worked on flexible work arrangements in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This study aimed to explore how flexible work arrangements affect employee

performance within small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. Specific objectives included identifying types of flexible arrangements adopted by SMEs and evaluating their impact on employee engagement and productivity levels. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, this study combined quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews for comprehensive insights into the subject matter. The population comprised approximately 1,500 employees from various SMEs across Enugu State; a sample size of 300 respondents was determined through simple random sampling techniques for the quantitative aspect while purposive sampling was used for qualitative interviews involving ten SME managers. Data were gathered via structured questionnaires complemented by semi-structured interviews for deeper understanding. Validity was ensured through expert reviews before distribution while reliability was confirmed through test-retest methods yielding consistent results over time intervals. Questionnaires were administered directly during scheduled meetings or sent via email for convenience among participants; qualitative data were analyzed thematically alongside quantitative data using statistical software packages like SPSS for correlation analysis. Results revealed that SMEs employing flexible work arrangements experienced higher levels of employee engagement, which translated into increased productivity rates compared to those maintaining traditional work structures. Employees expressed greater satisfaction with their jobs when given options such as remote working or adjustable hours. The study concluded that flexible work arrangements significantly enhance employee performance within Nigerian SMEs by fostering an environment conducive to engagement and motivation. It recommended that SME owners consider integrating more flexible policies into their operational frameworks as a strategy for improving overall organizational effectiveness.

Adeyemi and Ogunleye (2022) worked on temporal flexibility as a catalyst for innovation in Nigeria's tech startups. This study aimed to explore how temporal flexibility serves as a catalyst for innovation specifically within technology startups in Nigeria. The objectives focused on identifying key aspects of temporal flexibility that contribute to innovative outcomes, examining employee perceptions regarding flexible work arrangements, and analyzing how these arrangements impact overall business performance in tech startups. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, this study combined qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys for comprehensive insights into the phenomenon under investigation. The population comprised 300 employees from various tech startups located in Abuja and Lagos states; a sample size of 150 was selected through purposive sampling based on their roles related to innovation processes within their organizations. Data collection involved administering online surveys complemented by semi-structured interviews with selected participants for deeper qualitative insights. Validity was ensured through expert reviews during instrument development while reliability was confirmed through test-retest methods yielding consistent results over time intervals. Data analysis utilized thematic analysis for qualitative data alongside statistical software for quantitative data interpretation. Results indicated that temporal flexibility significantly enhances innovation capabilities among tech startups by allowing employees greater autonomy over their work schedules which fosters creativity and reduces burnout rates associated with traditional work hours. Employees reported feeling more motivated when given control over their time management which directly correlated with increased innovative outputs such as new product development or process improvements. The study concluded that embracing temporal flexibility is crucial for tech startups aiming at sustained innovation amidst competitive pressures within Nigeria's rapidly evolving technology landscape. Recommendations included advocating for policy changes at both organizational and governmental levels to support flexible working conditions while encouraging further academic inquiry into sector-specific impacts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design as it seeks to determine the relationship existing between two variables. The population of the study consisted of 2,764 employees across 4 major telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria. The study sample size is 349. Structured

questionnaire was used in data collection. The reliability of empirical measurement is indicated by the internal consistency, one of the most commonly used indicators of internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results were used in computation using Cronbach's alpha test of reliability.

**Table 3.1: Reliability Coefficients of Variable Measures**

S/No	Dimensions/Measures of the study variable	Number of items	Number of cases	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Temporal flexibility	5	342	0.783
2	Locational flexibility	5	342	0.832
3	Operational flexibility	5	342	0.864
4	Innovativeness	4	342	0.742
5	Waste minimization	4	342	0.797
6	Goal attainment	4	342	0.789

**Source: Survey data, 2025 via SPSS version 23.0 output**

### DATA ANALYSIS

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between temporal flexibility and innovativeness of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria.

#### Correlations on Temporal Flexibility and Innovativeness

			Temporal flexibility	Innovativeness
Spearman's rho	Temporal flexibility	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.755**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	349	240
	Innovativeness	Correlation Coefficient	.755**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	349	240

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

The results presented indicate a strong positive correlation between temporal flexibility and innovativeness, as evidenced by the Spearman's correlation coefficient of 0.755. This value suggests that as one variable increases, the other tends to increase as well, indicating a significant relationship between these two constructs. The significance level (Sig.) for this correlation is reported at 0.000, which is below the conventional threshold of 0.01 for statistical significance. This means that there is less than a 1% probability that the observed correlation occurred by chance, reinforcing the reliability of the findings. The sample size (N) for both variables is 349, providing a robust basis for these conclusions. In summary, the data suggest that temporal flexibility significantly enhances innovativeness in commercial banks. This indicates that allowing employees the flexibility to manage their work schedules positively influences their ability to generate creative solutions and adapt to dynamic challenges, ultimately fostering an innovative organizational culture.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between locational flexibility and waste minimization of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria.

#### Correlations on Locational flexibility and Waste minimization

	Locational	Waste
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			flexibility	minimization
Spearman's rho	Locational flexibility	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.596**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	349	349
	Waste minimization	Correlation Coefficient	.596**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	349	349

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

The results presented indicate a significant positive correlation between locational flexibility and waste minimization, as measured by Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.596$ ). This value suggests a moderate to strong relationship between the two variables, implying that as one increases, the other tends to increase as well. The significance level ( $p < 0.01$ ) indicates that this correlation is statistically significant, meaning that the likelihood of this correlation occurring by chance is very low.

The sample size for both variables is 349, which provides a robust basis for these findings. The correlation coefficient of 1.000 for locational flexibility with itself is expected, as it reflects perfect correlation. Conversely, the correlation coefficient of 0.596 for waste minimization with locational flexibility reveals that individuals who exhibit higher levels of adaptability in their personalities are likely to be more effective in implementing strategies within their organizations or contexts. In summary, the findings suggest that locational flexibility plays a crucial role in enhancing waste minimization efforts within commercial banks. This significant positive correlation implies that as banks adopt more flexible location strategies, such as remote work options or dynamic branch operations, they are better positioned to reduce waste, streamline operations, and improve resource efficiency.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between operational flexibility and goal attainment of telecommunication firms in South-South.

#### Correlations on Operational Flexibility and Goal Attainment

			Operational flexibility	Goal attainment
Spearman's rho	Operational flexibility	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.683**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	349	349
	Goal attainment	Correlation Coefficient	.683**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	349	349

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

The results presented indicate a significant positive correlation between operational flexibility and goal attainment, as measured by Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho). The correlation coefficient for the relationship between these two variables is 0.683, which suggests a strong association; this value indicates that as one variable increases, the other tends to increase as well. The significance level (Sig.) of 0.000 confirms that this correlation is statistically significant

at the 0.01 level, meaning there is less than a 1% probability that this observed correlation occurred by chance.

The sample size for both variables is 349, which provides a robust basis for the analysis. The results suggest that there is a strong positive relationship between operational flexibility and goal attainment in commercial banks. This means that as operational flexibility increases, the ability of the bank to achieve its goals also improves. The findings imply that banks with more adaptable and flexible operations are better positioned to meet their objectives, potentially enhancing overall performance and efficiency.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study focused on examining the relationship between workplace flexibility and employee performance of telecommunication firms in South-South, Nigeria. The study raised research questions and hypotheses based on the dimensions and measures of the constructs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made;

1. The study recommends that temporal flexibility should be reinforced through organized shift practice to encourage employee innovativeness.
2. It is also recommended that waste minimization should be sustained by ensuring locational flexibility through guaranteed remote working practices.
3. The study recommends that operational flexibility should be practiced as a means of enhancing goal attainment.

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