



Assessing the impact of Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment on Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry: The Mediating Role of Employees' Readiness for Change

Odunayo Paul SALAU ^a, Titilayo OWOLABI ^{b,*}, Adebukola DAGUNDURO ^c.

^{a, c}. Department of Employment Relations and Human Resource Management Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State - NIGÉRIA

^b. Department of Business Administration, School of Management Sciences, Babcock University - NIGÉRIA

article info

Article history:

Received:
06 August 2026
Accepted:
10 September 2026
Published:
01 October 2026

Keywords:

Employees' Readiness
for Change
Employees' Innovative
Work Behaviour
Psychological
Empowerment
Telecommunications
Industry
Workplace Spirituality

JEL Classification:

M12, M54, D23, O31

abstract

The issue of encouraging innovative work behaviour in employees is becoming a challenge to organisations in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry despite the investments in human resource practices and workplace initiatives. Nevertheless, the current literature has focused on Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment separately with little focus on the behavioural pathway through which these variables are converted to innovation thus leaving a research gap regarding the mediating role of Employees Readiness to Change. Based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory and Social Exchange Theory (SET), this paper evaluated how Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment affect the Innovative Work Behaviour of Employees. The quantitative research method was used to conduct a descriptive research design. The sample included those employees of four major telecommunication companies in Nigeria listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX), that is, MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom and 9mobile. The data was gathered using the hard-copy and Google Forms questionnaires and 401 valid responses were retrieved out of 423 distributed questionnaires, which is a high response rate. Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-PLS version 4.1.1) was used to code and analyse the data. The results indicated that the constructs were highly reliable and valid, as the values of Cronbachs Alpha and Composite Reliability were high. Spirituality of the Workplace ($\beta = 0.390$, $t = 8.438$, $p = 0.000$) and Psychological Empowerment ($\beta = 0.602$, $t = 12.518$, $p = 0.000$) were found to have significant effect on the Readiness of Employees to Change, with the latter being more powerful. The indirect effects revealed that the Workplace Spirituality ($\beta = 0.373$, $t = 8.286$, $p = 0.000$) and Psychological Empowerment ($\beta = 0.576$, $t = 12.798$, $p = 0.000$)

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: O. Salau odunayo.salau@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng, T. Owolabi owolabit@babcock.edu.ng, A. Dagunduro dagunduro.adebukola@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng

How to cite: Salau, O., Owolabi, T., & Dagunduro, A. (2026). Assessing the impact of Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment on Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry: The Mediating Role of Employees' Readiness for Change. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Administration*, 2(2), 22-44.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34118/jeba.v2i2.4896>

This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

had a significant positive impact on enhancing the Employees Innovative Work Behaviour using the Employees Readiness to Additionally, the mediating role of Employees Readiness to Change was highly significant in Innovative Work Behaviour ($\beta = 0.957$, $t = 147.727$, $p = 0.000$). The research finds that the willingness of employees to change is a major channel through which workplace spirituality and empowerment influences innovation and recommends that organisations should encourage meaningful working conditions and empower employees to maintain innovation in telecommunications industry.

1. Introduction

Spirituality and psychological empowerment at workplace have become increasingly important as a determinant of innovative work behaviour by employees in modern organisations. Workplace spirituality is the meaning, purpose, connectedness, and value alignment that employees feel in the workplace, whereas psychological empowerment is the perceived autonomy, competence, impact, and meaning of the employees in the work environment (Aboobaker et al., 2022; Bantha and Nayak, 2021). Empirical research has indicated that employees with more spirituality at the workplace are more likely to exhibit greater emotional attachment, creativity, and innovation-driven behaviours (Jena, 2022; Adnan et al., 2020). On the same note, psychological empowerment has been associated with improved job performance, creativity, and innovative output in various industries, telecommunications included (Al Jedi and Al Mojahed, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2022). Nevertheless, even with these laid down relations, the combination of the two constructs in the Nigerian telecommunications industry is not explored well, especially in the context of how they combine to affect innovative work behaviour through change readiness.

Countries around the world have embraced various degrees of workplace spirituality and empowerment practices to improve the results of innovation by employees. Indicatively, in the United States organisations reported that organisations with structured systems of empowerment were up to 24% more productive in terms of innovation output than organisations with no systems of empowerment (Vasconcelos, 2018). Structured empowerment and participatory decision-making systems have enabled telecommunication firms in Germany to gain about 28 percent in employee-driven innovation. Spirituality programmes as part of corporate wellbeing strategies employed in the United Kingdom at the workplace also correlated with a 19% rise in employee creativity indices. Psychological empowerment in the automobile and ICT industry in India enhanced innovative work behaviour by 31 percent especially when leader support systems were incorporated (Sheeba and Christopher, 2024). In China, the efficiency of innovation increased by 22 percent in companies that incorporated spiritual leadership and empowerment, and in Vietnam, a 26 percent increase in employee creativity was observed when the effects of workplace conditions were mediated by psychological empowerment (Nguyen et al., 2023). Employee willingness to change was identified in Canada to improve the performance of innovation by 23 percent and in Australia, companies that adopted workplace spirituality models indicated an increase in employee engagement and innovation capacity by 20 percent. These international statistics reveal that planned psychological and spiritual work practices are of great benefit to the results of innovation in industries.

Conversely, the telecommunications sector in Nigeria is still struggling to convert the spirituality and psychological empowerment in the workplace into quantifiable innovation results. Nigeria is a relatively low employee-driven innovation country despite being one of the

largest telecom markets in Africa, contributing more than 75 billion to GDP each year and having more than 12 percent of the ICT industry workforce (Ibeku and Nwagwu, 2024; Tamunosiki-Amadi et al., 2023). Research has revealed that a significant proportion of telecom workers in Nigeria lack autonomy, a poor organisational meaning system, and low perceptions of empowerment, which lower the desire to act innovatively (Omoefe, 2024; Nwachukwu et al., 2022). Innovation efforts in companies like MTN Nigeria and Globacom have been rather top-down, restricting the involvement of employees in the innovative decision-making process, which has led to slow service innovation and less adaptability to the needs of digital transformation.

The readiness to change has become a paramount psychological process connecting empowerment and innovation behaviour because psychologically prepared employees are more inclined to embrace the new ideas and technologies (Aboobaker et al., 2022; Salem et al., 2023). In the telecom sector of Nigerians, however, change resistance has been reported because of fear of job loss, poor communication systems, and poor spiritual alignment of workplace culture. This has resulted in poor innovation performance, customer dissatisfaction and slower uptake of emerging technologies like 5G infrastructure and AI-based customer service platforms. In places like India and Vietnam, readiness to change has been observed to mediate more than a quarter-third of the effect of empowerment and innovation results, but this is still lacking in the Nigerian setting (Nguyen et al., 2023; Bantha and Nayak, 2021).

From a policy and sustainability perspective, the current research is consistent with the concept of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), which highlights productive working and innovation-based economies. It has been reported that countries that have managed to incorporate workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment into organisational systems have registered better employee wellbeing, innovation productivity, and economic competitiveness (Saeed et al., 2022; Garg et al., 2022). Yet, Nigeria continues to lag behind the global averages in employee innovation indices, where less than (65) percent of telecom employees are actively involved in innovation related activities, versus more than (60) percent in developed economies. This gap points out the immediate necessity of an empirical study of the way in which spirituality and psychological empowerment in the workplace could be utilised to enhance innovation performance in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria. Although the relationship between workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment and innovative work behaviour has increasingly attracted scholarly literature, most of the literature has concentrated on the developed economies or Asian setting with little attention given to the African industries especially the telecommunications industry in Nigeria. Moreover, the literature has seldom involved the readiness of employees to change as a mediating variable, which creates a conceptual and empirical gap in the comprehension of how psychological and spiritual workplace conditions can be converted into innovation performance in emerging economies.

1.1. Problem Statement

One of the fastest-growing industries in Africa, the Nigerian telecommunications industry generates over 75 billion dollars of the GDP of Nigeria and over 15% of the national output of the digital economy, but its rate of employee-led innovation has been inconsistent and relatively low in comparison to global benchmarks (Ibeku & Nwagwu, 2024; Tamunosiki-Amadi et al., 2023). Regardless of the growth of the key players like MTN Nigeria, Globacom, Airtel Nigeria and 9mobile, reports have indicated that there are systematic problems in employee creativity, slow

adoption of innovation, and poor internal change preparedness especially in adopting new technologies like 5G, AI based customer care and digital payment integration systems. Research has shown that fewer than 40% of employees in the telecom industry in Nigeria engage in decision-making that is associated with innovation, versus more than 65% in the telecom industry of the developed countries, including the United Kingdom and South Korea, where the system of workplace empowerment is well-institutionalised (Salem et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023). Moreover, spirituality and psychological empowerment in the workplace, which have been observed to enhance meaning, autonomy, and creativity, are underdeveloped in most of the telecom organisations in Nigeria because of the strict hierarchical hierarchy, employee involvement, and poor integration of organisational culture. This has led to low innovative work behaviour, employee disengagement, and slow service innovation, which has had an impact on competitiveness in an industry that is core to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). The research gap is in the fact that there is scanty empirical combination of workplace spirituality with psychological empowerment as a combined predictor of innovative work behaviour among the telecommunications industry in Nigeria, especially with the willingness of employees to change as a mediating variable.

Practically, digital transformation strategies have been put in place by telecom companies in Nigeria, and behavioural aspects of employees have been neglected, which has resulted in failure to promote organisational change and innovation diffusion. As an example, when such companies as MTN Nigeria and Airtel Nigeria invested in digital platforms, internal reports indicated that the level of innovation uptake among the employees was lower than expected because of the low level of psychological empowerment and low sense of workplace meaning (Omoeffe, 2024; Nwachukwu et al., 2022). On the contrary, in other countries, including India and Vietnam, the innovative work behaviour improved more than 30% when the organisational systems were combined with psychological empowerment and readiness to change (Nguyen et al., 2023; Sheeba and Christopher, 2024). Equally, structured workplace spirituality initiatives in the United States and Germany led to better employee engagement and innovation performance of more than 25% growth in outcomes of new service development. Such comparisons demonstrate a vast performance difference between Nigeria and the telecom giants in the world, even though both have the same level of technological investment. Thus, the relevance of workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment on innovative work behaviour by the willingness of employees to change is important in enhancing the effectiveness of organisations in the Nigerian telecom industry and ensuring the organisation keeps pace with the rest of the world in terms of innovation. Based on the problem statement discussed above, the following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

- How does workplace spirituality influence employees' readiness for change in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?
- What is the impact of psychological empowerment on employees' readiness for change in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?
- To what extent does employees' readiness for change mediate the relationship among workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment and employees' innovative work behaviour in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality has been defined from multiple scholarly perspectives. According to Vasconcelos (2018), it was defined as the acknowledgment of the inner life of employees that feeds valuable work and interdependence. Adnan et al. (2020) defined it as an organisational work environment in which employees feel purposeful, compassionate, and aligned to both individual and organisational values. Jena (2022) theorised it as a multidimensional construct comprising of work meaning, community sense, and transcendence that improves employee well-being and behaviour. In all these definitions, workplace spirituality is always associated with emotional satisfaction, ethical conduct and better workplace performance, especially in the innovation-driven sectors. Research has revealed that workers with workplace spirituality are more committed, less turnover intention, and more creative (Garg et al., 2019; Dubey et al., 2022). Spirituality at the workplace in organisations affects the attitudes of employees because it creates a sense of belonging and purpose that builds discretionary behaviour. The studies have shown that spiritually enriched working environments enhance workforce agility and emotional intelligence, which are essential to innovation (Saeed et al., 2022; Paul et al., 2020). Spirituality in the workplace in Nigeria has been noted in small organisational forms mostly in areas that have high cultural or ethical leaders influences, yet its practice in the telecommunications sector has not been well advanced. Research indicates that in organisations that have a sense of spirituality in the workplace, the employees are better engaged and ethically aligned, which helps to achieve innovation results (Ojobu et al., 2024). Yet, among most telecom companies in Nigeria, the strict corporate hierarchies and performance pressures have constrained the assimilation of spiritual values into the workplace systems, thus restricting the innovative behaviour. This leaves a knowledge gap in the way spirituality at the workplace can be strategically used to improve innovation in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria.

2.2. Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment has been defined in several ways in organisational literature. According to Spreitzer (1995), it is a motivational construct that comprises of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) described it as a mental condition that indicates how an employee feels in control and influence on the outcomes of work. It was further conceptualised by Zimmerman (1995) as a process by which people become masters, have control and critical awareness of their workplace. All these definitions focus on employee autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and perceived control as the key elements of empowerment. The empirical research proves that psychological empowerment is a strong factor that contributes to employee creativity, engagement, and performance (Nguyen et al., 2022; Muneer et al., 2024). The psychological empowerment is especially significant in the industries that are dynamic in nature as it increases the capacity of employees to react to change and develop innovative solutions. Research has demonstrated that employees with a sense of empowerment will tend to participate in proactive behaviour and innovative work practices as a result of heightened confidence and autonomy (Phairat and Potipiroon, 2022; Nwanzu and Babalola, 2024). Psychological empowerment has been proposed to enhance engagement and productivity in other industries like banks and ICTs in Nigeria, yet its implementation is still intermittent in telecommunications companies (Aduwo et al., 2021; Nwachukwu et al., 2022). In

most Nigerian telecom organisations, the hierarchical decision-making processes diminish the feeling of autonomy among employees hence lowering the potential to innovate. This implies that psychological empowerment is not exploited as an innovation strategic force in the telecommunications sector in Nigeria.

2.3. Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour

The innovative work behaviour (IWB) is the creation, encouragement, and adoption of new ideas in an organisation by employees. According to Janssen (2000), it was defined as purposeful generation, presentation and implementation of new ideas in a job position. Scott and Bruce (1994) referred to it as a multi-stage process of which idea generation, championing, and implementation were involved. It was conceptualised by De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) as the activities of the employees who seek to enhance products, services, or processes by means of innovation. Such definitions also emphasise innovation as a behavioural process that goes beyond creativity to entail implementation and organisational impact. It has been found that IWB is a key element in organisational competitiveness, particularly in technology-intensive industries (Lasisi et al., 2024; Ibeku and Nwagwu, 2024). Leadership, organisational culture and psychological conditions affect innovative work behaviour in organisational practice. It has been demonstrated that transformational leadership and conducive working conditions can greatly contribute to employee innovation (Agazu et al., 2025; Edonomokumor et al., 2025). Innovative work behaviour is becoming significant in Nigeria as the telecommunications, oil and gas as well as banking industries are rapidly digitalising. Nonetheless, the empirical data indicate that the Nigerian employees are moderately innovative because of structural limitations and the absence of opportunities to become empowered (Tamunosiki-Amadi et al., 2023). In telecom companies, the management drives innovation as opposed to the employees, thus restricting the creativity of employees. This highlights the importance of knowing psychological and spiritual aspects of workplace that can promote innovative work behaviour in Nigeria.

2.4. Employees' Readiness for Change

Employees readiness to change can be said to be the degree to which the employees are psychologically and emotionally ready to accept and embrace change initiatives in the organisation. Armenakis et al. (1993) described it as cognitive and emotional beliefs of the need and ability to apply change. According to Holt et al. (2007), it was defined as the beliefs, attitudes and intentions of the individual on whether change is needed and the organisational ability to bring the change. Weiner (2009) also described it as a mutual determination and will to effect change in an organisation. These definitions emphasise the preparedness to change as an individual and group psychological condition that determines the success of change. Research indicates that change preparedness increases employee flexibility, creativity, and organisational efficiency (Salem et al., 2023; Aboobaker et al., 2022). Leadership style, communication and psychological empowerment determine readiness to change in organisations. It has been shown that transformational leadership and workplace spirituality are a considerable enhancement of change preparedness due to the development of trust and sense of meaning in work (Zhao et al., 2022; Astakoni et al., 2022). The readiness to change is paramount in Nigeria because of the digital transformation that is going on in the country and especially in the telecommunication sector, where companies are implementing AI, 5G, and cloud-based solutions. Nevertheless, it

has been demonstrated that Nigerian workers tend to oppose change because of the fear of losing their jobs, poor communication, and a poor empowerment system (Omoeffe, 2024). Such resistance inhibits the adoption of innovation and retards organisational change within the telecom companies, which implies that readiness to change should be considered as a mediating variable in the context of innovation research.

2.5. The Nigerian Telecommunications Industry Context

The telecommunications sector in Nigeria is among the most vibrant industries in Africa with some of the firms like the MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile playing a significant role in the GDP and jobs. The industry has experienced a booming growth owing to the rise in mobile penetration, online banking and the use of the internet. Although this growth is present, the performance of innovation is not balanced as companies can hardly harness the full capabilities of employees in terms of creativity and psychological resources in innovation (Ibeku and Nwagwu, 2024; Tamunosiki-Amadi et al., 2023). Research indicates that fewer than a quarter of the employees in telecom companies in Nigeria actively engage in innovation-related activities, whereas more than 65% of employees in developed economies do (Nguyen et al., 2023). This indicates a structural loophole in human resource practices and employee engagement systems. Digital transformation has been invested heavily in the industry, but the behavioural preparedness of employees is a challenge. As one example, when the AI-based customer service systems were introduced in the context of the MTN Nigeria, internal reports showed a lack of flexibility in the employees and poor involvement in the innovation processes (Omoeffe, 2024). On the same note, Airtel Nigeria experienced delays in internal digital adoption because of the low levels of psychological empowerment of employees. These issues underscore the significance of workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment in the provision of innovation outcomes. This research is necessitated by the fact that the constructs have not been well integrated to explain innovative work behaviour in the telecommunications sector in Nigeria, especially by the willingness of employees to change as a mediating variable.

2.6. Development of Research Questions

Research Question 1: How does workplace spirituality influence employees' readiness for change in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?

Workplace spirituality has increasingly been recognised as a more and more valued strategic organizational resource that is believed to enhance the psychological resilience, adaptability, and willingness of employees to accept organizational change. It is often defined as employees' perceptions of positive work experiences, community and congruence of individual and organisational values (Vasconcelos, 2018; Astakoni et al., 2022). Likewise, workplace spirituality has been defined as a work atmosphere where employees feel a sense of purpose, connectedness, trust, and ethical relationships with the organisation, which leads to positive attitudes towards the organisation's goals (Adnan et al., 2020; Dubey et al., 2022). In another way of looking at it, workplace spirituality is a culture that fosters compassion, belongingness and intrinsic motivation, thus deepening the relationship between employees and the organisation (Iqbal et al., 2021; Ojobu et al., 2024). These spiritually supportive settings increase the trust of employees in decisions made by the organisation, and minimize uncertainty around change efforts. Employees who feel that their jobs have significance and who trust organisational leadership are more willing to accept and accept organisational change and are

more prepared for change (Paul et al., 2020; Saeed et al., 2022). Empirical evidence additionally indicates that workplace spirituality boosts workforce agility, organisational commitment, and positive work attitudes, which are conducive to employees' readiness to accept change and innovation (Jena, 2022; Gamasiwi et al., 2023). Similarly, Aboobaker et al. (2022) found that workplace spirituality has a positive impact on employee readiness to change, which in turn fosters innovative work behaviour. The literature indicates that there is not much empirical focus on the direct impact of workplace spirituality on the preparedness of employees for change in the Nigerian telecommunication industry, hence the need for the current study, as the previous studies have examined workplace spirituality with respect to employees' effectiveness in the telecommunication industry in the following areas: employee engagement, employee organizational commitment, agility, turnover intention and innovative work behaviour (Pariyanti et al., 2024; Salem et al., 2023; Saxena & Prasad, 2023).

Research Question 2: What is the impact of psychological empowerment on employees' readiness for change in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?

Psychological empowerment is considered as one of the most important motivational factors contributing to the improved self-efficacy and self-determination of employees and their ability to handle organisational changes. It has been conceptualized as the perceived meaning, competence, self-determination and impact of employees in relation to their work responsibilities (Nguyen et al., 2022; Nwachukwu et al., 2022). It is also considered as a psychological condition in which workers can exercise their discretion, have influence on the results of the organization and can actively participate in the decision-making process (Al Jedi & Al Mojahed, 2024; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2024). Moreover, psychological empowerment is an intrinsic motivational mechanism that leads to work ownership, proactivity, and self-confidence in managing new work demands (Sheeba & Christopher, 2024; Muneer et al., 2024). The use of technology and digital transformation is a phenomenon that continues to gain momentum in organisations, and as technology advances, employees feel more empowered and secure to embrace organisational changes because they believe they can do so successfully in the face of new responsibilities and work processes (Phairat & Potipiroon, 2022; Omofe, 2024). Previous studies have demonstrated that psychological empowerment enhances employee creativity, innovation, job performance, engagement, and organisational effectiveness by fostering positive attitudes towards organisational initiatives (Nguyen et al., 2023; Al Jedi & Al Mojahed, 2024). Furthermore, empowered employees are more likely to demonstrate positive qualities such as optimism, resilience and behavioural flexibility, which are essential traits of readiness for organisational change (Tjimuku et al., 2025; Onyewuchi & Oguegbe, 2025). Notwithstanding these empirical contributions, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on the direct effect of psychological empowerment on employees' readiness for change in Nigeria's telecommunication industry, which this study aims to fill.

Research Question 3: To what extent does employees' readiness for change mediate the relationship among workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, and employees' innovative work behaviour in the Nigerian telecommunications industry?

Contemporary organisational behaviour literature increasingly suggests that there is a growing emphasis on the role of employees' readiness for change as a psychological mechanism that links workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment to innovative work behaviour. Workplace spirituality fosters a work context that is defined by meaning, trust, shared values and connectedness among the people involved, which in turn motivates employees to embrace

change in the organisation, and actively engage in innovation projects (Bantha and Nayak, 2021; Salem et al., 2023). Similarly, psychological empowerment can improve staff members' self-efficacy, self-determination, and self-efficacy, which can empower them to adapt to the shifting requirements of their workplaces, engage in creativity, and demonstrate innovation (Nguyen et al., 2022; Sheeba & Christopher, 2024). Psychologically prepared employees are more receptive to new concepts and ideas, more oriented to learning, are more flexible and have a higher willingness to apply new solutions in their organization (Aboobaker et al., 2022; Lasisi et al., 2024). Some previous empirical studies have independently found workplace spirituality to be related to innovative work behaviour (Saxena & Prasad, 2023; Tamunosiki-Amadi et al., 2023), psychological empowerment to be related to employee creativity and innovation (Phairat & Potipiroon, 2022; Muneer et al., 2024), and readiness for change to be related to innovative outcomes (Aboobaker et al., 2022). The existing literature, however, has mostly investigated these constructs individually, and studied only simple mediation relationships, leaving little empirical evidence to examine the employees' readiness for change as the mediating variable between workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment and innovative work behaviour, especially in the Nigerian telecommunications industry. This theoretical and empirical gap, therefore, calls for the need of the present study.

2.7. Theoretical Synthesis

The Job Demands Resources (JD-R) Theory by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) is one of the salient theories that will be used to guide this study. The theory presupposes that each job has demands (things that need to be maintained) and resources (things that decrease demands and trigger growth, learning, and motivation). It also assumes that job resources, including autonomy, social support, and meaningful work, increase employee engagement, which produces not only positive results, such as creativity and innovative behaviour, but also burnout (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). Within the framework of the current research, workplace spirituality and psychological empowerment are the main job resources that promote the psychological energy and intrinsic motivation of employees. In Nigeria, particularly in the fast-paced industries like telecommunications, the resources play a vital role in helping employees to balance between the high service demands and the ability to create innovative solutions and adapt to the technological change (Aduwo et al., 2021; Ojogiwa and Nhari, 2024).

The next theory is the Social Exchange Theory (SET) that was initially designed by Blau (1964). The theory stipulates that the relationships in the workplace are founded on mutual exchange in the sense that employees will reciprocate positive treatment by the organisation through positive behaviours such as commitment, loyalty and innovation. It posits that employees are expected to give back to organisations by offering favourable work behaviours when organisations offer psychological empowerment, support, and meaningful work environments (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Spirituality in the workplace helps in this exchange because it enhances trust, respect and sense of belonging, which enhances the willingness of the employees to provide innovative ideas. This theory can be applied to understand the way employees in telecommunications companies react to positive HR practices and enabling environments by becoming more willing to change and adopt innovative work behaviour (Salau et al., 2021; Akinleye et al., 2025).

Another theoretical extension is that of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), which postulates that behavioural intentions (influenced by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control) drive individual behaviour. The willingness of employees to

change is closely related to perceived behavioural control and organisational change attitudes that predetermine the readiness of employees to innovate their work behaviour. Psychological empowerment boosts perceived control, whereas workplace spirituality boosts positive attitudes towards work meaning and organisational purpose. TPB is used to explain how empowered and spiritually engaged employees in Nigeria telecommunications industry form more robust intentions to adapt to change and generate innovative ideas in an environment of digital transformation and organisational restructuring.

3. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

The research design employed in this study was descriptive research design based on quantitative research methodology to determine how spirituality and psychological empowerment at the workplace affect innovative work behaviour of employees in Nigeria with the mediator being the willingness of employees to change. The descriptive design was deemed suitable as it enables one to collect, analyse and interpret numerical data in a systematic manner thus explaining the relationship between variables as they naturally exist without any form of manipulation. The quantitative method also allows objective measurement of such constructs as workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, readiness to change, and innovative work behaviour with the help of structured questionnaires and the statistical modelling methods (Adewumi and Abasilim, 2024; Ngene et al., 2024). The design is specifically appropriate when conducting behavioural research within organisational settings where massive employee perceptions are needed to form generalisable results. The design is also capable of testing hypothesis and analysis of structural relationship between latent variables, which is the focus of the study objective. Since the research is aimed at causal associations (direct and indirect effects) of psychological and behavioural constructs, a descriptive quantitative design would offer the statistical rigour necessary to conduct such analysis (Deng et al., 2023; Ystaas et al., 2023). In the case of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, where organisational behaviour is determined by the intense technological change, the design allows the real-time employee perceptions of various firms to be captured, which makes the measurement objective and consistent.

3.2. Population and Sample Size

The sample population of this paper will include the employees of the four (4) leading telecommunications firms in Nigeria that are listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX), i.e. MTN Nigeria, Airtel Africa (Nigeria operations), Globacom Nigeria and 9mobile Nigeria. These companies were chosen because they are leading players in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria, their subscriber numbers are large and they have a massive contribution to the digital economy and GDP of Nigeria. Together, these companies represent more than 90% of active telecom subscribers in Nigeria, thus being the most representative of the workforce dynamics in the industry. They also have good corporate governance structures, standardised HR systems and innovation-driven strategies that make them ideal to study the outcome of workplace behaviour, empowerment and innovation (Akinleye et al., 2025; Emumena and Hamilton, 2022). The approximate number of employees in these four organisations is around 2,110 employees comprising managerial, technical, customer services, IT, HR, and operational departments.

Based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, a population of this size will need a minimum of about 423 respondents. To enhance the statistical power, minimise the sampling error, and enhance the stability of the models in Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), however, the sample size was enlarged to 423 respondents. This is regarded as a sufficient sample to conduct SEM analysis, which normally needs to be large to estimate latent constructs and mediate effects reliably (Hair et al., 2021; Deng et al., 2023). The choice will make sure that all four companies are represented and increase the generalisability of the findings to the telecommunications sector in Nigeria.

3.3. Sampling Technique

The researcher used a multi-stage sampling, which involved stratified sampling and proportionate simple random sampling. The stratification of the population was done in the first stage, using the four chosen telecommunications companies (MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile). This stratification made sure that every organisation had a fair representation based on the number of people working in it hence increasing the comparability among firms. The stratification was required since the organisations vary in structure, size and complexity of their operations which can affect the workplace spirituality, empowerment practices and innovation outcomes (Salau et al., 2021; Aduwo et al., 2021). The second stage involved simple random sampling of respondents within each of the strata so that all employees had an equal and independent opportunity of being selected. This probability-based method eliminates selection bias and enhances reliability and validity of the collected data. The stratified and simple random sampling is especially suitable with heterogeneous population like employees of telecommunications, as there is a great difference in job position and departmental functions. The approach will also make sure that the final sample of 423 respondents will represent varied views in technical, managerial, and operational departments of the major telecommunications companies in Nigeria.

Table 1
Measurement of Variables

Construct	Dimensions Measured	Sample Items	Scale Type	Source
Workplace Spirituality	Meaningful work, sense of community, value alignment	"My work gives me a sense of meaning and purpose"	5-point Likert	Aduwo et al. (2021); Gomes (2023)
Psychological Empowerment	Meaning, competence, autonomy, impact	"I have autonomy in deciding how to perform my job"	5-point Likert	Salau et al. (2018); Agazu et al. (2025)
Readiness for Change	Attitude toward change, openness, confidence	"I am ready to adapt to organisational changes"	5-point Likert	Akinleye et al. (2025); Edonomokumor et al. (2025)
Innovative Work Behaviour	Idea generation, promotion, implementation	"I actively generate new ideas to improve my work"	5-point Likert	Ystaas et al. (2023); Deng et al. (2023)

3.4. *Research Instrument*

The main data collection tool was the structured questionnaire, which was aimed to evaluate workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, the willingness of the employees to change, and innovative work behaviour. The questionnaire was broken down into five parts, Section A took demographic data, Section B evaluated spirituality at work, Section C evaluated psychological empowerment, Section D evaluated the willingness of employees to change, and Section E evaluated innovative work behaviour. The scale of all constructs was the 5-point Likert scale, between 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree, which makes it possible to measure attitudes and perceptions in a quantifiable way (Deng et al., 2023; Salau et al., 2018). The structured questionnaire will be standardised, easy to administer and comparable of the responses among the four telecommunications firms. It can also be used to measure latent constructs needed to perform Structural Equation Modelling (see Table 1).

3.5. *Method of Data Analysis*

data obtained on the 423 valid questionnaires were coded and analysed with Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) version 4.1.1 using SmartPLS software. SEM was used since it enables analysis of several dependent and independent variables at the same time, and thus it is suitable in testing the complex relationships like mediation effects. In comparison to the conventional regression approaches, SEM allows estimating both direct and indirect effects and consider measurement error, which enhances the accuracy and strength of the findings (Hair et al., 2021; Deng et al., 2023). The choice of the SmartPLS 4.1.1 (Partial Least Squares-SEM) is justified by the fact that the method is suitable in predictive research models and can be used to work with complex models with multiple constructs and indicators even when the data is not normal. PLS-SEM is also suitable with medium sample sizes like 423 respondents and hence it is suitable to use in this study. The analysis consisted of two key steps (1) measurement model assessment (validity and reliability tests such as Cronbachs Alpha, Composite Reliability, AVE, and discriminant validity), and (2) structural model assessment (path coefficients, R², f², Q², and mediation analysis with bootstrapping techniques).

4. **Data Presentation and Analysis**

According to the data provided in this study, the response rate to the questionnaire that was issued to the employees of the chosen telecommunications companies in Nigeria (MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile) is high as 401 valid responses were retrieved out of the 423 distributed questionnaires, which is a high retrieval rate. This implies that there was a high degree of collaboration and readiness of the employees to take part in the study, which increased the reliability and validity of results. The questionnaires were conducted both in hard-copy and soft-copy (Google Forms) to make sure that the information was more widely spread and accessible to various departments and work shifts, including field and technical employees who might not have access to email-based survey during working hours. The researcher used follow up reminders, direct contact through the HR liaison officers as well as scheduled collection visits of hard copies in order to enhance the response rate and minimise non-response and incomplete responses. Moreover, the assurance of confidentiality and clear definition of the academic purpose of the study were also offered to promote honest participation. Among the 22 questionnaires that were not retrieved or filled in correctly, there were those that were as a

result of time constraints and workload pressure among the employees, which contributed to a minor non-response rate. In general, the obtained response rate of 401 valid questionnaires is discussed as very sufficient to conduct statistical analysis as the response rates over 70% are usually accepted in survey-based studies and provide strong inferential statistics analysis of workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, readiness to change, and innovative work behaviour in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria (See Table 2 and Figure 1).

Table 2
Response Rate

Questionnaire	Total
Copies of Questionnaire Distributed	423
Copies of Questionnaire Retrieved	401
Copies of Questionnaire Not Retrieved	22

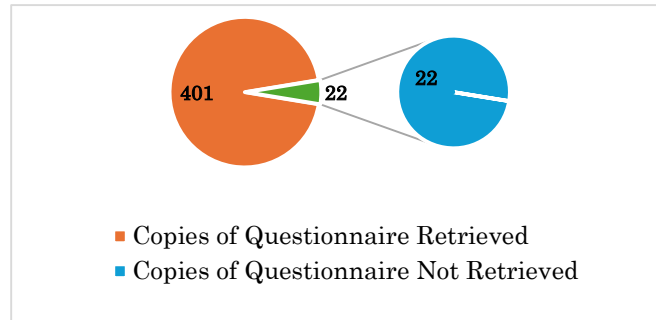


Fig. 1. Response Rate

4.1. Analysis of Respondent's Demographic Data

The analysis of respondent demographic characteristics provides essential insight into the composition of employees who participated in the study across the selected telecommunications companies in Nigeria. The study sample used in the analysis was 401 valid responses (out of 423 distributed questionnaires). The demographics were divided into five important levels, which include: name of telecommunication company, gender, age, educational qualification and work experience, to have a complete picture of the respondents' distribution. The classification is significant because it assists in explaining how the differences in respondent background can affect the perceptions of spirituality in the workplace, psychological empowerment, change readiness and innovative work behaviour (see Table 3).

The demographic profile of the 401 respondents shows that the highest number of 32.4% goes to the MTN Nigeria, then Airtel Nigeria (27.6%) and Globacom Nigeria (22.7%) and lastly 9mobile Nigeria (17.3) indicating a relatively balanced coverage in the sample of the four telecommunications companies. Regarding gender composition, 56.1% of the respondents were male, and 43.9% were female, which indicates that the workforce was moderately male, but well female representation was recorded in the study. Age distribution indicates that majority of the respondents were between the age group of 18-30 years (46.8%), closely followed by 31-40 years (40.2%) with few respondents in the 41-50 years (9.1%) and 51-60 years (3.9%) respectively, which implies that the workforce is also young and within productive active age brackets. Education level demonstrates that most of the respondents possessed HND/B.Sc/BA degrees (62.5%), then postgraduate qualifications (23.4%), PhD holders (2.0%), and others (12.1) and are a very highly educated workforce with high academic backgrounds. Lastly, work experience reveals that 57.8% of the respondents had more than 3 years of experience, 21.6% had 1-3 years, 11.9% had 7-12 months, and 8.7% had 0-6 months, which means that the majority of the respondents had considerable organisational experience, which increases the credibility of the results on workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, readiness for change, and innovative work behaviour in Nigeria's telecommunications industry.

Table 3
Demographic characteristics (n = 401)

Characteristics	Categories	Percentage (%)
Name of Telecommunication Company	MTN Nigeria	32.4
	Airtel Nigeria	27.6
	Globacom Nigeria	22.7
	9mobile Nigeria	17.3
Gender	Male	56.1
	Female	43.9
Age	18–30	46.8
	31–40	40.2
	41–50	9.1
	51–60	3.9
Education	HND/B.Sc/BA	62.5
	MSc/MA/MBA/MPA	23.4
	PhD	2.0
	Other	12.1
Experience	0–6 months	8.7
	7–12 months	11.9
	1–3 years	21.6
	Above 3 years	57.8

4.2. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

The section provides the descriptive statistics of the major variables under analysis within the framework of this study, i.e., workplace spirituality, psychological empowerment, readiness of employees to change, and innovative work behaviour of employees. The analysis gives a clue on the central tendency and dispersion of responses and internal consistency of the measurement scales applied. The alpha value of Cronbach was calculated to determine the reliability of every construct, and the values of means and standard deviation were calculated to determine the perception of respondents. Table 4 summarises and presents the results.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (n = 401)

SN	Items	No of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	SD
1	Workplace Spirituality	17	0.912	3.286	0.642
2	Psychological Empowerment	18	0.925	3.341	0.618
3	Employees' Readiness for Change	15	0.903	3.198	0.671
4	Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour	20	0.934	3.372	0.605

The findings show that the internal consistency of all constructs was high with a Cronbach alpha of between 0.903 and 0.934 which is above the acceptable range of 0.70, therefore, demonstrating the reliability of the measurement scales. The highest mean score was obtained on the innovative work behaviour of the employees (Mean = 3.372, SD = 0.605), indicating that the respondents tended to have a high level of innovative behaviour at the workplace. This was closely followed by psychological empowerment (Mean = 3.341, SD = 0.618) and workplace

spirituality (Mean = 3.286, SD = 0.642) which implies that the employees felt that there was a supportive and meaningful work environment and that they felt competent and autonomous. Nevertheless, the mean score obtained by employees' readiness for change was the least among the three (Mean = 3.198, SD = 0.671) but still higher than the midpoint, meaning employees are moderately ready to adjust to organisational change. It can be observed from the results that the standard deviations are relatively low in all the three variables, indicating a similar perception among employees regarding their readiness for organisational change. Based on the results, it can be concluded that although Nigerian telecommunications companies have employees who are creative and well-motivated, efforts should still be made to improve their readiness for change through change management.

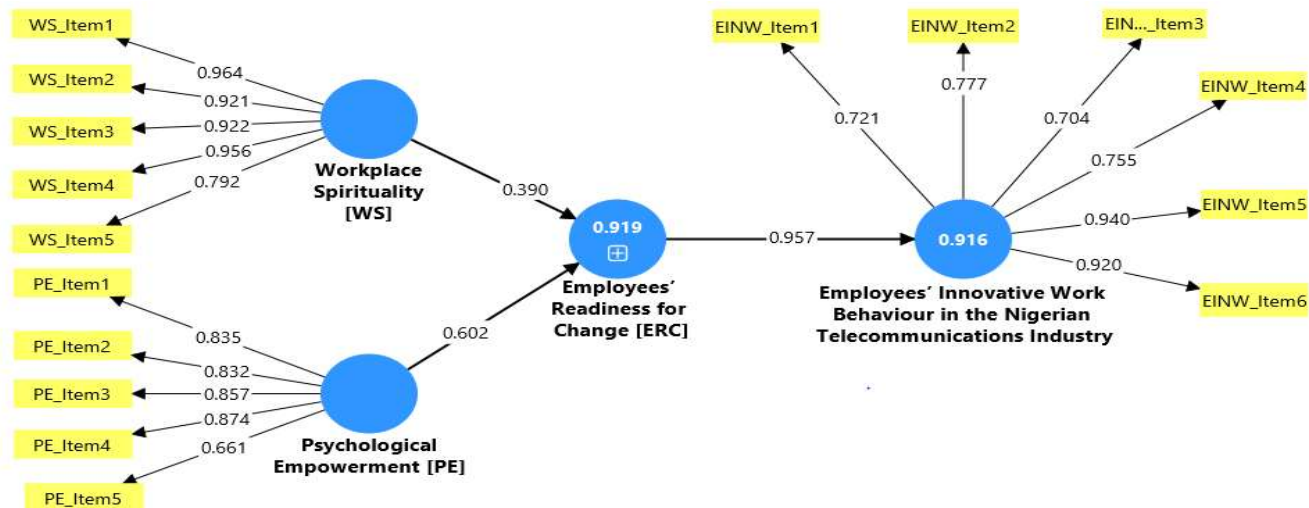


Fig. 2. Path Coefficient for the Mediating Role of Employees' Readiness for Change on the relationship between Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment and Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour

4.3. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) – Partial Least Squares (PLS)

The test of the mediating and moderating effects and the analysis of the relationships between the variables of the study was done with the help of the SEM-PLS technique (version 4.1.1.1), as it is the most appropriate method in the analysis of the complex predictive relationships between many latent constructs in the organisational behaviour research. The model was designed into four major constructs, which are Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment as independent variables, Employees innovative work behaviour as dependent variable and Employees Readiness to Change as the mediating variable, which were measured using multiple indicators. Workplace Spirituality was measured by meaningful work, a sense of community, inner life connection and alignment of personal and organisational values; Psychological Empowerment was measured using meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact; Employees innovative Work Behaviour was measured using idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation; and Employees Readiness to change was measured using willingness to change, adaptability, openness to new processes, The study hypothesised that Workplace Spirituality significantly influences Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour (H1), Psychological Empowerment significantly influences Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour (H2), Workplace Spirituality significantly influences Employees' Readiness for Change (H3), Psychological Empowerment significantly influences Employees' Readiness for Change (H4), Employees' Readiness for Change significantly influences Employees' Innovative Work

Behaviour (H5), and Employees' Readiness for Change mediates the relationships between Workplace Spirituality, Psychological Empowerment, and Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour (H6). This, thereby, justifies the use of SEM-PLS as an appropriate analytical technique for simultaneously estimating direct, indirect, and interaction effects within the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry context (See Figures 2-4).

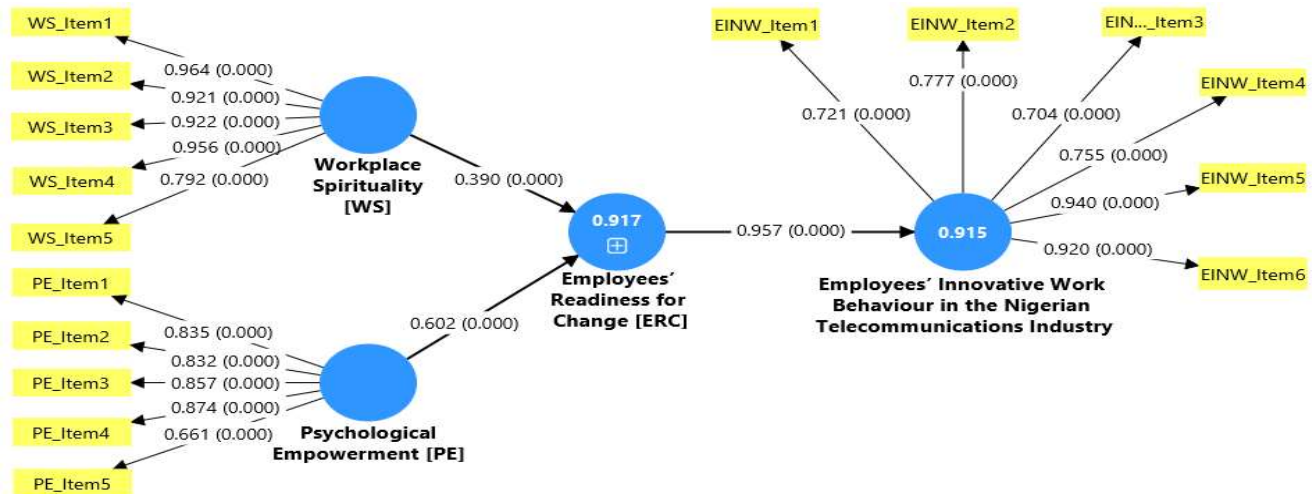


Fig. 3. Path Coefficient and P values for the Mediating Role of Employees' Readiness for Change on the relationship between Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment and Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour

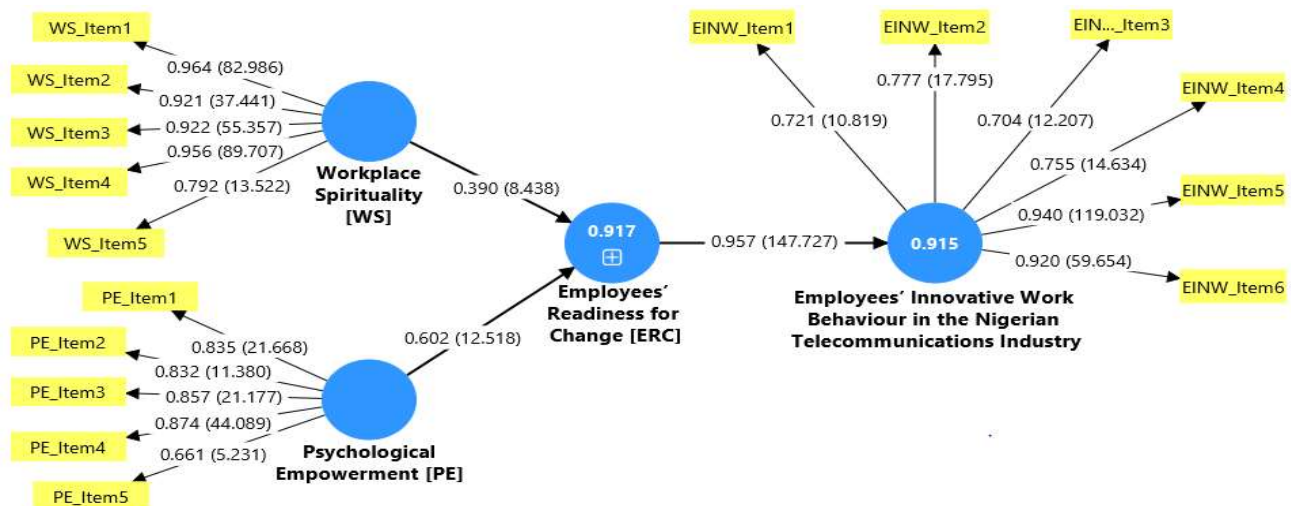


Fig. 4. Path Coefficient and T values for Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment, Employees' Readiness and Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour

Figure 2 showed the measurement model of this study and all the indicator loadings were above the recommended threshold of 0.70, which confirmed a high level of convergent validity and reliability of the constructs, which are Workplace Spirituality, Psychological Empowerment, Employees Readiness to Change and Employees innovative Work Behaviour in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry. Figure 3 depicted the structural model that presented the direct relationship between Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment with Employees Readiness to Change, and direct impact on Employees Innovative Work Behaviour. Figure 4 particularly showed the mediation model which made it clear that there are indirect routes through which the Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment promote Employees Innovative Work Behaviour via Employees Readiness to Change. Figure 4 and Figure 5 provided

the path coefficient histograms to evaluate the stability and distribution of the structural estimates and as such, demonstrated the strength and soundness of the PLS-SEM findings.

Path coefficients histogram: Employees' _Readiness for _Change [ERC] -> Employees' Innovative...

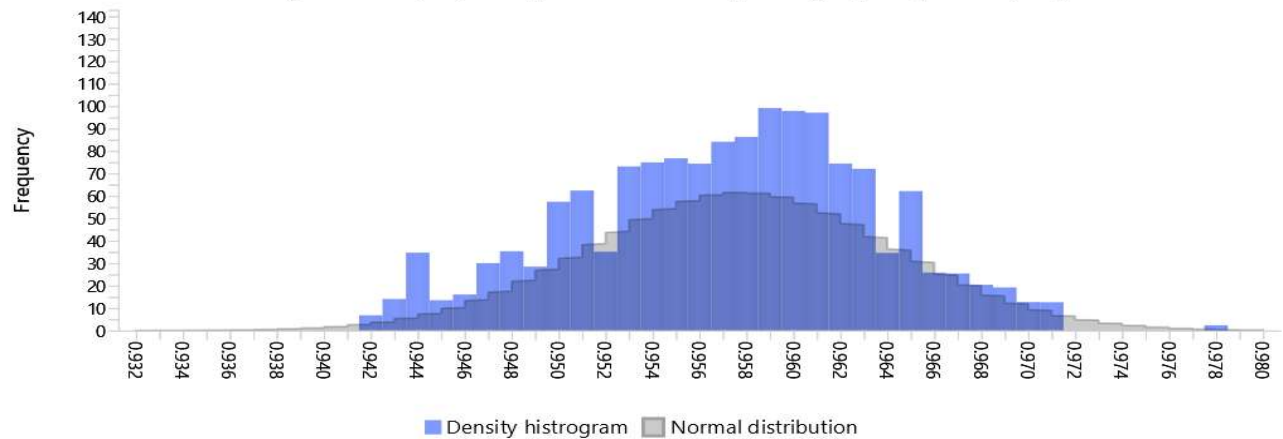


Fig. 5. Path Coefficient Histogram for Path Coefficient for Employees' Readiness for Change and Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour

Path coefficients histogram: Psychological_Empowerment [PE] -> Employees' _Readiness for _Ch...

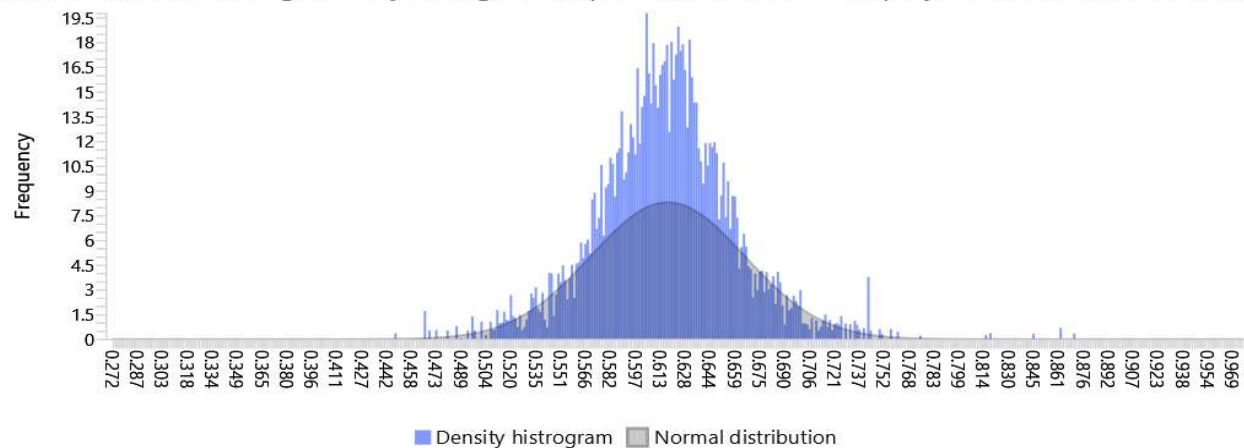


Fig. 6. Path Coefficient histogram for Psychological Empowerment and Employees' Readiness for Change

Path coefficients histogram: Workplace_Spirituality_[WS] -> Employees' _Readiness for _Change ...

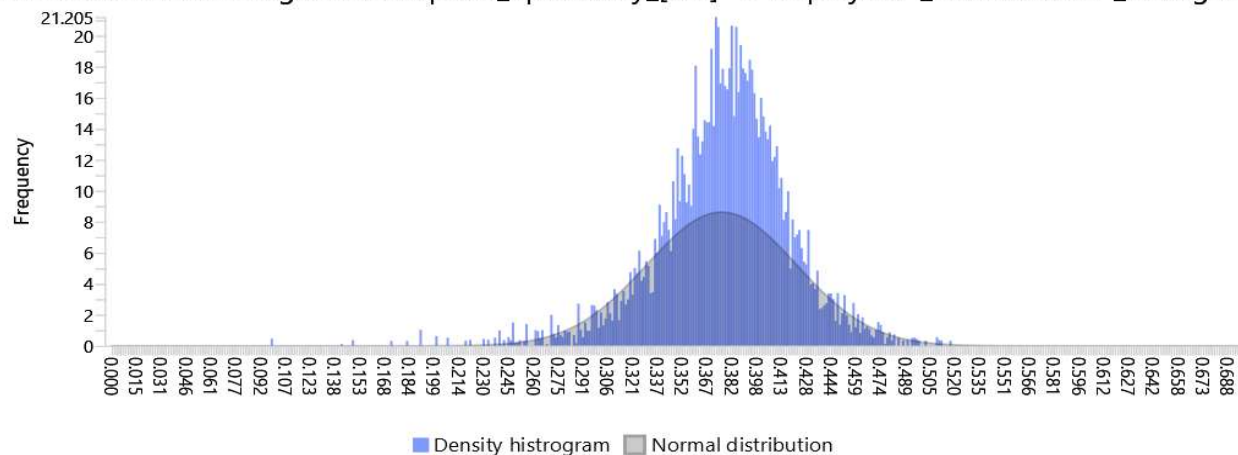


Fig. 7. Path Coefficient Histogram for Workplace Spirituality and Employee Readiness for Change

Table 4.2
Summary of SEM-PLS Results

Construct Reliability and Validity			
	Cronbach's Alpha [> 0.70]	Composite Reliability [> 0.80]	Average Variance Extracted [> 0.60]
Workplace Spirituality [WSP]	0.950	0.971	0.834
Psychological Empowerment [PSE]	0.877	0.906	0.665
Employee Readiness for Change [ERC]	0.948	0.955	0.799
Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour [EIWB]	0.891	0.917	0.653
Path Co-efficient – Mean, STDEV, T values and P values			
Path Relationship [Total Effect]	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Workplace Spirituality [WS] → Employee Readiness for Change [ERC]	0.390	8.438	0.000
Workplace Spirituality → Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour [Indirect Effect]	0.373	8.286	0.000
Psychological Empowerment [PE] → Employee Readiness for Change [ERC]	0.602	12.518	0.000
Psychological Empowerment → Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour [Indirect Effect]	0.576	12.798	0.000
Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment → Employee Readiness for Change [ERC]	0.555	10.836	0.000
Employee Readiness for Change [ERC] [mediating role] → Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour [EIWB]	0.957	147.727	0.000
	R2	Adjusted R2	
Employee Readiness for Change [ERC]	0.919	0.917	
Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour [EIWB] in the Telecommunication Industry	0.916	0.915	

The results of Table 4 revealed that the measurement model had a great construct reliability and validity in the Telecommunications Industry of Nigeria. The constructs met the necessary thresholds, and the Cronbach Alpha values were greater than 0.70, Composite Reliability were greater than 0.80, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was greater than 0.60. Specifically, Workplace Spirituality recorded 0.950, 0.971, and 0.834; Psychological Empowerment had 0.877, 0.906, and 0.665; Employee Readiness for Change showed 0.948, 0.955, and 0.799; while Employees' Innovative Work Behaviour recorded 0.891, 0.917, and 0.653. These findings affirm that the constructs are reliable and valid to measure the study variables.

Taking a closer look at the reliability values, it was found that the internal consistency of Workplace Spirituality ($\alpha = 0.950$; CR = 0.971) and Employee Readiness for Change ($\alpha = 0.948$; CR = 0.955) is very high, which means that employees within the telecommunications industry have very high common perceptions regarding these constructs. There were also good levels of reliability in Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Work Behaviour. The AVE values, which all exceed 0.60, also indicated that each construct accounts a considerable amount of

variance of its indicators, hence, convergent validity. The outcome of the structural model showed that Workplace Spirituality positively and significantly influences Employee Readiness to Change ($\beta = 0.390$, $t = 8.438$, $p = 0.000$). It means that employees are better and more ready to accept change when they feel that they have a purpose and belong. The impact of Psychological Empowerment on Employee Readiness to Change was even stronger ($\beta = 0.602$, $t = 12.518$, $p = 0.000$) which implies that employees who feel competent and have autonomy are better prepared to respond to organisational changes.

Concerning the indirect effects, the results indicated that Workplace Spirituality has a significant impact on the Innovative Work Behaviour of Employees by way of Employee Readiness to Change ($\beta = 0.373$, $t = 8.286$, $p = 0.000$). In the same manner, the Psychological Empowerment also exerted a strong and significant indirect influence on Innovative Work Behaviour ($\beta = 0.576$, $t = 12.798$, $p = 0.000$). This means that Employee Readiness for Change is an effective mediator between the independent variables and outcomes of innovation in the telecommunications industry. Moreover, the Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment showed to have a strong and significant combined effect on Employee Readiness to Change ($\beta = 0.555$, $t = 10.836$, $p = 0.000$), which means that both of them influence the readiness of employees to change. The effect of Employee Readiness for Change on Employees Innovative Work Behaviour ($\beta = 0.957$; $t = 147.727$; $p = 0.000$) was also very strong, which proves that Employee Readiness to Change plays a powerful mediating role. This demonstrates that the willingness to change is a major innovation driver in the industry.

Lastly, the R2 values were high showing that the model is very powerful in its explanatory ability. The R2 and adjusted R2 of Employee Readiness to Change were 0.919 and 0.917, respectively, indicating that 91.9 percent of the change in readiness can be accounted by Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment. The R2 of the Innovative Work Behaviour of the employees was 0.916 with an adjusted R2 of 0.915 meaning that 91.6% of its variation is due to Employee Readiness for Change. These high values confirm that the model is strong and suitable for explaining innovative behaviour in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

This study found out that Employees Readiness to Change is a significant influence on Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment, which consequently leads to Employees Readiness to Change, driving Employees Innovative Work Behaviour in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry. The results showed that Psychological Empowerment had a stronger effect on readiness for change ($\beta = 0.602$, $t = 12.518$, $p = 0.000$) compared to Workplace Spirituality ($\beta = 0.390$, $t = 8.438$, $p = 0.000$). Moreover, Employee Readiness to Change had a significant impact on Innovative Work Behaviour ($\beta = 0.957$, $t = 147.727$, $p = 0.000$) which supports the fact that it is a mediating variable. This means that before the employees can demonstrate innovative behaviours, they have to be psychologically and behaviourally ready to change.

This paper coincides with the findings by Aboobaker, Zakkariya and Edward (2022) and Garg, et al. (2022) who had previously determined that workplace spirituality increases the willingness of employees to change and adopt innovative behaviour. The results also support those of Paul et al. (2020) and Saeed et al. (2022) that discovered that spirituality in the workplace enhances employee flexibility and change responsiveness. This outcome, in particular, implies that once employees derive meaning in their work and feel attached to organisational values, they will be more open to change and more willing to bring innovative

ideas in the telecommunications industry. The results also echo the study by Al Jedi and Al Mojahed (2024) and Nguyen et al. (2023), who demonstrated that psychological empowerment positively affects the performance and creativity of employees. On the same note, the research concurs with Sheeba et al. (2024), who discovered that empowered employees tend to be more inclined to participate in the innovative work behaviour. This means that the employees will be more ready to accept change and add to innovation when they feel competent, autonomous, and impactful.

The results are also consistent with those of Muneer, et al. (2024) and Nguyen et al. (2022), who stressed the mediating impact of psychological and behavioural elements in the promotion of innovation. Similarly, the findings agree with Phairat and Potipiroon (2022), who determined that psychological empowerment and organisational climate have a significant impact on innovative behaviour among telecommunication companies. This implies that the willingness of employees to change is a major process by which the spirituality and psychological empowerment in the workplace are converted into the results of innovation. The results however, slightly contradict the studies of Pariyanti et al. (2024) and Jena (2022) which implied that workplace spirituality does not necessarily result in positive organisational performance like retention. Although in that research turnover intention was considered, the current research demonstrates that workplace spirituality has a significant impact on readiness to change and innovate. The results also expand the arguments of Omoeffe (2024) by showing that readiness to change is a more powerful mediator than moderation effects. Thus, this paper confirms that the psychological willingness and the sense of purpose in the workplace of employees are the key drivers of innovation in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry.

5. Conclusion

The research found that the Workplace Spirituality and Psychological Empowerment are relevant factors that influence the Innovative Work Behaviour of Employees in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry. The results revealed that the two variables have a significant positive impact on Employee Readiness to Change that consequently enhances innovation. This implies that organisations that concentrate on both the emotional and psychological wellbeing of their employees have better chances of coming up with better innovative outcomes. It was also found that Employee Readiness for Change is a key mediating variable in the model. It was noted that, prior to engaging in innovative work behaviour, employees have to be willing, adaptable, and mentally prepared. In the absence of this preparedness, the beneficial impacts of spirituality and empowerment might not completely be converted into innovation.

Also, the research found out that Psychological Empowerment is more influential on readiness to change than Workplace Spirituality. This implies that autonomy, competence, and a feeling of impact are essential in equipping employees with change in a rapidly changing industry as is the case with telecommunications. In general, the paper has come to a conclusion that innovation in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry is not solely a system and structure-based process but also a process of inner values, mindset, and readiness to change of employees. Companies that integrate spirituality, empowerment, and change preparedness are in a better position to realise sustainable innovation.

6. Recommendations and Policy Implications

- To begin with, the telecommunication companies are supposed to foster Workplace Spirituality by designing a workplace that fosters meaningful work, shared values, and the feeling of belonging. This may be done by inclusive policies, team building and value-based leadership.
- Second, the Psychological Empowerment should be reinforced by the management by providing the employees with greater autonomy, decision-making power, and skills development opportunities. Employees with power feel more confident and ready to embrace change.
- Third, organisations ought to invest in change management programmes that aim at enhancing Employee Readiness of Change. There should be training, systems to communicate and support employees to adapt to the new technologies and processes.
- Lastly, policymakers and industry regulators must promote people-centred management practices by organisations that would facilitate employee wellbeing and innovation. The overall performance of the telecommunications sector will be improved by the policies that encourage continuous learning, empowerment, and good working conditions.

6.1. Contributions to Knowledge

This research adds to the body of knowledge by confirming that Employee Readiness for Change is a central mediating variable that falls in the relationship between Workplace Spirituality, Psychological Empowerment and Employees Innovative Work Behaviour. It provides a new insight by connecting emotional, psychological and behavioural variables in describing innovation in the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations.

The study has its limitation based on its cross-sectional design and the Nigerian Telecommunications Industry where generalisation to other industries might not be possible. The future research ought to use longitudinal methods and to study other variables like leadership style, organisational culture and digital transformation in order to give more insight on innovative work behaviour.

References

- Aboobaker, N., Zakkariya, K. A., & Edward, M. (2022). Workplace spirituality and employees' readiness for change as precursors to innovative work behaviour: an empirical examination. *International Journal of Intelligent Enterprise*, 9(1), 6-23.
- Adnan, N., Bhatti, O. K., & Farooq, W. (2020). Relating ethical leadership with work engagement: how workplace spirituality mediates? *Cogent Business & Management*, 7(1), 1739494.
- Al Jedi, M., & Al Mojahed, N. (2024). Effect of psychological empowerment on job performance and job satisfaction at telecommunications firms in Jordan. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 14(8), 1315-1324.
- Astakoni, I. M. P., Sariyani, N. L. P., Yulistiyono, A., Sutaguna, I. N. T., Utami, N. M. S., & Denpasar, S. T. I. M. H. (2022). Spiritual Leadership, Workplace Spirituality and Organisational Commitment; Individual Spirituality as Moderating Variable. *Italienisch*, 12(2), 620-631.

- Bantha, T., & Nayak, U. (2021). The relation of workplace spirituality with employees' innovative work behaviour: the mediating role of psychological empowerment. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 13(2), 223-235.
- Dubey, P., Pathak, A. K., & Sahu, K. K. (2022). Analysing workplace spirituality as a mediator in the link between job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behaviour. *Management Matters*, 19(2), 109-128.
- Evwierhurhoma, D. E., & Oga, K. C. (2022). The Effect of Adaptive Work Systems on Punctuality and Honesty in Ministries of Culture and Tourism in South-South States of Nigeria. *Management Sciences*, 9(6), 110-121.
- Gamasiwi, R. J., Bagis, F., Endratno, H., & Widyaningtyas, D. (2023). How to reduce workplace deviant behaviour: Through ethical leadership and workplace spirituality with organisational commitment as mediation. *International Journal Of Scientific Research And Management*, 11(12), 5596-5613.
- Garg, N., Kumari, S., & Punia, B. K. (2022). Resolving stress of university teacher: Exploring role of workplace spirituality and constructive workplace deviance. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 11(3), 295-315.
- Garg, N., Punia, B. K., & Jain, A. (2019). Workplace spirituality and job satisfaction: exploring mediating effect of organisation citizenship behaviour. *Vision*, 23(3), 287-296.
- Ibeku, S. E., & Nwagwu, W. E. (2024). Innovative culture, innovative behaviour, social capital and performance of small and medium ICT enterprises in Lagos, Nigeria. *Information Development*, 02666669241266819.
- Iqbal, Q., Ahmad, N. H., & Ahmad, B. (2021). Enhancing sustainable performance through job characteristics via workplace spirituality: A study on SMEs. *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, 12(3), 463-490.
- Jena, L. K. (2022). Does workplace spirituality lead to raising employee performance? The role of citizenship behaviour and emotional intelligence. *International Journal of Organisational Analysis*, 30(6), 1309-1334.
- Lasisi, T. T., Enea, C., Eluwole, K. K., & Egeli, S. (2024). A parallel mediation study of hospitality employee's innovative work behaviour and proactivity using self-determination theory. *Sage Open*, 14(3), 21582440241251933.
- Muneer, S., Singh, A., Choudhary, M. H., & Alshammari, A. S. (2024). The mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relationship between digital transformation, innovative work behaviour, and organisational financial performance. *Behavioural Sciences*, 15(1), 5. 1-25.
- Nguyen, H. T. N., Nguyen, H. T. T., Truong, A. T. L., Nguyen, T. T. P., & Nguyen, A. V. (2023). Entrepreneurial culture and innovative work behaviour: the mediating effect of psychological empowerment. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 15(2), 254-277.
- Nguyen, T. P. L., Nguyen, T. T., Nguyen, T. D., & Nguyen, T. V. H. (2022). Psychological empowerment and employee creativity in Vietnam telecommunication enterprises: The mediating role of intrinsic work motivation. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour Research*, 7(2-2022), 132-142.
- Nwachukwu, C., Vu, H. M., Chládková, H., & Agboga, R. S. (2022). Psychological empowerment and employee engagement: role of job satisfaction and religiosity in Nigeria. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 54(4), 666-687.
- Nwanzu, C. L., & Babalola, S. S. (2024). Psychological empowerment as moderator of the relationship between core self-evaluation and proactive work behaviour. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 1-17.
- Ojobu, A. O., Ezech, L. N., & Joe-Akunne, C. (2024). Moderating roles of workplace spirituality on work-life balance and employee engagement among bank employees in Delta State. *African Psychologist: An International Journal of Psychology and Allied Profession*, 14(2), 76-91.
- Omofe, E. E. (2024). Managerial cultural intelligence and innovative work behaviour in telecommunication companies in south-south, Nigeria: the moderating effect of psychological empowerment. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 11(3), 582-593.
- Onyewuchi, U. S., & Oguegbe, T. M. (2025). Job Crafting Behaviour among Public Sector Employees: A Predictive Study of Psychological Flexibility and Career Sense of Calling. *Practicum Psychologia*, 15(1), 1-23.

- Pariyanti, E., Adawiyah, W. R., & Wulandari, S. Z. (2024, July). Does workplace spirituality predict turnover intention in small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In *Evidence-based HRM: A Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship* (Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 643-665). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Paul, M., Jena, L. K., & Sahoo, K. (2020). Workplace spirituality and workforce agility: a psychological exploration among teaching professionals. *Journal of religion and health*, 59(1), 135-153.
- Phairat, P., & Potipiroon, W. (2022). High performance work systems and innovative work behaviour among telecom employees: the roles of organisational climate for innovation and psychological empowerment. *ABAC Journal*, 42(3), 214.
- Saeed, I., Khan, J., Zada, M., Ullah, R., Vega-Muñoz, A., & Contreras-Barraza, N. (2022). Towards examining the link between workplace spirituality and workforce agility: Exploring higher educational institutions. *Psychology Research and Behaviour Management*, 31-49.
- Salem, N. H., Ishaq, M. I., Yaqoob, S., Raza, A., & Zia, H. (2023). Employee engagement, innovative work behaviour, and employee wellbeing: Do workplace spirituality and individual spirituality matter?. *Business Ethics, the Environment & Responsibility*, 32(2), 657-669.
- Sani, A., & Maharani Ekowati, V. (2020). Spirituality at work and organisational commitment as moderating variables in relationship between Islamic spirituality and OCB IP and influence toward employee performance. *Journal of islamic marketing*, 11(6), 1777-1799.
- Saxena, A., & Prasad, A. (2023). Exploring the influence of dimensions of workplace spirituality on innovative work behaviour: role of sense of God. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, 39(2), 183-212.
- Sheeba, M. J., & Christopher, B. P. (2024). The role of psychological empowerment dimensions in promoting innovative work behaviours via creative self-efficacy in the Indian automobile industry: an empirical investigation using PLS-SEM and IPMA. *International Journal of Innovation and Learning*, 36(2), 179-212.
- Tamunosiki-Amadi, J. O., Boussa-Dibite, E. E., & Ogoun, B. (2023). Meaningfulness and employee innovative behaviour in the Nigerian telecommunication industry. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 8(1), 27-32.
- Tjimuku, M., Atiku, S. O., & Kaisara, G. (2025). Emotional intelligence and psychological capital at work: A systematic literature review and directions for future research. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 11(1), 2443559.
- Vasconcelos, A. F. (2018). Workplace spirituality: empirical evidence revisited. *Management Research Review*, 41(7), 789-821.
- Zhao, L., Liu, P., Zhang, F., Xu, S., & Liu, Y. (2022). How does perceived respect affect innovative behaviour? The role of thriving at work and spiritual leadership. *Frontiers in psychology*, 13, 978042.