

# Effect of Organizational Structure on Employee Involvement and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour in Select Telecommunication Firms in South-East Nigeria

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## Abstract

The study examined the relationship between employee involvement (EI) and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) by exploring organisational structure (OS) as contextual variable influencing EI and OCB in the Nigerian telecommunication industry. Cross-sectional survey was used to obtain data from the respondents. The accessible population of 800 comprised of the employees in the state branches of the selected telecom firms in the major cities of the five states of the South-East region of Nigeria. The Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table on sample size determination was used to get a sample size of 260. The five point Likert Scale was used in the questionnaire distributed to respondents while the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to identify and test the strength of a relationship between the sets of data. The partial correlation technique was used in testing the multivariate association between the predictor, the criterion and the contextual variable at a 95% confidence interval. The findings from our analysis indicate: that OS significantly moderates the relationship existing between EI and OCB in the telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The study therefore concluded that EI exists in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria, and these influence employees' OCB. The study recommends that the decentralized nature in the organizational structure of the telecommunication firms in Nigeria should be encouraged. This is because it has improved interpersonal relationship, communication, enhanced workers show of ingenuity, creativity as well as deeper display of organisational citizenship behaviour to the firms. Finally, by exploring the effect of contextual variable influencing EI and OCB, organizations can develop stronger organisational structure that can enhance their competitive advantage and ensure effectiveness.

**Keywords:** employee involvement, organisational structure, organisational citizenship behaviour, telecommunication firms

## Introduction

Most managers and scholars emphasize that an organisation's most important tool for gaining a competitive advantage is its people and in order for the firm to attain success employees must be involved and active (Alibegovic, Hawkins and Parmar, 2009). In efforts to increase organisational effectiveness, employee involvement has been an area of recent interest and academic concern (Judeh, 2012). Employee involvement has been linked to many different management concepts and behaviours, such as, management styles, total quality management, employee empowerment, job satisfaction, and job performance Cohen (1999).

In current years the telecommunication industry has made a quantum increase into a new and unpredictable environment, characterized by deregulation, product innovation, globalization, expansion in technology and concentrated competition. In the present day, professional world is progressing towards high performance, effective organisations and management that grant high degree of job satisfaction to employees. Organisations find it difficult to involve the employees. This has made it impossible for the employees to go extra mile in helping the organizations realize set goals and objectives. The study tries to answer the question "to what extent does organizational structure moderate the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria?" The study there hypothesizes that the structure of the organization does not moderate the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour.

The relationship between EI and OCB is widely researched but the moderating effect of the relationship between EI and OCB is relatively less studied. In this study, structure has been identified as a moderator between the predictor and criterion variable. Majority of the other studies in the literature were conducted outside Africa and Nigeria in particular. In addition, the study location of the reviewed papers lies outside the South Eastern Zone of Nigeria. Most of the studies centered on the manufacturing sector. To bridge this gap in literature, we examined the relationship between EI and OCB taking cognizance of the moderating role of a contextual variable (OS) within the telecommunication sector in Nigeria. The major factors that necessitated the choice include convenience, time factor and the financial implication. There are many companies that provide these services but we studied the major operators such as MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom and Etisalat (now 9-Mobole). The study therefore covered employees of the four selected telecommunication firms in the five eastern states. This enabled us make a good analysis of the opinions of the staff of the four selected telecommunication

firms.

### **The Concept of Employee Involvement**

Employee involvement can be defined as the direct participation of staff to help an organisation fulfill its mission and meet its objectives by applying their ideas, expertise, and efforts towards solving problems and making decisions. According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) 2009, employee involvement is ‘a range of processes designed to engage the support, understanding and optimum contribution of all employees in an organisation and their commitment to its objectives’. A firm can have a high or low degree of employee involvement. A high degree of involvement (deep employee involvement in decision making) means that all categories of employees are involved in the planning process. Conversely, a low degree of involvement (shallow employee involvement in decision making) indicates a fairly exclusive planning process (Barringer & Bleudorn, 1999) which involves the top management only. A deep employee involvement in decision making allows the influence of the frontline employees in the planning process. These are the people who are closest to the customer and who can facilitate new product and service recognition, a central element in the entrepreneurial process (Li, Tse, and Gu 2006). This means that employee participation in the planning process surrounding the potential innovations may facilitate opportunity recognition throughout the organization (Kemelgor, 2002; Zivkovic, Mihajlovic, and Prvulovic, 2009). The attitudes that organisational results come from the top, that effective cultures are derived from the upper echelon, often tend to ignore the power and the contributions of those at lower levels (Woodworth, 1986) thus ignoring the importance of employee involvement in decision making (Owolabi and Abdul-Hameed, 2011). As a result, employees are expected to be more motivated, more committed, more productive and more satisfied with their work (Chatleska and Sofijanova 2013). Marshal, Travaglione, and Scott-Ladd (2006) examined a structural and causal inference between participative decision making and the work environment over time using the structural equation modelling to examine longitudinal matched sample data for causal inferences. Data were collected from five medium-sized organisations, including one state and three Local Government agencies and a private hospital in Western Australia. In all, 2000 surveys were distributed through internal mail systems. It was revealed that participation in decision appears to promote job satisfaction and commitment, whereas task variety and work effort foster participation.

### **The Concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

Bateman and Organ (1983) were the first who used the term “organisational citizenship behaviour” (OCB) over the two and half decades earlier but its link could be found in the Bernard’s (1938) concept of “willingness to cooperate”. This was later refined and explained by Katz (1966). Katz made a compact description of in role behaviour and extra role behaviour with sound difference between them (Podsakoff, Mackenzie and Bachrach 2000).

There is a substantial relation established in literature between organisational citizenship behavior and employee involvement. The more dynamically an employee is engaged in his work there will be greater chances to reveal citizenship behaviour and ultimately effective performance (Ahmeed, Rasheed and Jahanzeb, 2012). In general, organizations with higher degree of OCB will notice reduced absenteeism and turnover, increased employees’ satisfaction and retention which subsequently lead to improved organizational performance, success, customers’ satisfaction and loyalty (Ibrahim, Ghani, Munir, and Embat, 2013).

Organ (1988) further tries to define the OCB and highlights five precise types of discretionary behaviour and describe how each assists to improve the efficiency of the organizations. They include altruism e.g., helping new colleagues and freely giving time to others is naturally concentrating toward other individuals but add to group efficiency by increasing the performance of individuals; conscientiousness e.g., efficient use of time and going beyond minimum expectations increases the efficiency of individual and the group; sportsmanship e.g., avoids complaining and whining improves the quantity of time spent on productive activities in the organization; courtesy e.g., advance notices, reminders, and communicating appropriate information facilitates productive use of time and civic Virtue e.g., service to communities and voluntarily attending functions endorse the interests of the organization.

### **Employee Involvement and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour: The role of structure**

Organisational structure refers to how individual and team work within an organization are coordinated. Structure is a valuable tool in achieving coordination, as it specifies reporting relationships (who reports to whom), delineates formal communication channels, and describes how separate actions of individuals are linked together. Organizations can function within a number of different structures, each possessing distinct advantages and disadvantages. The purpose of structure is the division of work among members of the organization, and the co-ordination of their activities so they are directed towards the goals and objectives of the organization. The organization structure is also called the organization chart/organogram (Ottih, 2008). Burns and Stalker (1961)

were the first to indicate that different types of organizational structures might be effective in different situations. Furthermore, Burns and Stalker identified two extreme types of organizational structure. The mechanistic (mechanic) structure which is found in organizations operating under stable environmental conditions, and the organic (dynamic/bio) structure which is found or rather is best suited, to organizations operating under unstable environmental conditions. They also suggested eight characteristics or factors (task complexity, task definition, responsibility, control, expertness, communication, loyalty and prestige) of organizational form that vary between these two extreme forms of organizational structure (Agbim, 2013).

According to De Groot and Brownlee (2006, p.116) little empirical research has been undertaken to investigate how more macro level variables such as organizational structure may affect employees' engagement in OCB (George & Jones 1997, p.153). De Groot and Brownlee (2006, p.1116) argue that previous theoretical developments suggest that the structure of an organization might affect the relationship in one of two ways. Firstly, structure may act as an antecedent to OCB with different levels of structure leading to higher or lower OCB levels without directly affecting organizational effectiveness. Secondly, structure may moderate the OCB organizational effectiveness such that the presence of OCB will interact with structure; promote an even greater increase in affectivity in some structures rather than others. In their study, George and Jones (1997) found that OCB level is higher in less structured organic organizations than more structured, mechanistic organizations. Since mechanistic organizations are designed in a way that tends to stifle personal initiative. They further argue that this may be the reason why there are lower levels of OCB in mechanistic structures. As opposed to mechanistic structures which tend to constrain OCB, organic structures, with loosely defined roles and high levels of interdependence, contribute to higher levels of OCB.

The study anchors on the leader-member exchange theory and the path-goal theory of leadership. According to Organ, Podsakoff, & McKenzie (2005), the leader member exchange theory is based on the leader's style. It encompasses how supportive the leader is, to what extent the leader provides structure to and clarity of the roles and expected behaviours of group members and how much participation the leader provides for subordinate input. The path-goal theory of leadership has also been used to explain the concept of OCB. The theory was developed to describe the way in which leaders encourage and support their subordinates in achieving set goals by making the path that they should take clear and easy. In particular, leaders clarify the path that subordinates take, remove roadblocks that are stopping their progression and increase the rewards along the route.

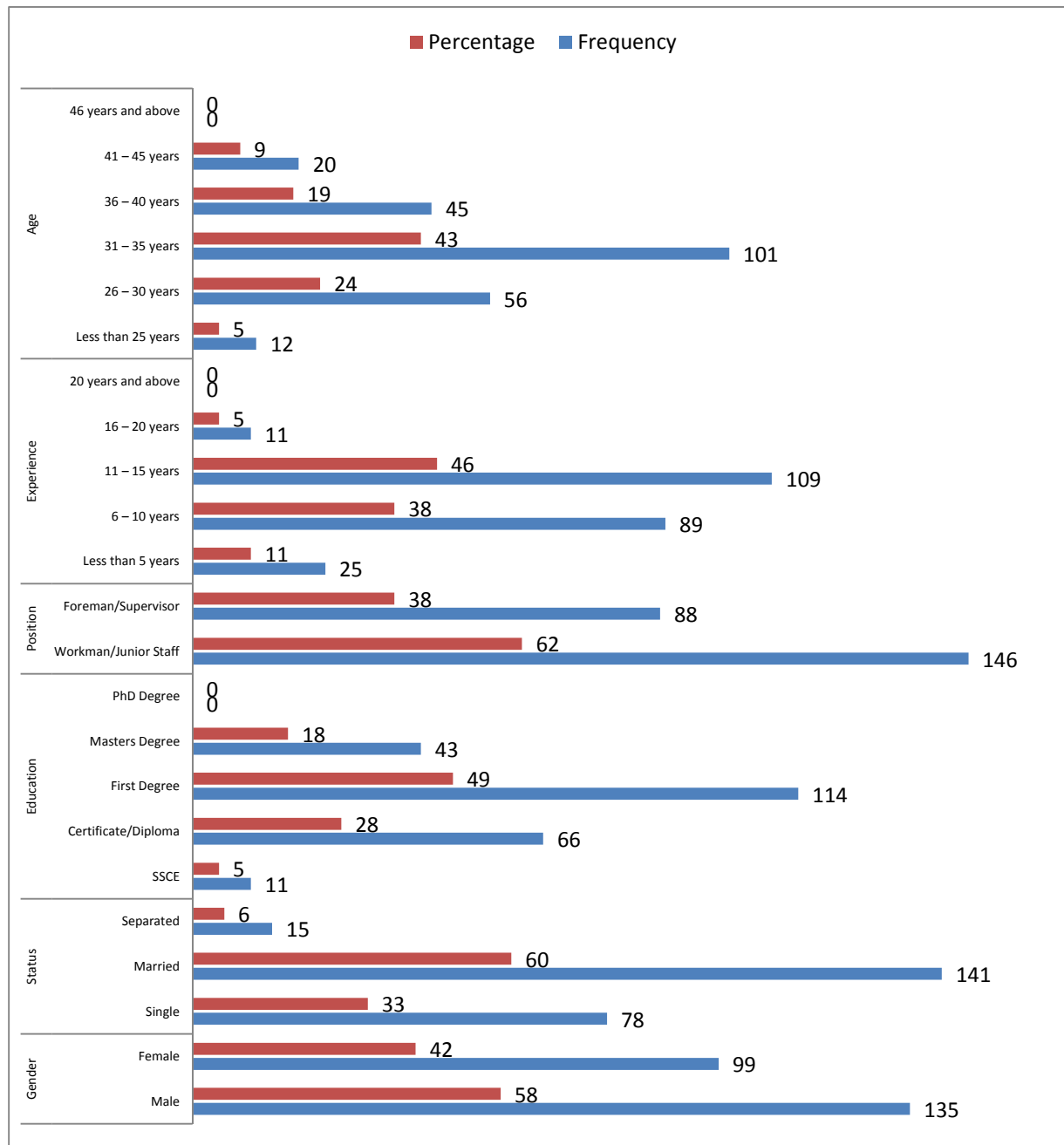
Onodugo, Ugbam, Imo and Ogosi (2013) specifically investigated how organizational structure influenced the performance of Nigerian banks. The descriptive survey method of research was used for this study and responses were gathered from five hundred and forty-three respondents (543) comprising managerial and non-managerial staff of Commercial banks in South East Nigeria. Results revealed that structure has significant positive effect on the enhancement of performance of Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. They thus recommended greater specialization among banks in Nigeria. This will further boost performance and subsequently enhances the growth of the Nigerian economy.

### **Research Methodology**

The study is a hypothesis testing cross sectional survey. Both primary (survey) and secondary (archival) data were used for the study. Data were collected through questionnaire and interview techniques. The working population for the study is 800 employees of the four telecommunication firms. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table on sample size determination was used to get a sample of 260. 234 copies were retrieved with 90% success rate. Three (3 participants from each of the five states in the south-east were interviewed, bringing the total to fifteen (15). Experts from the field of Management validated our instruments as well as from existing literature pre-tested and validated in previous studies. The Cronbach's alpha statistic was used to measure the internal consistency for reliability of our research. We also conducted a pilot study to retest the reliability of our instruments where approximately 10% of the target population was exposed to the instrument prior to the actual study. All variables for the study were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale questionnaire. Close ended questions on the extent of agreement or disagreement with a statement was administered to respondents. Data were analyzed in four stages: demographic, primary level (univariate), secondary level (using Spearman rank Order Correlation Coefficient), and tertiary levels (multivariate) of analyses using the partial correlation technique (non-parametric).

### **Data Analysis and Results**

Figure 1 below illustrates the distribution of the demographic data.



**Figure 1: Demographic Distribution of the respondents**

**Source:** Research survey, 2016

*Distribution based on gender characteristic:* The data (Fig. 1) reveal a majority of the participants in the study as males (58%) in comparison with the female participants (42%). A total of 135 males and 99 females responded to our questionnaire. This implies that representativeness is enhanced across both genders as shown in the heterogeneous nature of our sample size.

*Distribution based on marital status of participants:* Fig. 1 indicate that a higher percentage of the participants fall into the married category (60%); followed by those who comprise the “single” category (33%) then those who fall into the “separated” category (6%). A total of 78 employees are single, 141 are married while 15 of our respondents are separated. This indicates high level of maturity and disposition on the part of our respondents.

*Distribution based on Education of participants:* The data contained in Fig. 1 indicate that for the distribution according to educational qualifications, most of the participants has acquired First Degree certificates (49%) followed by those who have attained Diploma certificates (28%), then those who have acquired Master Degree certificates (18%) and finally SSCE (5%). This shows that 114 of the respondents have First Degree, 43 are with Masters, none has PhD, and 66 respondents have Diploma while 11 are with SSCE.

This implies that the sample respondents are literate enough to comprehend and adequately answer the questions in the questionnaire. Majority of our respondents possess First Degree.

*Distribution based on position (status) in the organization:* Data contained in Fig. 1 reveal that most of the participants are subordinates and junior staff (62%) followed by those who are supervisors and heads of departments (38%). The employees were asked to indicate their respective position within their respective firms. A total of 146 respondents are junior staff and foremen while 88 are supervisors. The distribution according to their respective positions indicates an even participation at all levels that will ensure an objective report from respondents on the topical areas investigated.

*Distribution based on the work experience of the participants:* Data contained in Fig. 1 indicate that most of the participants have work experiences with their respective companies ranging between 11 – 15 years (46%); this is followed by the number of participants with experiences ranging between 6 – 10 years (38%); followed by those with experiences less than 5 years (11%), and finally those with 16 – 20 years' work experience (5%). Respondents were asked to indicate their years of experience as contained in the options in the questionnaire. 25 respondents have worked for less than five years, 89 for 6-10 years, 109 for 11-15 years, and 11 employees for 16-20 years category. None has worked for 20 years and above. This implies that the telecom firms are relatively new in Nigeria.

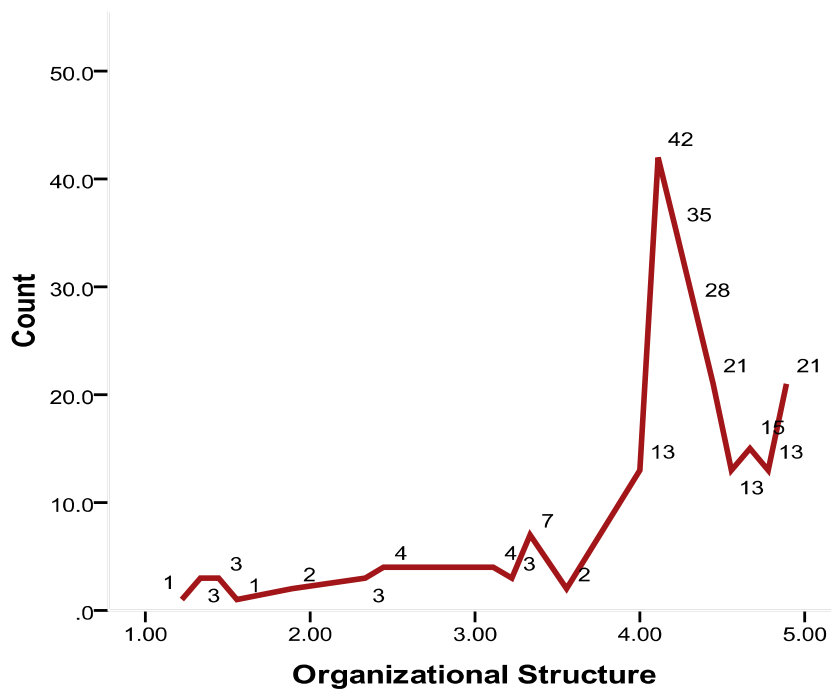
*Distribution based on age of respondents:* Data contained in Fig. 1 reveal that most of the participants are between ages 31 – 35 years (43%); this is followed by the number of participants between ages 26 – 30 years (24%) then those between ages 36 – 40 years (19%) and then those between ages 41 – 45 years (9%) and finally those of less than 25 years (5%). Twelve of our respondents are less than 25 years, fifty six of them fall within the 6-30 years bracket, one hundred and one of them are in the 36-40 years category while twenty are in the 41-45 age bracket. Therefore majority of employees in the telecom industry are below 40 years.

**Table 1: Respondents view of structure as a mediator of Employee Involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour in the telecommunication firms.**

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
	Structure1	234	1.00	5.00	4.1325	.81006	-1.468	.159	3.674
Structure2	234	1.00	5.00	4.1410	.83472	-1.521	.159	3.481	.317
Structure3	234	1.00	5.00	4.1709	.88663	-1.572	.159	3.166	.317
Structure4	234	1.00	5.00	4.1026	.85803	-1.391	.159	2.571	.317
Structure5	234	1.00	5.00	4.1068	.82952	-1.385	.159	2.895	.317
Structure6	234	1.00	5.00	4.1368	.81199	-1.469	.159	3.404	.317
Structure7	234	1.00	5.00	4.0940	.90760	-1.507	.159	2.839	.317
Structure8	234	1.00	5.00	4.1368	.91159	-1.612	.159	3.277	.317
Structure9	234	1.00	5.00	4.1068	.86001	-1.555	.159	3.601	.317
Valid N (listwise)	234								

Source: Research survey, 2016

The data (table 1) illustrates that there is a high level of affirmative (where  $x > 2.50$ ) as regards the indicators of organizational structure which is the contextual variable of the study. The construct examined the nature and characteristics of the structure of the organization as experienced by employees within the target organizations with its indicators. Based on the results, it can be observed that all indicators reveal that respondents affirm to all nine practices and indicators of organizational structure within the target organizations as also supported by the low disparity in response of ( $SD \leq 2.00$ ).



**Figure 2: Line graph showing distribution of the contextual variable (organizational structure)**

**Source:** Research survey, 2016

Data (figure 2) illustrate the chart for the contextual variable - organizational structure (where  $x = 4.1254$ ) indicating high affirmative and agreement to the participants experience and practice of the construct within the organization.

**Table 2: Summary for Distribution of the Study Variables**

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Structure	234	1.22	4.89	4.1254	.74979	-2.219	.159	5.120	.317
Involvement	234	1.29	4.89	4.1318	.72654	-2.268	.159	5.187	.317
OCB	234	1.20	4.93	4.1219	.74812	-2.300	.159	5.274	.317
Valid N (listwise)	234								

**Source:** Research survey, 2016

The data (table 2) illustrate the summary of the statistics for the variables of the study (employee involvement,  $x = 4.1318$ ; organizational citizenship behaviour,  $x = 4.1219$ ; organizational structure,  $x = 4.1254$ ) with summarized values for central tendency based on the responses to the indicators and dimensions. Results reveal high affirmative summaries for each variable.

We examined the moderating effect of organizational structure on the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizen behaviour. Basically, multivariate statistics refer to statistical computation that simultaneously analyzes more than two variables (Ezejelue, Ogwo and Nkamnebe, 2008). The partial correlation technique is used in testing the multivariate association between the predictor, the criterion and the contextual variable at a 95% confidence interval; thus implying a 0.05 level of significance (two-tailed). The decision rule is set at a  $R_1 \leq R_2 < R_1$  observation of difference; where  $R_1$  coefficient indicates moderating effect and  $R_2$  coefficients indicates control for moderating effects. Where an instance of  $R_1 \leq R_2$  indicates a non-significant difference or effect of moderation and thus an acceptance of the null hypothesis and where a  $R_1 > R_2$  indicates a significant difference as a result of a moderating effect and thus the rejection of the null hypothesis. Table 3 and table 4 below are used to illustrate the results for the multivariate tests.

**Table 3: The Moderating Effect of Organizational Structure on the Relationship between Employee Involvement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour:**

Variables		Involvement	OCB	Structure
Involvement	Correlation	1	.993**	.988**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	234	234	234
OCB	Correlation	.993**	1	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	234	234	234
Structure	Correlation	.988**	.990**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	234	234	234

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

Source: Research survey, 2016

The data (table 3) reveals a significant level of association between all three variables: the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour (correlation = .993;  $P < 0.000$ ); employee involvement and organizational structure (correlation = .988;  $P < 0.000$ ); and organizational structure and organizational citizenship behaviour (correlation = .990;  $P < 0.000$ ).

**Table 4: The control of Organizational Structure on the Relationship between Employee Involvement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour:**

Control Variable			Involvement	OCB
Structure	Involvement	Correlation	1.000	.674
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000
		Df	0	231
OCB	OCB	Correlation	.674	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.
		Df	231	0

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

Source: Research survey, 2016

The tests for the moderating effect of organizational structure on the association between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour reveals significant levels of moderation (where  $R_1 = .993 > R_2 = .674$ ); thus the data implies that organizational structure significantly affects the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour; hence the null hypothetical statement is rejected and the alternate accepted as follows:

- i. That the structure of the organization significantly moderates the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour.

### Discussion and Summary of Findings

The result of study indicates that organisational structure is very strong in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Organisational structure as a contextual factor has a mediating influence on employee involvement and organisational citizenship behaviour. Hence, we have rejected our null hypothesis which states that the structure of an organization does not mediate the relationship between employee involvement and organisational citizenship behaviour. Marshal, Travaglione, and Scott-Ladd (2006) revealed that participation in decision appears to promote job satisfaction and commitment, whereas task variety and work effort foster participation. From the discussion of our findings on the presence of a mediating effect of organizational structure on the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour, show that the organizational structure in the telecom firms in Nigeria is decentralized in design. The organization's structure significantly moderates the relationship between employee involvement and organizational citizenship behaviour in the telecommunication firms in Nigeria.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings from both the quantitative and qualitative results relate to the research questions that were derived

from the main objectives of our study. Furthermore, the findings were discussed in line with our conceptual framework and we conclude that there exists decentralized informal modular structure in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Hence, the organizational structure has a mediating effect on the relationship between employee involvement and organizational behaviour. The decentralized nature in the organizational structure of the telecommunication firms in Nigeria should be encouraged. It has improved interpersonal relationship, communication, enhanced workers show of ingenuity, creativity as well as deeper display of organizational citizenship behaviour to the organization. Finally, by exploring the effect of contextual variable influencing EI and OCB, organizations can develop stronger organizational structure that can enhance their competitive advantage and ensure effectiveness.

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