

## **SITUATIONAL TELEWORKING AND VITALITY OF INDIGENOUS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FIRMS IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the relationship between situational teleworking and organizational vitality of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This study anchored on the Socio-technical systems theory. This study employed a cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study was the nine indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. As an organizational level study, the study was conducted as a census. Three managers were selected from the nine indigenous information and communication technology firms making a total of twenty-seven managers which serves as the population elements. Structured questionnaire was the only source of data collection. Pearson Product Moment Test Statistics was used to analyze the data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science. The results uncovered that situational teleworking has a strong and positive relationship with the measures of vitality of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This study concluded that teleworking was shown to improve organizational vitality when applied to tasks that require minimal physical presence and offer high levels of autonomy and digital collaboration. Therefore, the study recommended among others that should institutionalize situational teleworking policies with clear guidelines and robust technological support to ensure seamless transitions during disruptions.

**Keywords:** Situational teleworking, organizational vitality, resilience, responsiveness

## INTRODUCTION

Digitization and its resultant effect have made it practically impossible for organizations to remain the same, imposing on organizations the duty to not just ensure their survival but also maintain their relevance in the business world. For an organization to maintain relevance, organizations must be at the top of their game by not just foreseeing changes before they occur but ensuring that they strive to adapt and flexibly respond to foreseen and unforeseen changes within their domain. It is pertinent to note, however, that irrespective of how much an organization tries to pre-empt its locale, there is need to give room for surprises. This position is sequel to the important lesson COVID-19 has taught the business world (Don-Baridam, 2020).

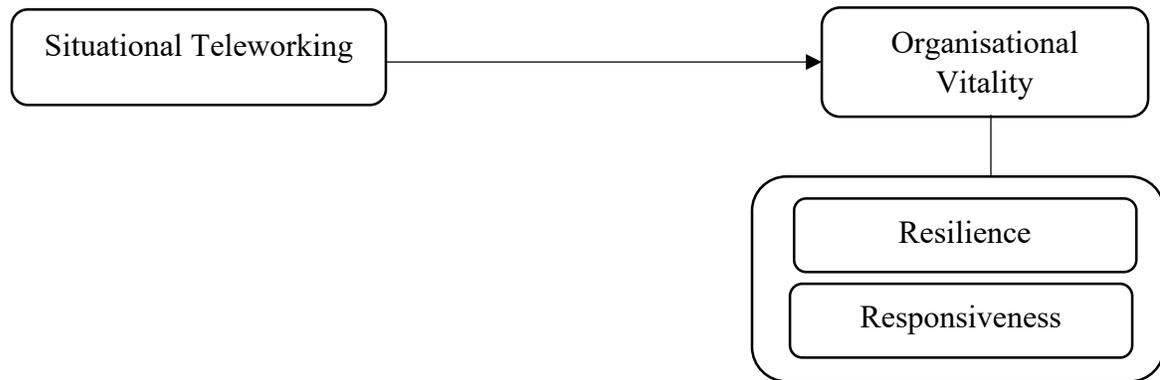
Organisations that can recreate or change themselves with respect to environmental change will remain vital in the long term and remain competitive in the market. Vital organizations are not just those that are healthy or energized but those who can recognize and engage competent employees that can fit into their roles; withstand challenges and adjust to unforeseen circumstances to achieve firm vitality (Akpotu & Ozioko, 2020). Bednar (2016) supported this view by stating that vital organizations are apt when it comes to switching functional or operational work formats when necessary or necessitated by their environment. Such switches are important for continued operations despite the challenges in the environment - one of such is the teleworking. Teleworking is the use of telecommunication technologies that enable employees to perform their job duties remotely, away from their central workplace, in accordance with work agreements (Aguilera, Lethiais, Rallet & Proulhac, 2016).

The frequent organizational ill health particularly the ICT sector in Nigeria continues to draw scholarly attention, as research provides insight into resolving operational challenges (Hornbaek, 2006). Scholars such as Akpotu and Konyefa (2018), Gabriel, George and Adim (2021) and Adim and Asawo (2021) have examined various predictors of organisational vitality across sectors. Their works explored factors like managerial mentoring, environmental dynamism and opportunity-seizing capabilities. While these studies contributed to understanding vitality, they do not sufficiently address the emerging relevance of flexible work systems. This study therefore investigates the relationship between situational teleworking and organizational vitality. The focus is on indigenous information and telecommunication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, where this phenomenon remains largely unexplored.

The specific objectives of the study include:

- i. To ascertain the relationship between situational teleworking and resilience of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the relationship between relationship between situational teleworking and responsiveness of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

### Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework of situational teleworking and organisational vitality of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

**Source:** Researchers Conceptualisation (2025).

### Research Questions

The following research questions were put up in line with addressing the relationship between situational teleworking and organizational vitality of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. These are stated as follows:

- i. What is the relationship between situational teleworking and resilience of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between situational teleworking and responsiveness of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

### Statement of Hypotheses

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between situational teleworking and resilience of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between situational teleworking and responsiveness of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the socio-technical systems (STS). The socio-technical systems (STS) approach in organizational development emphasizes the interplay between people and technology within workplace structures. Originating from the work of Eric Trist, Ken Bamforth, and Fred Emery at the Tavistock Institute during World War II, the concept views both society and organizations as interwoven systems made up of technical processes and human behaviors.

The theory seeks to achieve joint optimization, meaning that technical performance and the quality of employees' work lives must be simultaneously enhanced. It recognizes that the best organizational outcomes are produced not by maximizing either the social or technical components in isolation, but by harmonizing them in a way that leads to mutual reinforcement and collective efficiency. According to Kirby (2005) and Mello (2007), this joint optimization occurs through purposeful organizational design where both planned and unanticipated interactions between people and technology shape productivity and well-being.

Socio-technical theory also rests on two key principles: the first highlights that the interaction between social and technical systems determines organizational success, whether through deliberate design or complex, non-linear dynamics; the second warns that optimizing one dimension in isolation often results in harmful unintended consequences. As such, the theory advocates designing organizations that foster collaboration between both systems. This is exemplified in semi-autonomous groups and telework structures where team cohesion, immediate communication, and responsible autonomy are emphasized. These structures are particularly advantageous in challenging environments, where team proximity and shared awareness foster trust, innovation, and effective communication. In this framework, the synergy between social systems (like team roles and culture) and technical systems (like digital platforms and workflow processes) expands the organization's capacity for sustainable performance and adaptability.

## **Conceptual Review**

### **Situational Teleworking**

Situational teleworking is a flexible, conditional form of remote work where employees operate off-site on an ad hoc or need-based basis, typically in response to specific circumstances such as personal emergencies, health concerns, adverse weather, or public health crises (Grzegorzczak et al., 2021). Unlike regular teleworking, it lacks a fixed schedule and is employed temporarily to address immediate needs, making it a circumstantial approach often triggered by environmental challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted traditional workplace settings (Atkeson, 2020; Akbar et al., 2020). As a growing component of organizational resilience, situational teleworking is increasingly embedded within contingency planning frameworks, supported by technologies such as cloud computing, VPNs, and collaborative tools to ensure seamless transitions during disruptions (Almeida et al., 2024; PLOS ONE, 2023). While this arrangement enables organizations to maintain productivity and employees to meet personal or environmental demands without compromising work, its unpredictability can create challenges in workflow planning, resource allocation, and equitable access. To mitigate these issues, organizations must implement robust policies and clear communication strategies (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021).

## **Organisational Vitality**

Bishwas (2011) explains that vitality generally refers to health or growth, which means that the organization's health or development is determined by the organization's financial, intellectual, and creative growth. Organisational vitality is the general well-being of the workplace. It is the current health and energy status of the organization which defines it fit to do work in relative environmental conditions. Malik, MacIntosh and McMaster (2015) contends that, organisational vitality is the physical and mental wellbeing of the workplace. Like human being, organizations can remain strong to do their businesses and make progress, they can fall ill at some point due to situations and circumstances emerging within the company or in the business environment. Therefore, corporations need to be healthy to continue in business irrespective of the situations prevailing in the company's internal and external environment (Akpotu & Ozioko, 2020). The health and vitality of the firm enables the organization to adapt to situations and circumstances emerging in the business environment. Lack of energy and good wellbeing of the organization may threaten its continuous performance in the market.

## **Measures of Organisational Vitality**

**Resilience:** Every organization is unique as an entity. This entity is evident in organizations exposed to challenges or adverse experiences. There exist wide variations in the way companies respond to stress. Some organizations appear to be relatively unaffected, while others develop a variety of behavioural, psychological and physical consequences (Hormor, 2016). Hence, resilience is the process of adapting an organization well in the face of adversity, trauma and threat, or even a significant source of stress such as business relationship problems, workplace financial stress. It means the capacity to withstand and bounce back from unstable experiences and challenges while remaining unbroken as well as progressive (Hormor, 2016; Gabriel & Zeb-Obipi, 2019). Hormor (2016) maintains that, resilience is a dynamic construct. It could be defined as the overcoming of adversity or stress by the organization. It encompasses positive adaptation for the company to regain mental health status irrespective of prevailing situations confronting the organization. Resilience is considered an imperative for organizations during crisis events or situations as it ensures the continuity of the business and its survival (Don-Baridam, 2020). Organizations need to constantly respond not just to one time crisis or disaster event but to continuously anticipate and adjust to trends that permanently impair the earning power of the organization.

**Responsiveness:** Responsiveness refers to the extent to which firms react rapidly to changes in a business environment to seize potential opportunities (Gabriel, George & Adim, 2021). Responsiveness refers to the extent to which firms react rapidly to changes in a business environment to seize potential opportunities (Bernardes & Hanna, 2009). This responsiveness reflects the efficiency and effectiveness with which firms' sense, interpret, and act on market stimuli (Garrett, Covin & Slevin, 2009), and has been treated as a competitive advantage. For

example, Wei and Wang (2011) proposed that this responsiveness represents a competitive marketing advantage by deploying resources to satisfy customer needs. Inman, Green and Whitten (2011) noted that a firm with a high level of responsiveness outperforms its competitors in terms of operations. Inman et al. (2011) noted that a firm with a high level of responsiveness outperforms its competitors in terms of operations. Day (2005) stated that organisational responsiveness is anchored on organisational learning and knowledge transfer which serve to inform and upgrade the dynamics of the organization in such a way that enhances its ability to perform adequately. Organisational responsiveness builds on its relationships and its ability to follow the trends and features that shape its environment.

### **Empirical Review**

Taşkan, Junça-Silva and Caetano (2024) studied how individuals' perceptions of telework affects their adaptive performance by shaping their negative emotional experiences, with perceived leadership effectiveness acting as a critical moderator in this relationship. Drawing on the conservation of resources theory. A cross-sectional design was used, with data collected from a final sample of 209 teleworkers via an online survey. The results demonstrated a significant indirect effect of the perceived effects of teleworking on adaptive performance through negative affect. Furthermore, leadership effectiveness moderated the indirect effect, in a way that the indirect effect was only significant for those who had ineffective leaders and moderate effective leaders; therefore, the indirect effect was strengthened for those who had less effective leaders (versus effective leaders).

Elsamani and Kajikawa (2024) study investigated how teleworking adoption influenced the labor market and workforce dynamic using bibliometric methods to overview 86 years of teleworking research [1936–2022]. By grouping the retrieved articles available on the Web of Science (WOS) core collection database, we revealed a holistic and topical view of teleworking literature using clustering and visualization techniques. Our results reflect the situation where the adoption of teleworking in the last three years was accelerated by the pandemic and facilitated by innovation in remote work technologies. We discussed the factors influencing one's decision to join the workforce or a specific company, besides the unintended consequences of the rapid adoption of teleworking. The study can aid organizations in developing adequate teleworking arrangements, enhancing employee outcomes, and improving retention rates. Furthermore, it can help policymakers design more effective policies to support employees, improve labor force participation rates, and improve societal well-being.

Lladós-Maslloréns, Meseguer-Artola, Rimbau-Gilabert and Sabadell-Bosch (2024) opined that since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, academic research has primarily focused on the challenges posed by flexible working arrangements. However, there has been a lack of exploration into managers' intentions to either promote or reject remote work. This paper utilizes a TAM analysis to examine managers' attitudes and motivations towards implementing telework in a sample of European companies. Our findings reveal that this intention is largely influenced

by their perception of its usefulness. Additionally, telework is more likely to be accepted when managerial teams believe that those who hold significance to them also support the implementation of flexible work practices in their companies. Our research contributes to the existing literature by considering the impact of job performance, quality of output, and digital skills on telework adoption. The results confirm that skills related to communication and team building are crucial competencies for successfully implementing telework. The ability of leaders to effectively build, motivate, recognize, and hold accountable teams in virtual environments can make all the difference.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopts the explanatory cross-sectional survey as its design for investigating the relationship between situational teleworking and organizational vitality. The population of the study was the nine indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. As an organizational level study, the study was conducted as a census. Three managers were selected from the nine indigenous information and communication technology firms making a total of twenty-seven managers which serves as the population elements. Structured questionnaire was the only source of data collection. Pearson Product Moment Test Statistics was used to analyze the data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **Bivariate Data Analysis**

The secondary data analysis employed the use of bivariate inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation tool which was used at a 95% confidence level. Specifically, the tests covered hypotheses  $H_{01}$  to  $H_{02}$  which were bivariate at all, stated in the null manner. The study relied on the Spearman Rank Order Correlation tool to carry out the analysis thus the probability criterion of 0.05 significance level was adopted for accepting the null hypotheses at ( $P > 0.05$ ) or rejecting the hypotheses at ( $P < 0.05$ ).

#### **Situational Teleworking and Organizational Vitality Measures**

Table 1 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for situational teleworking and measures of organizational vitality. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance ( $p$  - value), which makes us able to answer our research question and generalize our findings to the study population.

**Table 2: Correlations for Situational Teleworking and Organizational Vitality**

		Situational Teleworking	Resilience	Responsiveness
Situational Teleworking	Pearson Correlation	1	.810**	.844**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	25	25	25
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	.810**	1	.801**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	25	25	25
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	.844**	.801**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	25	25	25

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between situational teleworking and resilience of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between situational teleworking and resilience in indigenous information and communication technology (ICT) firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, revealed a very strong and positive correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.810$ . This result indicates that an increase in situational teleworking where employees are allowed to work remotely based on specific operational needs or circumstances is associated with a significant enhancement in organizational resilience, defined as the firm's ability to adapt, recover, and sustain stable operations amidst disruptions. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = 0.656$ ) further suggests that 65.6% of the variance in resilience can be attributed to variations in teleworking practices, underscoring the strategic importance of flexible work arrangements in promoting operational continuity and agility. The statistical test of significance ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (which stated no relationship) and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis, thereby affirming a significant relationship between situational teleworking and resilience in indigenous ICT firms in Bayelsa State.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between situational teleworking and responsiveness of indigenous information and communication technology firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis conducted to assess the relationship between situational teleworking and responsiveness in indigenous information and communication technology (ICT) firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, yielded a very strong and positive correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.844$ . This finding suggests that increased adoption of situational teleworking—where employees are permitted to work remotely under specific operational

conditions—is strongly associated with enhanced responsiveness within these firms, including improved decision-making speed, service delivery, and operational flexibility. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = 0.712$ ) indicates that approximately 71.2% of the variance in responsiveness can be attributed to variations in teleworking practices, highlighting the strategic importance of flexible work arrangements in boosting firms' ability to react swiftly and effectively to internal and external demands. The statistical test of significance ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) confirms the validity of this relationship, thereby leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternate, concluding that situational teleworking significantly influences responsiveness in indigenous ICT firms in Bayelsa State.

## **Discussion of Findings**

### **Situational Teleworking and Vitality of Indigenous Information and Communication Technology Firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria**

The study found a significant positive relationship between situational teleworking and organizational vitality in indigenous Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Situational teleworking—where employees work remotely based on operational needs or project demands—was shown to enhance organizational resilience by allowing staff to adapt during disruptions, personal constraints, or periods of high workload. This flexibility supports business continuity, improves staff productivity outside traditional office settings, and contributes to a more agile and robust organizational structure capable of sustaining performance under pressure.

Additionally, situational teleworking was found to significantly improve organizational responsiveness an essential aspect of vitality for ICT firms operating in fast-paced, competitive environments. Employees under flexible work arrangements responded more promptly to client needs and project demands, enhancing service delivery and enabling collaboration across time zones. These outcomes support findings by Mohd Lokman et al. (2024) and are framed by the socio-technical systems (STS) theory and human capital theory. STS highlights the value of aligning technology with flexible work practices to foster resilience, while human capital theory underscores the importance of autonomy and employee well-being in enhancing motivation and productivity.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

In conclusion, situational teleworking emerged as a strategic enabler of corporate resilience, particularly in times of uncertainty or operational disruptions. Its flexible nature allowed employees to swiftly adapt their work patterns in response to emerging personal or organizational demands, thereby maintaining continuity and minimizing workflow interruptions. Furthermore, situational teleworking enhanced organizational responsiveness by facilitating extended engagement with clients and project teams regardless of time or location constraints, reinforcing the firm's ability to sustain performance and meet stakeholder expectations amid evolving challenges. Based on the conclusion drawn, the following two recommendations are proposed:

- i. Telecommunication companies should institutionalize situational teleworking policies that provide clear guidelines and technological support to facilitate seamless transitions

during emergencies or project-specific needs, thereby enhancing operational continuity and workforce adaptability.

- ii. Management should invest in communication and collaboration tools that enable employees to engage effectively with clients and teams remotely, ensuring responsiveness and sustained service delivery beyond traditional office constraints.

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