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**Determinants of Innovative Work Behaviour among Employees of State Agencies for Mass Education in Nigeria**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB), an employee's ability to explore, promote and sustain new ideas, is a prerequisite for job performance and goal attainment in the workplace. However, evidence indicated low IWB of State Agencies for Mass Education (SAMEs) in southwestern Nigeria, which has influenced effective delivery of mass education programmes. This study, therefore, was carried out to determine predictors (personal, institutional and self-efficacy) of IWB among SAMEs employees in southwestern Nigeria. The explanatory sequential mixed method (QUAN qual) design was adopted. Purposive sampling was used to select five (Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ekiti and Ondo) out of six states in southwestern Nigeria owing to their homogenous patterns in programme monitoring, evaluation, and implementation. Two-hundred and eight (208) SAMEs employees were enumerated. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistical tools, while the qualitative data were content-analysed. The composite contribution of predictors ( $F_{(13,187)} = 14.722$ ;  $R^2 \text{ adjusted} = .571$ ) on IWB was significant, accounting for 57.1% of the variance. Educational qualifications were given more priority than gender at the point of recruitment of Adult Mass Literacy Officers. Self-efficacy, democratic and situational leadership styles, job tenure, age and training opportunities predicted innovative work behaviour among employees of State Agencies for Mass Education in Southwestern Nigeria. The employees should leverage on IWB factors to promote innovative work behaviour and achieve their mandates.*

**Keywords:** Innovative Work Behaviour, Self-efficacy, Job Performance, Leadership, State Agencies, Mass Education

**INTRODUCTION**

Globally, the out-of-school population of ages 6 to 18 stood at 244 million in 2021, and Pakistan and Nigeria are home to 20.7 and 19.7 million of this population, respectively (UNESCO, 2022). Aderinoye and Ladan (2021) reported that one-third of children in Nigeria are not enrolled in school, and one in every three or four adults is non-literate. The global cost of non-literate amounted to an estimated \$1.2 trillion (US) decline in GDP per year, of which Nigeria's share stood at approximately \$4.9 billion (Cree, Kay and Steward, 2022). According to the National Bureau of Statistics Report (2020), the distribution of school-age and out-of-school populations in the country's six geopolitical zones and all six states in the southwest showed that, 19%, 24%, 26%, 33%, 22%, and 25% of the school-going-age population in the south-east, south-south, north-central, north-east, south-west, and north-west are not in school, respectively. At the state level, 17%, 19%, 20%, 22%, 26%, and 27% of this age group in Ekiti, Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, and Osun states are out-of-school. The high non-literacy rate could be attributed to the lack of IWB among SAME employees. The phrase "Innovative Work Behaviour" (IWB) refers to a multifaceted and cyclical process which encourages the employees to explore opportunities, generate idea from the explored opportunities, promote the generated ideas, implement the recognised ideas, and sustain the implemented ideas with a view to achieving organisational goals (Lambriex-Schmitz, Vander, Simo, Bijker and Mien, 2020). DaCosta and Loureiro (2019) reiterated that a larger share of novel ideas in the workplace is a product of employees' IWB. This is to infer that the ultimate goal of IWB is to enhance the personal and organisational productivity of employees. This is because IWB is characterised by voluntary

engagement, self-motivation, and a focus on driving change. Even, the agency's compensation system may not formally acknowledge or incentivise this behaviour. This behaviour stimulates employees to engage in rational thinking and strategic action aimed at enhancing their job quality and gaining a competitive edge.

The challenges that seem to have confronted effective implementation and delivery of the SAME activities include; employees' inability to explore, generate, promote, realise and sustain new ideas. This manifested in their incapacity of the SAME employees to challenge the conventional work process among the ad hoc literacy instructors, share opinions about recent events with colleagues, discuss personal ideas for improvement with colleagues, offer fresh approaches to problems, and track results of the implemented ideas.

The SAME employees face multiple challenges at the Agency level and beyond. These comprise the need to manage large-scale educational programmes, coordinate multiple stakeholders, navigate bureaucratic structures, and traditional rules, and allocate limited resources among others. The employee's ability to carry out efficient programmes and practices that cater for the various categories of learners might depend on his/her ability to embrace IWB. However, a number of factors might affect the IWB among SAME employees.

Previous studies in this direction have significant limitations. Most studies focus largely on employees' motivation, resource provision, allocation and utilisation, employees' commitments level, leadership styles, and personalised systems of instruction. This study, therefore, addressed this gap by exploring the predictors- gender, age, educational qualifications, job tenure, leadership style, training opportunities, job security, workplace happiness and self-efficacy of IWB among employees of SAMEs in southwest Nigeria. Hence, the study shall emphasize on need to train the trainers at all levels.

### **Objective of the study**

The study's general objective was to determine predictors of IWB among employees of State Agencies for Mass Education (SAME) in Southwestern Nigeria, while specific objectives are to;

1. investigate the extent to which SAME employees exhibit the elements consisted of opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea promotion, idea realisation, and idea sustainability and aggregate IWB.
2. identify the exhibited leadership styles, level of training opportunities, job security, workplace happiness and self-efficacy of the SAME employees under investigation.
3. examine the extent to which gender, age, job tenure, educational qualifications leadership styles, training opportunities, workplace happiness, job security, and self-efficacy predict SAME employees' IWB in the study area.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A study by Abun, Macaspact, Valdez, and Fredolin (2023) explored the impact of innovative work environments on employees' innovative work practices. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study surveyed employees from two institutions and analysed the data using inferential statistics. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between innovative work environments and employees' innovative work behaviours (IWB), suggesting that employees who exhibit high levels of IWB tend to thrive in creative work environments. The ANOVA results confirmed this relationship, indicating a statistically significant association between innovative workplaces and employees' creative work habits.

Hsiao, Chang, Tu, and Chen (2011) conducted a study to examine the impact of self-efficacy on innovative work practices among Taiwanese secondary school teachers. The researchers employed a stratified random sampling method to select 546 teachers from 20 public and private schools in northern Taiwan. Modified versions of the Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSWS) and the Innovative Work Behaviour Scale (IWBS) were used to collect data. Regression analysis and Pearson's correlation coefficients were applied to analyze the data. The results showed significant positive correlations between various dimensions of teacher self-efficacy and innovative work behavior. Specifically, self-efficacy in group leadership and task execution was strongly correlated ( $r = .73, p < .01$ ). Additionally, self-efficacy in group leadership was positively associated with idea generation ( $r = .57, p < .01$ ), idea promotion ( $r = .54, p < .01$ ), and idea realization ( $r = .56, p < .01$ ). Task execution self-efficacy also showed strong positive

correlations with idea generation ( $r = .60, p < .01$ ), idea promotion ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ), and idea realization ( $r = .65, p < .01$ ).

Thokozani and Reward (2024) assessed how staff training affected workers' productivity in the transport industry. The study adopted a qualitative methodology with an exploratory design, enabling an in-depth examination and discovery of new insights into the research topic. A sample of fifteen skill development representatives from Durban-based transport industry organisations was interviewed using purposeful sampling. Data was collected through unstructured interviews with the respondents. The main conclusions showed that employee performance in the transportation industry is positively impacted by staff training.

Rosdaniati and Muafi (2021) investigated the relationships between job satisfaction, workplace happiness, and innovative work behavior (IWB) among private university employees in Tenggarong, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Work engagement was examined as a mediator in this context. The study focused on private universities in Tenggarong Regency, including Universitas Kutai Kartanegara and STIE Tenggarong. Due to uneven subpopulation sizes, stratified random sampling was employed. A total of 103 surveys were distributed, with 100 complete responses received. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics, including structural equation modeling (SEM). The respondent demographics revealed a majority of males (47%), with 49% aged between 30-39, 63% holding a bachelor's degree, and 46% having 6-10 years of work experience. The empirical results showed that workplace happiness positively influenced job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.254, p < 0.05$ ) and work engagement ( $\beta = 0.890, p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, IWB positively impacted job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.292, p < 0.05$ ). Notably, this study was conducted in a foreign context without a specific research design or theoretical framework.

Bannay, Hadi, and Amanah (2020) investigated the impact of creative leadership on employee engagement and innovative work behavior (IWB). Specifically, they examined how creative leadership enhances employee energy, commitment, and absorption. Data was collected from 150 employees of mobile phone companies in Central and Southern Iraq through a questionnaire. The data was analyzed using SmartPLS and SPSS. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis revealed significant findings. The mean values for work engagement, inclusive leadership, and IWB were 3.882, 4.019, and 3.727, respectively, with corresponding standard deviations. Pearson correlation coefficients indicated strong, statistically significant positive relationships between inclusive leadership and IWB ( $r = .814, p < 0.1$ ), inclusive leadership and work engagement ( $r = .851, p < 0.1$ ), and work engagement and IWB ( $r = .814, p < 0.1$ ).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research used an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach. This approach enables the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data gathering and interpretation within a single study subject. This design is considered invaluable because the data collected from the instrument's qualitative section (Key Informant Interview, KII) was utilised to complement and better clarify the empirical results of the quantitative instrument (questionnaire). The target population comprised all two hundred and thirty-five (235) permanent employees of the SAME in the five southwestern states, Nigeria. The study's sample size was two hundred and eight (208) SAME employees of the officer cadres and above (Level 8 and above). This sample was taken from five southwestern states of Nigeria using multi-stage and purposive sampling procedures. Lagos State was not included in the sample states since it was utilised to evaluate the instrument's reliability.

The Same employees were selected from officer cadres and above using the purposive sampling approach. The reason is that the SAME employees of the officer cadres and above are saddled with the responsibilities of direct evaluation, monitoring, and implementation of literacy-oriented programmes of the agency. Two stages were created in each of the five states used. The first stage consisted of the respondents scheduled for the questionnaire, Two hundred and three (203) SAME employees of the officer cadres and above, excluding the executive secretaries or coordinating directors of the agency were enumerated for the questionnaire. Five SAME executive secretaries/coordinating directors were purposively enumerated for Key Informant Interviews. Executive secretaries, coordinating directors, and literacy unit directors are responsible for managing human and material resources to achieve the agency's literacy mandate.

### Instruments

The study employed adapted and self-designed versions of the instruments. The adapted instrument comprised the IWB Questionnaire (IWBQ), Workplace Happiness Questionnaire (WHQ), and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ), while the Leadership Style Questionnaire (LSQ), Training Opportunities Questionnaire (TOQ), and Job Security Questionnaire (JSQ) were self-designed.

### Validity of Instrument

In order to ensure that the instrument is valid, the draft copy of the instrument was properly scrutinized by the expert in the field of Educational Measurement and Evaluation before the production and final administration of the research instrument. This was tested by staff in Lagos state which is nonparticipants in respect of the scope of the study.

### Reliability of Instrument

The cronbach alpha reliability coefficients results include IWB Questionnaire (IWBQ) , Workplace Happiness Questionnaire (WHQ), and Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ), the Leadership Style Questionnaire (LSQ), Training Opportunities Questionnaire (TOQ), and Job Security Questionnaire (JSQ) are 0.85, 0.81, 0.82, 0.92, 0.87 and 0.84 respectively.

### Method of Data Analysis

The collected data of the study were analysed using descriptive, inferential, and content analyses at 5% level of significant to analyse the data collected for the study and provided answer to the stated research objectives

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.1: Socio-Demographic Indices of the Respondents**

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-29	12	6
	30-39	62	31
	40-49	93	46
	50 and above	34	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>
Gender	Male	71	35%
	Female	130	65%
<b>Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>
Educational Qualification	NCE/OND	56	28
	First Degree/HND	123	61
	Master	19	9
	PhD	3	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>
Tenure in the Agency	1-5 Years	30	15
	6-10 Years	62	31
	11-15 Years	47	23
	16 Years and above	62	31
<b>Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1.1 shows that twelve (12), sixty-two (62) ninety-three (93) and thirty-four (34) of the participants, or 6%, 31%, 46%, and 17% of the total, were found to be between the ages of 19 and 29, 30 and 39, 40 and 49, and 50 and older, respectively, according to the empirical data. The great majority of responders, or 46% of the total, are found to be between the ages of 40 and 49, when they are energetic and young. The implication of this is that as SAME employees grow older in age while overseeing literacy programmes, their feeling of responsibility to the agency would increase, with the prospect of embracing IWB.

The Table also indicates that one hundred and thirty (130) participants, which amounted to 65%, were females by gender, while seventy-one (71) participants, which accounted for 35%, were males. The research findings indicated a significant gender imbalance in the workforce of State Agencies for Mass Education with 65% of the staff being female. The gender imbalance suggests that agencies' policies and practices, including flexible work arrangements, may be more appealing to female employees.

Similarly, the Table shows that fifty-six (56) respondents had a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) or Ordinary National Diploma (OND), which represented 28%. One hundred and twenty-three (123) of them, which accounted for 61%, had first-degree or Higher National Diploma (HND) certificates. Nineteen (19) participants, which amounted to 9% had Master's degree certificates. Three (3) had a Ph. D certificate. None of the participants had others as his/her highest educational qualification. This indicated that the majority of SAME employees are holders of first-degree/HND. This is to infer that these employees can act as ad hoc literacy facilitators at the literacy centers when the services of facilitators are lacking.

Table 1.2 presents the components and aggregate IWB as demonstrated by SAME employees in southwestern Nigeria.

**Table 1.2: Components and Aggregate IWB as Demonstrated by SAME Employees in Southwestern Nigeria**

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	St. Deviation	Interpretation/Decision
Opportunity Exploration	201	3.12	0.81	Highly Extent
Idea Generation	201	3.27	0.79	Highly Extent
Idea Promotion	201	3.30	0.87	Highly Extent
Idea Realisation	201	3.37	0.74	Highly Extent
Idea Sustainability	201	3.22	0.79	Highly Extent
IWB	201	3.25	0.64	Highly Extent

**Source:** Author Fieldwork (2026)

The empirical outcomes from Table 1.2 indicated that the employees of SAME maintained high opportunity exploration ( $\bar{x}$ =3.12; St. Dv. = 0.81), idea generation ( $\bar{x}$ =3.27; St. Dv. = 0.79), idea promotion ( $\bar{x}$ =3.30; St. Dv. = 0.87), idea realisation ( $\bar{x}$ =3.37; St. Dv. =3.37), idea sustainability ( $\bar{x}$ =3.22; St. Dv. =3.22), and aggregate IWB ( $\bar{x}$ =3.25; St. Dv. =3.25) against the threshold of 2.50. This is to infer that the employees under investigation occasionally keep themselves informed and abreast of new concepts in the agency, get informed about new developments from other sister agencies, question the current traditional way of working by ad hoc literacy instructors, discuss the possible leeway for change with ad hoc literacy instructors, and exchange thoughts on recent developments with ad hoc literacy instructors to a high extent.

With respect to idea generation segment of the IWB, these employees frequently discuss personal ideas for improvement with literacy instructors, suggest elementary improvements needed to be implemented in the agency, suggest new ideas to achieve literacy mandate with ad hoc literacy instructors, exchange ideas on concrete changes with co-employees in the agency, and express personal opinion of underlying problems facing literacy programmes to a high extent.

Same employees under consideration maintained the idea promotion element of IWB while discharging their literacy responsibilities to a high extent. This suggests that SAME employees regularly propose novel proposals to designated personnel for resource allocation, advocate for these ideas among colleagues, literacy instructors, and supervisors, and ensure that literacy instructors are well-versed in effectively implementing these new concepts.

Regarding the IWB's idea realisation component, the SAME employees stated that they regularly assist literacy instructors in implementing developed ideas, test solutions for issues that arise during the implementation of ideas, track the progress of literacy instructors in putting ideas into practice, create

operational strategies for similar situations in the future, and provide literacy instructors with frequent updates on the extent to which they are realising literacy ideas.

Lastly, regarding the IWB's idea sustainability organ, SAME employees also stated that they constantly collect the outcomes of implemented ideas or solutions, compare those outcomes with Agency goals, plan a mini-training programme for literacy instructors, talk with colleagues about the wider applications of implemented ideas, and constantly collaborate with the Agency's quality assurance system in order to support and improve the implementation of the new idea at the literacy centres to a high degree.

This result supported that of Abdul Rahman, Noor, and Nazri (2022), who found that Malaysian public sector workers demonstrated a high level of IWB while doing their jobs. Likewise, among workers in the banking sector in Nigeria (Oyewole, Oludayo and Oyewole, 2020), healthcare professionals in Saudi Arabian hospitals (Alotaibi, Alzahrani, Alghamdi and Alotaibi, 2022), and IT Professionals in Indian (Singh, Rana, Kumar, and Gupta, 2022).

DaCosta and Loureiro (2019) supported this outcome by submitting that the employees are the backbone of all new ideas that originate within an establishment. Abun, Macaspact, Valdez, and Fredolin (2023) discovered that college workers in the Philippines exhibited elements of creative work behaviour, including opportunity identification, idea formulation, concept advocacy, and advanced implementation of innovative ideas, aligning with the results of this research. Effendy and Sukmarani (2021) corroborated that there would be no IWB unless ideas are generated by the employees.

This result contradicted Murphy, O'Connor, and McAuliffe's (2022) study, which found that employees in bureaucratic organisations such as SAME had lower IWB than those at entrepreneurial establishments. Liu, Chen, and Wang (2022) also discovered that workers in traditional companies exhibit lower levels of IWB than those in contemporary companies. Contrary to the findings of this research, Soputan and Tinneke (2022) discovered that personnel at Manado State University only partially executed the components of idea development, idea promotion, and concept execution of the IWB. All five informants reported that there was a frequency of exhibition of IWB among SAME employees in their activities. For instance, a respondent expressed that:

The major innovative activities that exist in the agency under my leadership include; the provision of needed materials such as queen primer, writing and other reading materials to both adult' learners and literacy instructors free of charge. This we hope would lessen the financial burden of the enrolled adult learners and could even attract the potential ones to enroll **(KII/Ekiti/Executive Secretary/Female/2023)**.

Another male informant said that:

Implementing and directing the agency's literacy programmes in every local government in the state is now the responsibility of the permanent staff of the officers' cadres in the organisation. This includes overseeing literacy centers as facilitators at their respective local governments. This is because the approval for the renewal of the ad hoc literacy instructors' contract is not yet given by the concerned stakeholders. The initiatives aimed at ensuring that the vacuum of ad hoc literacy instructors is tentatively filled and to avert putting the literacy centers in the state under lock and key **(KII/Oyo/Director/Male/ 2023)**.

A female informant narrated that:

All my officers are so innovative, this is because the first junior school certificate examination tagged BECE written by adult learners in the state in 2023 was facilitated by permanent employees of the agency. All my officers are able to harness resources and explore all forms of opportunities to achieve the agency's literacy goal and mandate **(KII/Ogun/Director/Female/2023)**.

A male interviewee stated that:

The majority of my employees always kept themselves informed and abreast of the agency literacy activities, exchange ideas on trending instructional strategy with ad hoc facilitators, as well as suggest novel ideas on how to attract resources from stakeholders in the state (KII/Ondo/Director/Male/2023).

Another respondent said that:

My employees are highly effective in guiding, monitoring and evaluating literacy tasks of the ad hoc literacy instructors in the state. They even assume the position of ad hoc facilitators when the need arises (KII/Osun/Deputy Director/Male/2023).

**Relationship Between SAME Employees’ Self-Efficacy and their IWB in Southwestern Nigeria**

Table 1.10 presents the relationship between self-efficacy and SAME employees’ IWB in southwestern Nigeria.

**Table 1.3: Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and SAME Employees’ IWB in Southwestern Nigeria**  
**Correlations**

		IWB	SE
<b>IWB</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	0.597**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	201	201
<b>SE</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.597**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	201	201

**Source:** Author Fieldwork (2026)

Table 1.3 displays the findings of the Pearson association between SAME personnel's self-efficacy and their IWB in southwest Nigeria. According to the empirical findings, there was a moderately linear correlation ( $r = 0.597$ ;  $0.000 < 0.05$ ) between the IWB presentation and the self-efficacy of SAME workers. This indicates that individuals with elevated self-efficacy are better prepared to execute IWB in the creation, management, and assessment of literacy initiatives at the agency level. The p-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) indicates that the correlation is extremely significant and not just a consequence of random sampling error. The null hypothesis, asserting that no significant link exists between the self-efficacy of SAME workers in Southwestern Nigeria and their IWB, is thus rejected.

Christianto and Handoyo (2020) found a strong and favourable correlation between the creative work practices of workers in Egypt's tourist sector and their self-efficacy. However, Ginting (2017), cited by Christianto and Handoyo (2020), argued that there is no appreciable correlation between self-efficacy and creative work practices among Radio Station X personnel in Surabaya, Indonesia. Similarly, Hosseini and Shirazi (2021) found that motivating staff members will encourage creative behaviour. Therefore, those who have higher degrees of self-efficacy are far more inclined to take on difficult jobs than those who have lower levels.

**CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that SAME employees have the potential to explore, generate, realise, promote and sustain literacy-oriented ideas to a moderate and high extent, respectively. The demonstration of this behaviour did not significantly differ on the basis of gender and educational qualifications, but did on the basis of age and job tenure, respectively.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made for various stakeholders in light of the study's results:

1. By establishing a culture that promotes and fosters innovation, SAME should help its staff members achieve high IWB. This may be accomplished by offering tools and assistance for

employee-led innovation initiatives, praising and rewarding creative accomplishments, and creating chances for career advancement.

2. On the basis of educational qualifications, SAME heads should establish a clear innovation framework, outlining goals, expectations, and resources available to support innovative tasks. This framework should be communicated across all levels and departments regardless of educational qualifications.
3. The SAME leaders need to have a flexible and adaptable stance. Heads should use a democratic approach that promotes employee engagement, participation, and feedback in order to promote IWB. Open-door policies, suggestion boxes, and frequent team meetings may help accomplish this.

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