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Assessing the impact of Innovation, Imitation, and Invention on the Decisional Roles of Managers in Multinational Corporations [MNCs]

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of innovation, imitation, and invention on the decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in Nigeria. The motivation for the research stemmed from the growing importance of knowledge-based and technology-driven management practices in enhancing decision-making efficiency, adaptability, and competitiveness in a globalized business environment. The study aimed to determine how these three dimensions of creativity and strategic adaptation influence managerial decisions in dynamic organisational contexts. Grounded in the Innovation Diffusion Theory and Dynamic Capabilities Framework, the study adopted an explanatory research design with a quantitative approach. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to 260 managers and staff across selected MNCs, out of which 235 valid responses were retrieved, representing a 90% response rate. Statistical analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized relationships.The results showed that innovation was the most influential factor with a positive impact on decision positions of managers (0.557, $p < 0.05$), then invention (0.248, $p < 0.05$) and imitation (0.201, $p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate that creative and adaptive practices are highly important in enhancing the efficiency of managerial decisions made, strategic planning and responsiveness to market dynamics. The paper concludes that it is necessary to be consistent in investing in innovative capability and organizational learning systems in order to increase managerial performance in multinational enterprises. Its recommendations are that the corporate leaders and policy makers initiate formulated innovation policies, institute capacity-building schemes, and pursue digital transformation strategies as a way of enhancing decision quality and global competitiveness in the multinational industry.

Keywords: Innovation, Imitation, Invention, Decisional Roles, Multinational Corporations

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1. Introduction and Background Information

The dynamics of innovation, imitation, and invention have profoundly shaped managerial decision-making roles in global corporations. In developed economies including Germany, Japan and South Korea, policies of innovation have intensified industrial productivity and competitive edge particularly in production. For example, in 2015-2020 Germany pumped over 4 billion (in Euros) into Industry 4.0s. This investment allowed the sector to aid the GDP by almost 20 per cent as compared to less than 8 per cent in Nigeria (World Bank, 2023). The emphasis of invention and imitation of its industries on a scale brought China to its manufacturing export of 3.3 trillion in 2020, which, comprising nearly 28 percent of the world production, is about 2.1 trillion of 2011 (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). These illustrations indicate the importance of being innovative and adapting as a manager to ensure the competitiveness of industries at a global scale.

Conversely, the manufacturing industry in Nigeria has not performed well compared to others in Africa since Nigeria is the largest economy in the continent. National Bureau of Statistics showed a decrease of 8.8 to 10.3 in the percentage contribution to GDP by manufacturing which stood at just 8.8 in 2022 and 10.3 in 2015. It has mostly deteriorated because of the infrastructural insufficiency, low adoption of innovation, and inadequate technological discovery (Kimhi et al., 2019). This contrasts sharply with South Africa, where manufacturing has always contributed 13 percent of GDP, Vietnam, where it represented over 25 percent in 2022, and it is made possible by conscious policies to encourage innovation as well as to establish managerial capacity (Donbesuurü et al., 2020). These gaps imply that Nigerian managers have more difficult problems in adjusting to technological, institutional and competitive shocks, which indicates the necessity to pay attention to the innovations, imitation, and invention when making decisions.

The world of global manufacturing describes the use of technological innovation by multinational corporations (MNCs) in a bid to maintain performance. Nestle has been investing in R&D CHF 1.7 billion in 2021 just in Switzerland alone, and improving the managerial decision-making around sustainability and product innovation (Isaac et al., 2020). MNC managers in the UK and France effectively emulated and translated local production technology to suit the changing consumer demand without major productivity decreases. In Nigeria, currency volatility, high energy price, and low infrastructure have interrupted the operations of MNCs that have undermined the capacity of managers to seek resolution based on invention or innovation (Salau, et al. 2018; Olorunnisola et al., 2024). This comparison shows that the issues of innovation, imitation, and invention are significant to research into the dynamics of Nigerian decisional roles.

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Evidence from other emerging markets also demonstrates the urgency of such a study. The managers of the manufacturing industry in Brazil had increasingly depended on imitation strategy to enable the sector to adapt the European production methods to enable it continue to contribute to the GDP at 10.9 per cent in 2021 (Wrede et al., 2020). India also ascertained to mix imitation and incremental innovation which resulted in high productivity and a manufacturing GDP of 17.4% in 2022. In the meantime, Turkey, through the invention-led management positions, increased its exports to industries by 33 percent in the period between 2019 and 2022 (Sheik and Singh, 2020). Nigeria, in turn, remains a country where the competitiveness is declining, as it ranks 110th among 141 countries in terms of the Global Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum, 2022). This relative poor performance demonstrates the sense of urgency to conduct studies grounding managerial decision-making within the contexts of innovation, imitation, and invention in the Nigerian manufacturing industry.

At the organisational level, evidence shows that Nigerian managers have historically struggled with the integration of new technologies into decision-making processes. Studies of Anambra State manufacturing firms revealed that low technological innovation adoption reduced operational performance significantly, with higher costs and inefficiency (Kimhi et al., 2019). Besides, despite the digitalization controversy, only 23% of Nigerian manufacturing firms reported structured innovation programmes in 2023, compared to 67% in South Korea and 52% in Malaysia (Majhi et al., 2023). This lack of structured innovation strategies has consequences such as reduced productivity, reduced export competitiveness, and declining foreign direct investment in the sector (Abdullahi et al., 2019). All these facts raise essential questions on how innovation, imitation, and invention are conceptualized and utilized by MNC managers in Nigeria in making their decisions.

Theoretical and empirical research also illustrate deficiencies in the understanding of how managerial roles evolve under conditions of technological and institutional turbulence.While scholars such as Tidd and Bessant (2020) and Güleryüz and Duygulu (2020) examined managerial adaptability in Industry 4.0 contexts, little has been done to contextualize these insights within the Nigerian manufacturing environment where infrastructural, economic, and institutional barriers persist. The literature has extensively explored the effects of technological change on performance in Western and Asian economies (Henfridsson et al., 2014; Giotis&Papadionysiou, 2022), but there is inadequate empirical focus on how innovation, imitation, and invention intersect with managerial decisional roles in African contexts, particularly in multinational subsidiaries. This gap underscores the necessity of the present study. Based on the above the following research questions are formulated to guide this study:

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i. What are the benefits and challenges of promoting the effectiveness of Innovation, Imitation, and Invention of managers of MNC in Nigeria?
ii. What is the impact of innovation on the decisional roles of managers of MNC in Nigeria?
iii. How does imitation of managerial practices and technologies affect decisional roles of managers of MNC in Nigeria?

2. LITERATUREREVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Innovation:

Innovation is the introduction of new or significantly improved products, processes, or business models (Tidd& Bessant, 2020); incremental innovation denotes small continuous improvements to existing offerings (Donbesuur et al., 2020); radical innovation denotes breakthrough changes that create new markets or disrupt existing ones (Bonnet &Westerman, 2020); and organisational innovation refers to internal changes in routines, structures or management practices that enable value creation (Martínez-Caro, Cegarra-Navarro & Alfonso-Ruiz, 2020). Innovation shaped managerial decisional roles by shifting choices from routine operational fixes to strategic option generation, risk assessment and resource reconfiguration (Güleryüz&Duygulu, 2020; Majhi, Mukherjee &Anand, 2023). Empirical studies showed that where firms invested in structured innovation processes, managers exercised more entrepreneurial judgement and forward-looking decisions (Wrede, Velamuri&Dauth, 2020; Olive-Tomas, 2020). In Nigeria, manufacturing managers faced institutional and infrastructural constraints that limited the scope and speed of innovation uptake, producing reactive rather than proactive decision patterns (Kimhi et al., 2019; Bawalla&Rufai, 2021). There is therefore limited empirical evidence on how innovation specifically altered managerial decisional enactment in MNCs, creating a need for this study.

2.2 Imitation

Imitation is the purposeful adoption or adaptation of existing technologies, products or managerial practices from other firms or markets (Van den Oever& Martin, 2015); adaptive imitation denotes contextual modification to fit local conditions (Donbesuur et al., 2020); reverse engineering is a technical form of imitation focused on product replication (Giotis&Papadionysiou, 2022); and institutional imitation refers to copying governance, HR or managerial routines observed elsewhere (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). Imitation influenced decisional roles by assessing efficiency and risk-averse types of decisions where managers chose to utilise what was already tested instead of innovation (Tidd and Bessant, 2020; Syed et al., 2024).

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Imitation was a factor that in the emerging markets hastened the ability building yet limited radical entrepreneurial actions, as managers were weighing speed-to-market versus local factors (Donbesuur et al., 2020; Wrede et al., 2020). The imitation in Nigeria had allowed a few companies to overcome the technology gap within brief periods but managers continued to face expenses of poor infrastructure and currency fluctuations that informed conservative decision heuristics (Isaac et al., 2020; Olorunnisola et al., 2024). This situation created an open question of how the use of imitation and innovation dissimilarly influenced the decisional orientations of managers in MNCs and how this issue required empirical research.

2.3 Invention

Invention is the development of entirely new technologies, processes or products that have never existed previously (Tebekin and Vasilyuk, 2019); scientific invention is the establishment of new discoveries based on research (Martinez-Caro et al., 2020); technological invention is the application artefact like a device or new machinery (Henfridsson, Mathiassen and Svahn, 2014); and organisational invention is the creation of a new managerial practice or a business model (Tidd and Bessant, 2020).Invention altered decisional roles by demanding managers make high-uncertainty strategic judgments about commercialization, IP, and capability investments—decisions that required long-term vision and tolerance for failure (Bonnet &Westerman, 2020; Majhi et al., 2023). Globally, inventing firms endowed managers with discretion to pursue market creation and to restructure organisations, while in constrained environments invention was rare and managers defaulted to imitation or incremental innovation (Donbesuur et al., 2020; Giotis&Papadionysiou, 2022). In Nigeria, the low national R&D intensity and fragmented research ecosystems limited invention pipelines, so managerial decisional roles often lacked invention-driven options and leaned toward adaptive strategies (Obiki-Osafiele et al., 2024; Abdullahi, Shehu& Usman, 2019). Consequently, the extent to which invention has affected decisional roles in MNCs is under-researched and warrants investigation.

2.4 Decisional roles of managers

Decisional roles (Mintzberg) include entrepreneur—initiating change; disturbance handler—resolving crises; resource allocator—distributing assets; and negotiator—representing the unit externally (Canbek, 2020; Gibbs, 1994). Decisional roles are enacted through choices about strategy, operations, and stakeholder engagement and are shaped by available knowledge,

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organisational routines and external conditions (Gibbs, 1994; Henfridsson et al., 2014). Innovation, imitation and invention differentially influenced how managers performed these roles—innovation increased entrepreneurial and long-term resource allocation choices, imitation emphasised efficient resource allocation and risk aversion, while invention demanded bold entrepreneurial and negotiation decisions to commercialize novel outputs (Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Wrede et al., 2020). In Nigeria, factors such as unreliable power, supply chain fragility and constrained R&D skewed managerial decisions toward short-term stability and cost management, limiting the exercise of exploratory decisional roles in manufacturing firms (Kimhi et al., 2019; Olorunnisola et al., 2024). There is therefore a clear need to empirically assess how innovation, imitation and invention altered the decisional roles of managers.

2.4 Manufacturing context in Nigeria

Competitiveness denotes a firm's ability to sustain market share and profitability amidst rivals (Schwab, 2021); productivity is output per unit input in manufacturing operations (Martínez-Caro et al., 2020); technology adoption denotes the rate and depth at which firms integrate new tools (Mugge et al., 2020); and institutional constraints include infrastructure, policy and skills gaps that shape firm behaviour (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). Nigeria's manufacturing share of GDP leveled off in recent years and productivity growth lagged behind peers, constraining firms' ability to grow and pursue automation investments (Kimhi et al., 2019; Obiki-Osafiele et al., 2024). Volatility of the exchange rate, power prices and supply chain interruptions already increased unit costs and constrained managers' bandwidth to pursue strategic digital initiatives in Nigeria-based multinational subsidiaries (Isaac et al., 2020; Olorunnisola et al., 2024). There were comparative evidence-based studies that indicated the more advanced the automation and managerial capability of countries, the better they performed in terms of competitiveness as well as product development speed (Wrede et al., 2020; Donbesuur et al., 2020). Given these conditions, an analysis of the role of innovation, imitation, and invention in reshaping the decisional roles in Nigeria was relevant and an unexplored territory.

2.6 Theoretical Underpinnings

Theoretical synthesis brings together concepts of multiple theoretical frameworks to provide a stronger assessment of the contribution of innovation, imitation, and invention to the decisional roles of MNC managers in Nigeria. Picking insights from Institutional Theory and Resource Dependency Theory, it highlights the interdependent nature of organisational strategies, external pressures, and managerial choices. Theoretical synthesis provides a foundation for examining how innovation, imitation, and invention programmes affect both decisional roles of managers.

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2.6.1 Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983 foundations; reviewed in Ahlstrom et al., 2020) assumes organisations conform to normative, mimetic and coercive pressures from their institutional environment. The central assumption is that managerial decisions are constrained and enabled by formal regulations, norms, and industry practices, leading to isomorphic behaviours. Institutional Theory is applicable here because managers of MNCs operate within Nigerian regulatory frameworks, industry norms and parent-company standards that shape whether they innovate, imitate or pursue invention (Ahlstrom et al., 2020; Isaac et al., 2020). Empirical applications have shown institutional pressures influence adoption strategies in emerging markets, where mimetic pressures (copying successful models) often lead managers to favour imitation over risky invention (Donbesuur et al., 2020; Obiki-Osafiele et al., 2024). Thus, Institutional Theory helps explain systemic drivers behind managerial decisional choices in the Nigerian manufacturing context.

2.6.2Resource Dependency Theory

The Resource Dependency Theory (Pfeffer and Salancak, 1978) presupposes that organisations have a dependency on external participants over key resources and that decision making at the managerial level is geared towards the management of the dependency to generate resources and independence. The theory assumes that as a result of resource constraints and bargaining power, managers will follow strategies (e.g. imitation to reduce risk; invention to create unique assets). Resource Dependency Theory defines the reactions of managers' decisional role to constraints common in the Nigeria manufacturing environment, including foreign exchange, imported inputs, infrastructure and access to skilled labour-constructions that made imitation imperative in reducing threats and constraining localized invention (Isaac et al., 2020; Bawalla and Rufai, 2021). The theory has been applied when dealing with manufacturing in emerging economies as a way of establishing how managerial discretion allocation and strategic alternatives are affected by external dependencies (Donbesuur et al., 2020; Syed et al., 2024). Resource Dependency therefore provides a powerful framework to develop the external environments of resources and how they affected decisions to be made on innovation, imitation and invention.

2.6.3 Integrated Applicability

Together Institutional Theory and Resource Dependency Theory provide complementary explanations: institutional pressures determine normative and regulatory constraints on managerial choices while resource dependencies shape the feasibility and attractiveness of innovation, imitation or invention strategies (Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Ahlstrom et al., 2020). In

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the case of empirical modelling, this implies defining both the institutional and resource variables as conditions or mediators of relationship between innovation/imitation/ invention and decisional roles, especially in Nigeria manufacturing setting where standardization of parent-company and the regulation and constraints of resources coexist (Isaac et al., 2020; Obiki-Osafiele et al., 2024). This combined framing assists in the modelling of regression equations to test both the direct influences of the types of innovations on decisional functions and the interaction effects of institutions and resource factors.

2.7Research Gap

Although international literature has examined how innovation, imitation and invention influence managerial roles in advanced economies (Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Wrede et al., 2020), there remains limited empirical research contextualising these dynamics within Nigerian manufacturing subsidiaries. Existing Nigerian studies documented infrastructure, skill and institutional constraints (Kimhi et al., 2019; Bawalla&Rufai, 2021) but did not empirically map how each mode of technological change (innovation, imitation, invention) differentially affected managers' decisional role enactment. Consequently, robust quantitative evidence, using regression models that incorporate institutional and resource moderators is lacking for the Nigerian context. This study will fill that empirical gap and inform managerial and policy responses.

3. DETAILED MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section discussed the methodology that guided this study and it provided a structured approach to research philosophy, design, population, sampling, instruments, analysis, and ethics.

Research Design and Approach: The research design was an explanatory research design which involves quantitative approach. Structured questionnaire was used to quantify numeric data of the impact of innovation, imitation, and invention on the decisional roles of managers. This study was informed by a positivist philosophy, which emphasizes both the numbers and the situational accounts toward answering very practical issues (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Quantitative approach allows maintaining generalisability and offering a deeper level of context. Therefore, this study generated findings that were both statistically robust and contextually grounded (Esteban-Bravo & Vidal-Sanz, 2021).

Population and Sample Size: The target population for this study comprised all staff and managers of the selected MNC, Lagos headquarters, with a total staff strength of 773 employees (NSE Prospectus, 2021). This included 48 top-level managers, 142 middle-level

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managers, and 583 lower-level managers. These groups represented the unit of analysis, as they were directly involved in decisional roles influenced by innovation, imitation, and invention. Table 1 presents the distribution of the population.

Table 1: Population Distribution of the selected MNC

Category	Code	Number of Staff
Top-Level Managers	TLM	48
Middle-Level Managers	MLM	142
Lower-Level Managers	LLM	583
Total		**773**

Since studying all 773 employees was impractical, a representative sample was drawn. Using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the sample size was calculated as 260 respondents. This ensured statistical adequacy and minimised sampling error. This stratified distribution ensured representativeness across managerial levels, thereby improving validity. Table 2 presents the sample size distribution.

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Category	Population	Sample Size
Top-Level Managers	48	16
Middle-Level Managers	142	48
Lower-Level Managers	583	196
Total	**773**	**260**

Sampling Techniques: This study employed a stratified random sampling technique for the quantitative survey. The population was divided into strata (top, middle, and lower-level managers), and proportional allocation was applied to ensure fair representation. From each stratum, respondents were randomly selected using computer-generated numbers. This method was superior to simple random sampling, as it prevented over-representation of lower-level managers who made up the bulk of the population. The choice of purposive sampling was justified because it allowed the researcher to deliberately target respondents with relevant expertise and experiences in innovation, imitation, and invention.

Research Instruments: A structured questionnaire was adopted for this study. The questionnaire was designed with three sections: demographic information, leadership roles, and informational roles in relation to innovation, imitation, and invention. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Agree (5)* to *Strongly Disagree (1)*. Table 3 presents the constructs and number of items included.

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Table 3: Constructs and Questionnaire Items

Construct	No. of Items	Sources
Decisional Roles	5	Canbek, 2020; Gibbs, 1994; Henfridsson et al., 2014; Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Wrede et al., 2020; Kimhi et al., 2019; Olorunnisola et al., 2024
Innovation	3	Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Bonnet &Westerman, 2020; Wrede, Velamuri&Dauth, 2020; Olive-Tomas, 2020; Bawalla&Rufai, 2021
Imitation	3	Van den Oever& Martin, 2015;Giotis&Papadionysiou, 2022; Tidd& Bessant, 2020; Syed et al., 2024; Olorunnisola et al., 2024
Invention	3	Henfridsson, Mathiassen&Svahn, 2014; Tebekin&Vasilyuk, 2019; Martínez-Caro et al., 2020; Bonnet &Westerman, 2020; Majhi et al., 2023; Abdullahi, Shehu& Usman, 2019

Method of Data Analysis: The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires were coded and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v26). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and percentages) summarised respondents' demographics, while inferential statistics, particularly the use of structural and measurement models (i.e. Smart PLS, 4.5.0) to examine the relationship between innovation, imitation, and invention and decisional roles. Smart PLS was chosen because it revealed both the strength and direction of relationships between independent and dependent variables, making it more suitable than correlation analysis alone.

Ethical Considerations: The study adhered strictly to ethical guidelines. Prior to data collection, approval was obtained from the researcher's institutional ethics committee. Informed consent forms were distributed to participants, clearly stating the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any stage. Respondents' confidentiality was guaranteed by assigning codes instead of names. All data were stored securely in password-protected files and accessible only to the researcher. Sensitive organisational information was treated with strict confidentiality to prevent misuse. These safeguards ensured that the research upheld integrity, transparency, and respect for human dignity.

4.Data Analysis and Discussions

The unit of analysis for this study comprised 260 staff and management of the selected MNC. This implies that two hundred and sixty (260) copies of questionnaire were distributed to staff and management of the selected MNC and out of which, only two hundred and thirty-five (235)

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representing 90% response rate were returned as shown in Tables 4 and Figure 1. The copies of the administered questionnaire and the response rate are presented accordingly in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents' Response Rate

Sample Size	Number	Percentage (%)
Correctly filled and Returned	235	90%
Not Returned and not completely filled	25	10%
Total	260	100%

Tables 4 and 5 represent the response rate from the questionnaire administered to the target respondents for the study. The result presented was based on the responses from the questionnaire that were correctly filled and returned. The response rate was further broken down according to the levels of management in the selected MNC (See Figure 1).

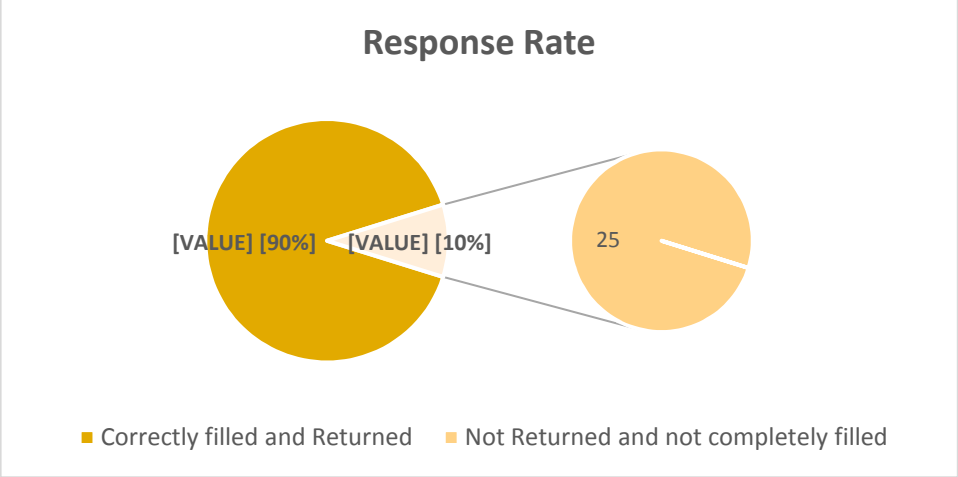

Figure 1: Distribution and retrieval rate of Questionnaire

Table 5: Breakdown of Retuned Questionnaire

S/N	Status	Copies Distributed	Copies Retrieved	(%) of Copies Retrieved
1	Top level Management	10	8	80%
2	Middle level Management	45	37	82%
3	Lower level Management	205	190	93%
	Total	**260**	**235**	**90%**

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The data in Table 5 outlines the response rate to questionnaires distributed across different management levels of a remarkable MNC, Lagos. Out of 260 total questionnaires distributed, 235 were retrieved, yielding an overall response rate of 90%. The breakdown shows that lower-level management had the highest retrieval rate at 93% (190 out of 205), followed by middle-level management at 82% (37 out of 45), and top-level management at 80% (8 out of 10). This high response rate, particularly from lower and middle management and this suggests strong participation and engagement with the survey. This also made the data reliable and reflective of the employees' perspectives across different management tiers.

4.2 Demographic Data

Table 6: Demographic distribution of respondents (n =235)

Gender	Percentage (%)
Male	68.4%
Female	31.6%
Total	100%
Age	
Below 30 years	29.1%
30-40 years	40.3%
41-50 years	23.2%
51 years and above	7.4%
Total	100%
Marital Status of the Participants	
Single	29.9%
Married	65.7%
Others	4.4%
Total	100%
Highest Educational Qualification of the Participants	
SSCE	7.1%
OND	10.7%
Bachelors' Degree	68.4%
Masters' Degree	10.7%
Others	3.1%
Total	100%
Years of experience [Spent] in the organisation	
1-5years	11.8%
6-10years	48.6%

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11-15years	25.4%
Over 16yrs	14.2%
Total	100%

Table 6 presents the demographic distribution of the 235 respondents. The majority were male (68.4%), while female respondents accounted for 31.6%. In terms of age, 40.3% were between 30–40 years, followed by 29.1% below 30 years, 23.2% aged 41–50 years, and 7.4% above 51 years. Regarding marital status, 65.7% were married, 29.9% single, and 4.4% categorized as others. Educationally, most participants held a Bachelor's degree (68.4%), while 10.7% each possessed OND or Master's degrees, 7.1% SSCE, and 3.1% other qualifications. Concerning work experience, 48.6% had 6–10 years, 25.4% had 11–15 years, 14.2% had over 16 years, and 11.8% had 1–5 years of experience in their organisations, showing a relatively well-educated and experienced workforce. Summarily, the demographic profile indicates that the study respondents were predominantly educated, married males in their productive age bracket with substantial work experience in their respective manufacturing organisations.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics reveal that innovation, imitation, and invention has significantly enhanced both decisional roles among managers in multinational corporations (MNCs). The mean scores indicate strong agreement among respondents on the positive influence of innovation, imitation, and invention, with relatively low standard deviations showing consistency in their views.

Table 7: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation on Innovation, imitation, and invention and Its Impact on Decisional Roles of Managers in MNCs (n = 235)

Variable	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Innovation	4.525	0.252	High level of adoption
Imitation	4.003	0.183	High level of adoption
Invention	4.194	0.107	High level of adoption
Decisional Roles	4.281	0.186	Highly improved decisional flow
Aggregate Mean	4.251	0.182	High influence overall

Table 7 reveals that innovation, imitation, and invention all exert a significant positive impact on the decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations (MNCs). The mean score for

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innovation ($\bar{x}$ = 4.525, SD = 0.252) indicates a very high level of adoption among managers, suggesting that creative and novel practices are strongly integrated into decision-making processes. Imitation also recorded a high adoption rate ($\bar{x}$ = 4.003, SD = 0.183), implying that managers frequently replicate successful strategies from other organisations to enhance efficiency. Similarly, invention showed a high level of adoption ($\bar{x}$ = 4.194, SD = 0.107), demonstrating managers' tendency to develop new approaches to address organisational challenges. The decisional roles variable ($\bar{x}$ = 4.281, SD = 0.186) reflects a highly improved decisional flow, signifying that these innovative dimensions collectively strengthen managerial decision-making. With an aggregate mean of 4.251 and a standard deviation of 0.182, the overall result indicates a high and consistent influence of innovation-related practices on the decisional roles of managers in MNCs.

4.3 Analysis of Research Question:

This section addresses the research question, *"What are the benefits and challenges of implementing innovation, imitation, and invention initiatives for managers in the selected multinational corporation (MNC)?"* The analysis examines how innovation, imitation, and invention initiatives contribute to managerial growth, strategic responsiveness, and organisational advancement, while also identifying the key barriers that limit their successful integration in multinational corporations (MNCs). Table 8 below highlights the major benefits and challenges faced by managers during the implementation of these initiatives.

Table 8: Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Innovation, Imitation, and Invention Initiatives for Managers in the Selected MNCs

Benefits	Challenges
1. Faster problem-solving capacity	1. High financial and maintenance cost
2. Stronger team collaboration	2. Employee reluctance toward new systems
3. Greater product and service quality	3. Limited digital infrastructure
4. Increased global competitiveness	4. Weak innovation-supportive policies
5. Improved managerial confidence and creativity	5. Short innovation life cycle

The findings indicate that innovation, imitation, and invention initiatives provide multiple advantages for managers in MNCs, including faster problem-solving, stronger collaboration, enhanced product quality, and improved competitiveness. These benefits help managers make timely and confident decisions while promoting creativity and adaptability across teams. However, persistent challenges such as high financial demands, limited infrastructure, weak policy support, and short innovation cycles often constrain sustainability. This implies that MNCs

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must adopt supportive policies, upgrade digital capacity, and foster a continuous learning culture to balance innovation-driven progress with operational stability and long-term growth.

4.4 Test of Research Hypotheses

This study employed both structural and measurement model predictions to evaluate the impact of innovation, imitation, and invention on decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations. Using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, path coefficients and the bootstrapping technique with 5,000 samples were applied in line with Bollen and Stine (1992) and Liao, Tang, and Shim (2022). All constructs in the measurement model were reflective and exceeded the minimum recommended factor loading of 0.70, as supported by Fornell (1981). The items that fell below this threshold were minimal and excluded to maintain validity. The hypothesis tested was:

H_0: Innovation, imitation, and invention has no significant effect on the decisional roles of managers in the selected multinational corporation [MNC]

To evaluate this, innovation, imitation, and invention were treated as the independent variable, while one dependent variable was considered: decisional roles of managers. Each construct was assessed using a five-point Likert scale. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the model structure, with Table 9 presenting the factor loadings, all of which exceeded 0.70, affirming the model's reliability and construct validity based on Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and Thakkar (2020).

Table 9: Factor Loadings and Measurement Model Indicators

Constructs	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Indicators
Innovation	0.819	0.876	0.711	0.735	3
Imitation	0.800	0.815	0.725	0.801	3
Invention	0.783	0.794	0.700	0.724	3
Decisional Roles of Managers	0.865	0.860	0.714	0.825	5

Table 9 shows that all constructs demonstrate strong reliability and validity, with factor loadings ranging from 0.783 to 0.865, indicating that the measurement items effectively represent each construct. Composite reliability values between 0.794 and 0.876 and Cronbach's alpha scores from 0.724 to 0.825 confirm internal consistency across all variables. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, which range from 0.700 to 0.725, surpass the 0.50 threshold, signifying good convergent validity. Overall, the results validate that innovation, imitation, and invention

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significantly influence the decisional roles of managers, supported by robust and reliable measurement indicators.

(a) Evaluation of the Path Coefficients

The inner structural model was used to assess the impact of innovation, imitation, and invention on decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations. Following Méndez-Suárez (2021), bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was applied to determine the significance of the path coefficients. Path coefficients were calculated using the PLS algorithm, providing standardised β values used to assess the strength of the relationships. The results, as shown in Table 10 and visualised in Figure 2, confirmed statistically significant relationships between the varables.

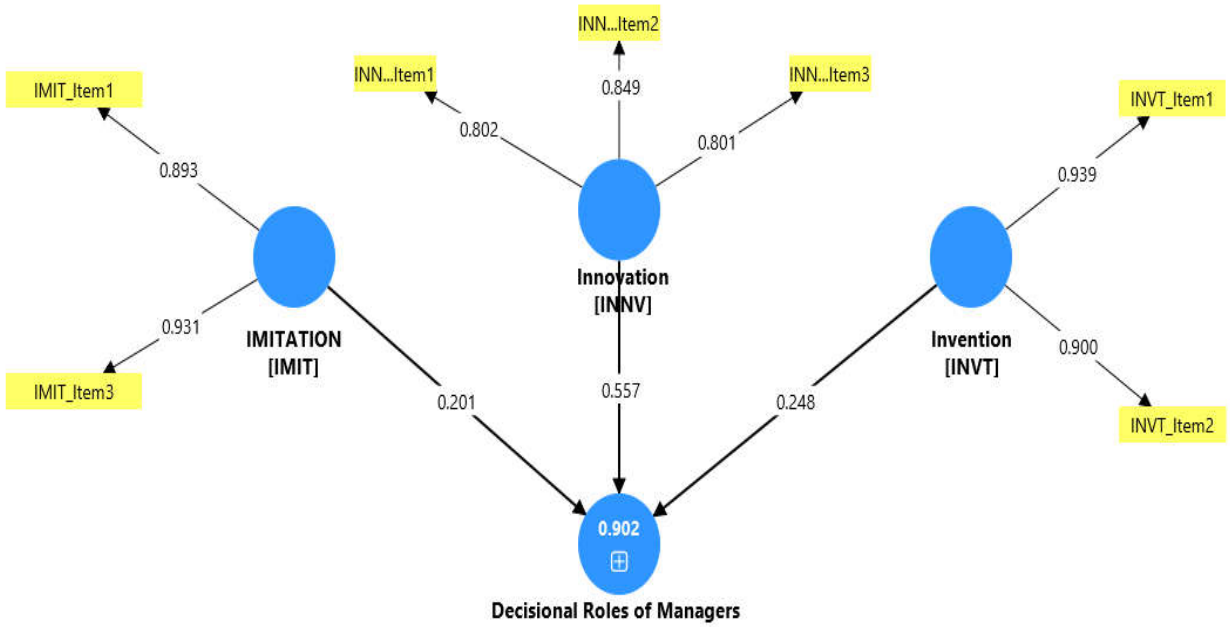

Figure 2 Predictive relevance (Path co-efficient and T-values) of innovation, imitation, and invention on decisional roles of managers

Table 10: Path Coefficients for innovation, imitation, and invention on decisional roles of managers

Variables and Cross Loading	Path Co-efficient	Std. Dev. (STDEV)	R Square	Adj. R Square	T-Statistics (O/ STDEV	P Values
Innovation =>Decisional roles of managers	0.557	0.050	0.902	0.891	38.625	0.000
Invention =>Decisional roles of managers	0.248	0.068			31.183	0.000
Imitation =>Decisional roles of managers	0.201	0.072			21.492	0.000

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Table 10 reveals that all three constructs (i.e. innovation, invention, and imitation) significantly influence the decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations (MNCs) in Nigeria, with varying degrees of impact. Innovation recorded the highest path coefficient (0.557, T = 38.625, p = 0.000), indicating that it is the most dominant predictor of managerial decision-making effectiveness. Invention followed with a moderate effect (0.248, T = 31.183, p = 0.000), suggesting that creative development of new ideas also strengthens decision processes, while imitation had the least but still significant contribution (0.201, T = 21.492, p = 0.000), showing that adopting existing models still aids managerial efficiency. The R^2 value of 0.902 and adjusted R^2 of 0.891 indicate that these three variables collectively explain about 90% of the variance in decisional roles, confirming that innovation-driven strategies exert the strongest and most reliable influence on managerial decision-making in Nigerian MNCs.

(c) Discriminant Validity – FornellLarcker Criterion

Discriminant	[1]	[2]	[3]	[3]	Q^2predict
Innovation [1]	0.862				0.182
Imitation [2]	0.779	0.780			0.288
Invention [3]	0.713	0.700	0.689		0.354
Decisional Roles of Managers [4]	0.700	0.685	0.671	0.666	3.422

The table demonstrates that the Fornell–Larcker criterion values confirm strong discriminant validity among the constructs, as each diagonal value is higher than the corresponding inter-construct correlations. Innovation (0.862), imitation (0.780), invention (0.689), and decisional roles of managers (0.666) all show satisfactory levels of distinctiveness, indicating that each construct measures a unique concept within the model. The Q^2predict values, which range from 0.182 to 3.422, suggest high predictive relevance, especially for the decisional roles construct, which recorded the strongest predictive power (3.422). Overall, these results imply that the measurement model is well-specified, with innovation, imitation, and invention contributing distinct yet complementary influences on managerial decision-making effectiveness in MNCs.

(d) The Common Method Bias (CMB)

Table 11 presents the results of the Common Method Bias (CMB) test conducted for innovation, imitation, and invention in relation to the decisional roles of managers. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for innovation (2.614), imitation (2.692), invention (2.337), and decisional roles of managers (2.561) are all below the acceptable threshold of 3, confirming that the dataset is free from multicollinearity and common method bias. Furthermore, the variance factor of 64.018% exceeds the 50% benchmark, indicating that the model explains a substantial portion of the variance in the observed variables. This implies that the statistical

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relationships among the constructs are authentic and not distorted by measurement bias, thereby reinforcing the validity and reliability of the study's findings on managerial decision-making in MNCs.

Table 11: Common Method Bias for Coefficients for innovation, imitation, and invention on decisional roles of managers

S/N	Variables	VIF [<3]	Decision	Variance Factor in % [> 50%]
1	Innovation [1]	2.614	Free of CMB	64.018
2	Imitation [2]	2.692	Free of CMB	
3	Invention [3]	2.337	Free of CMB	
4	Decisional Roles of Managers [4]	2.561		

(e) Evaluation of the Model fitness

Absolute, incremental, and parsimony fit indices were used to assess the model fit of the correlation between innovation, imitation, and invention, leadership position, and informational position of managers as suggested by Hair (2021). The value of the Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR = 0.063) is lower than the acceptable value (0.08) and it is clear the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI = 0.960) is very close with the suspected model and the data observed. Incremental fit measures such as Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.941) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.947) test scores were above 0.90 which confirmed the strength of the model and improvement compared to the baseline model. Moreover, the models are appropriate and simple, which is confirmed by the relative Chi-square (CMIN/DF<3) and Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI>0.50). A combination of these indices makes it clear that innovation, imitation, and invention has a significant and strong predictive power of the changes in the decisional roles of managers in multinational companies in Nigeria.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

The findings in Table 10 show that innovation, imitation, and invention all have a significant positive effect on the decisional roles of managers in multinational corporations (MNCs) in Nigeria, but with varying levels of influence. The path coefficient of innovation (β =0.557, T =38.625, p < 0.001) had the highest implying that it has the strongest contribution to effective managerial decision-making. The moderate impact was made on invention (β = 0.248, T =

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31.183, $p < 0.001$), and the least but still significant effect was made on imitation ($\beta = 0.201$, $T = 21.492$, $p < 0.001$). The model has a strong explanatory power as the $R2 = 0.902$ and Adjusted $R2 = 0.891$ of the model indicate that the three constructs jointly account 90% of the variance of managerial decision-making efficacy. This highlights the fact that innovation has been the major pivotal force behind decisional efficiency level among managers within MNCs in Nigeria.

These results correlate with the findings of Adenekan and Jimoh (2021) and Bawalla and Rufai (2021), who have stressed that technological innovation leads to improved decisions, flexibility, and efficiency of operations in organisations in Nigeria. Equally, the finding echoes Canbek (2020), who contended that the innovation-focused leadership approach enhances more rapid and precise decision-making in a technologically sophisticated environment. The relevance of the invention is considerable, which supports the stance of Donbesuur et al. (2020), who realized that the creation of new products and processes reinforced strategic decision-making and global competitiveness. In the meantime, the smaller impact of imitation represents the situation in Nigeria, where numerous MNCs do not establish new models, but rather transform existing ones, which is congruent with Giotis and Papadionysiou (2022) who observed that imitation can bring short-term efficiency to the company, but restricts long-term strategic benefit.

Specifically, these results show that innovation could be used as a strategic anchor to facilitate efficient decision-making and make organisations resilient in Nigerian MNCs. They support Ahlstrom et al.'s (2020) and Majhi et al.'s (2023) argument that leadership rooted in innovation could make a firm succeed under the environment of technological and institutional change. The relationship among innovation, invention, and imitation has explanatory capability that is strong ($R\ 2 = 0.902$), and therefore strategic management can be based on high levels of synergies. Therefore, to improve managerial performance and remain competitive in the world economy, MNCs in Nigeria need to focus on innovation competence, research leadership investment, and creative problem-solving cultures.

6. Recommendations and Policy Implications

It is recommended from the conclusions drawn that corporate executives, ICT departments, and HR managers work together to advance digital transformation in their operations because innovation, imitation, and invention significantly enhance managers' decision-making functions in Nigerian multinational firms. For these results, learning and development teams must put in place systemic innovation training programs aimed at learning creativity skills, technology adoption and decision-making. With digital transformation workshops and co-innovation centers, managers must be motivated to become a culture of continuous experimentation and

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improvement. Besides, MNCs are also advised to establish cross functional innovation team encompassing both global as well as local experience for easy sharing of knowledge and also for ensuring innovative as well as imitative strategies are oriented towards the organisational objectives. Such types of projects will enable managers to enhance efficiency, adopt new technologies and convert innovation into business results.

Policy-wise, the National Ministry of Labour and Employment, the National Information and Technology Development Agency (NITDA) and Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) should sit down and formulate a national policy on innovation that is particular to MNC activities in Nigeria. Such policy is to confer tax relief, innovation grants, and capacity building services upon the firms that invest in research, invention, and technology development. Additionally, it is proposed that promote the use of ethical innovation practices and lay down the ground for public-private collaboration to expedite the process of digital preparedness. Compliance with these recommendations will not only increase the managerial decision-making capability of MNCs, but also increase the competitiveness of Nigeria on a global scale and a sustainable digital economy.

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