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THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON PROCESSING COMPANIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the effect of globalization on processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the effect of information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility on the processing companies. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted, while primary data were collected from employees of selected processing companies in Cross River State using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment, and labour mobility had a significant positive effect on the processing companies. The findings indicate that the productivity of processing companies is strengthened through effective information technology diffusion, favourable trade liberalization, increased foreign direct investment inflows, and efficient labour mobility. The study recommends that management of processing companies should strengthen information technology adoption, maximize opportunities created by trade liberalization, establish strategic partnerships that attract foreign direct investment, and implement effective human resource policies that promote skilled labour development and knowledge transfer to improve operational efficiency of processing companies in Cross River State. (Word count: 175)

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1.1 Introduction

Globalization, a process fostered and spurred by rapid change in the information and communication technology, is making the world economy more interdependent. It brings about the free flow of trade and investment among the nations. The process also results in higher efficiency, increase in productivity, better products and lower prices. For the developing countries, the inflow of funds through foreign direct investment (FDI), information technology (IT), trade liberalization (TL) and labour mobility (LM) as well as smart partnership have catalyzed the rapid development of their economies.

Today, it is no longer news that Nigeria, as an open economy with a large domestic market has benefited from the globalization process though without its implications on businesses particularly processing firms (Alkharafi & Alsabah, 2025).

Globalization is the growing integration of economies through information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility. These dimensions have reduced barriers to cross-border transactions and increased the speed at which ideas, resources, and production practices spread across countries (Daniel & Iisokariari, 2020).

Information technology diffusion is a critical mechanism through which globalization influences organisational productivity. Digital technologies support automation, data-driven decision-making, and real-time coordination across production stages. Processing companies increasingly rely on enterprise resource planning systems, digital supply chain platforms, and process control technologies to optimize operations (Jaber et al., 2024).

Trade liberalization, another pillar of globalization, removes barriers to international trade, such as tariffs and quotas, allowing firms to access larger markets and compete on a global scale. This trade openness encourages efficiency improvements as domestic companies face international competition, compelling them to innovate and reduce costs to maintain market share. In Nigeria, trade liberalization has historically influenced manufacturing output by expanding export opportunities and importing advanced inputs, though its effects on productivity vary across sectors.

Foreign direct investment inflows on the other hand, represent a key channel through which globalization injects capital, technology, and managerial expertise into host

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economies, directly influencing organisational productivity. These inflows occur when multinational corporations establish or acquire operations in foreign markets, often bringing advanced production techniques and training programs that elevate local firm standards (Aderemi et al., 2021).

Furthermore, labour mobility, involving the cross-border movement of skilled and semi-skilled workers facilitates the transfer of knowledge, technical skills, and work practices. Processing companies benefit when employees with international exposure introduce new methods of production, quality control, and problem-solving. At the same time, outward labour mobility can create skill shortages that constrain productivity if not adequately managed.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Over the past decades, the force of globalization has led to expanded world output, and many countries and businesses are benefiting from increased information technology, cross-border trade, labour mobility, and foreign direct investment. Many others, particularly in developing nations, suffer because economic regimes are inefficiently managed and basic infrastructures such as electricity, good roads, and information communication facilities, etc., which could enhance productivity of firms to gain from the impact of globalization, are neglected. This weakness reduces the capacity of firms in these developing countries to successfully compete globally. Organisations, particularly processing firms, are striving to survive worldwide competition due to increased trade liberalization in a global marketplace. Processing firms in Cross River State in particular are under pressure to improve their productivity in the face of intense pressure from high-quality foreign firms in order to ensure their existence and growth amidst an increasingly globalized economy.

However, a major challenge is poor information technology diffusion. Many processing companies still rely on outdated production systems, limited digital infrastructure, and low levels of automation. Weak access to reliable internet services, high costs of digital tools, and inadequate technical skills reduce firms' ability to adopt modern production planning, inventory management, and quality control systems. Evidence shows that limited digital adoption in Nigerian firms continues to constrain productivity growth, operational efficiency, and competitiveness in global value chains (Adeleye et al.,2021).

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While broader research examines globalization's macroeconomic impacts on Nigerian manufacturing (Ebhotemhen & Njoku, 2024), a conspicuous gap exists in targeted investigations of its specific dimensions, information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labor mobility on organisational productivity within this region's processing sector. This study fills that void by empirically analyzing these factors, offering insights to inform policy and enhance firm performance.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of globalization on processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the effect of information technology diffusion on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the effect of trade liberalization on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.
3. Investigate the effect of foreign direct investment inflows on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.
4. Assess the effect of labour mobility on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1 Theoretical framework

The theoretical underpinning for this study is rooted on technology spillover theory.This theory is chosen because of its direct relevance to this study.Technology Spillover Theory provides a strong foundation for explaining how globalization-related mechanisms transmit technological knowledge and skills that improve productivity in processing firms.The foundations of the theory are commonly attributed to the work of economists such as Paul Romer and Gene Grossman in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with further development by scholars examining international technology diffusion, particularly Coe and Helpman in 1995. The theory emerged from the recognition that technological knowledge is partially

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non-rival and imperfectly excludable, allowing benefits generated by one firm, industry, or country to extend beyond their original source.

More recent studies have refined the theory to explain how globalization accelerates the transmission of technology and knowledge across organisational and national boundaries (Keller, 2021; Coe et al., 2020). Technology spillover theory rests on several core assumptions. One central assumption is that knowledge and Technology do not remain fully contained within the organisations or countries that create them. Innovations introduced through advanced information systems, production techniques, or management practices generate external benefits that other organisations can access without incurring the full cost of development. Another assumption is that exposure to global markets increases learning opportunities. Organisations operating in open economies are assumed to observe, imitate, adapt, and improve upon foreign technologies through competitive pressure and interaction with global partners. The theory also assumes that absorptive capacity matters. Organisations must possess sufficient human capital, infrastructure, and institutional support to effectively internalize external technological knowledge. Without this capacity, spillovers may exist but remain underutilized (Behera, 2023).

2.2 Conceptual framework/review

Globalization is presented as the independent variable, operationalized through information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility. The framework assumes that globalization alters the operating environment of processing firms by expanding access to technology, markets, capital, and human skills. Their influence takes effect through improvements in how organisations utilize resources, coordinate activities, and manage production processes. Operational efficiency therefore functions as a central mechanism that connects globalization-related inputs to measurable productivity gains in the processing companies.

Information technology diffusion represents one of the most direct globalization pathways within the framework. Global digital connectivity allows organisations to access advanced technologies, management systems, and real-time information flows that were previously unavailable or costly. Adoption of global information technologies improves internal processes such as communication, inventory management, data analysis, and decision-

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making speed. These improvements reduce operational costs and enhance output quality, which strengthens organisational productivity. Empirical studies confirm that digital globalization improves firm performance by increasing efficiency and innovation capacity (Suprunenko et al., 2024; Daniel & Telmon, 2025).

Trade liberalization reduced trade barriers expose organisations to international competition and larger markets. This exposure pressures firms to optimize production processes, reduce inefficiencies, and improve product standards in order to remain competitive. Access to imported intermediate inputs and capital goods also allows organisations to integrate superior technologies and production methods. These changes contribute to more efficient operations and higher productivity levels. Research indicates that trade openness improves organisational performance through efficiency gains and strategic adjustments (Viera & Trapp, 2015; Champa, 2025).

Foreign direct investment inflows allows local processing firms to benefits from advanced technologies, managerial expertise, and standardized operating procedures into host organisations and industries. Local firms benefit from these inflows through supplier relationships, demonstration effects, and workforce movement. The framework reflects the idea that productivity gains emerge when organisations absorb and apply foreign knowledge to improve operational processes. Studies on multinational enterprises consistently show that FDI contributes to productivity growth through efficiency-enhancing spillovers (Kyove et al., 2021; Vrontis et al., 2024).

Labour mobility completes the globalization construct in the framework by emphasizing human capital flows. Movement of skilled workers across borders and organisations facilitates the transfer of technical know-how, managerial skills, and innovative practices. The framework supports existing evidence that globalization contributes to organisational productivity when firms adapt strategically and operationally to global forces (James et al., 2024; Agbionu & Nwankwere, 2021). It also aligns with strategic management literature that emphasizes competitiveness and performance as outcomes of global integration (Hansen et al., 2025).

Therefore, the conceptual framework provides a structured explanation of how globalization affects processing companies through identifiable channels. Information

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technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility serve as globalization drivers that reshape processing firms.

2.2.1 Concept of globalization

Globalization refers to the increasing integration of economies, markets, technologies, cultures, and institutions across national borders. It is driven by the expansion of international trade, foreign direct investment, cross-border flows of capital, labor, information, and the diffusion of technology. At the organisational level, globalization reduces the significance of geographic boundaries in business operations and enables firms to source inputs, access markets, and coordinate activities on a global scale. Kyove et al. (2021) describe globalization as a process that reshapes how multinational and domestic firms structure production, manage resources, and compete, emphasizing its role in connecting firms to international networks of suppliers, customers, and partners. This integration has transformed organisational operations from largely domestic arrangements into systems that depend on global linkages for efficiency and growth.

Globalization also reflects institutional and policy changes that encourage openness, including trade liberalization, deregulation, and the harmonization of standards. Shu and Steinwender (2019) note that reductions in trade barriers and tariffs expose firms to international competition while simultaneously providing access to larger markets and advanced inputs.

2.2.2 Concept of information technology diffusion

Information technology diffusion is the process through which information technologies are adopted, spread, and integrated across organisations, industries, and countries over time. It involves not only the availability of digital tools such as computers, software applications, communication networks, and data systems, but also their effective use in organisational activities (Suprunenko et al., 2024). Information technology diffusion occurs when firms move from limited or isolated use of technology to widespread and routine application across core functions including production, communication, decision-making, and coordination. This process is strongly influenced by globalization, as cross-border trade, foreign investment, and international competition accelerate the transfer of

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digital technologies and managerial practices among firms and economies (Kyove et al., 2021).

2.2.3 Concept of trade liberalization

Trade liberalization refers to the systematic reduction or removal of barriers that restrict the free flow of goods and services across national borders (Frey & Goldbach, 2025). These barriers commonly include tariffs, import quotas, export subsidies, licensing requirements, and other regulatory constraints that raise the cost of international trade. Trade liberalization is a core dimension of globalization because it promotes openness in national economies and encourages firms to participate in international markets. It reflects policy choices aimed at integrating domestic economies into the global trading system through bilateral, regional, or multilateral agreements.

Frey and Goldbach (2025) explain that firms operating in liberalized trade regimes benefit from expanded market access and stronger incentives to improve productivity in order to compete internationally. Trade liberalization therefore acts as a structural force that links national policy reforms to firm-level productivity outcomes.

2.2.4 Concept of foreign direct investment inflow

Foreign direct investment inflow refers to the movement of capital from a foreign investor into a host country with the intention of establishing a lasting interest and a significant degree of control in a domestic enterprise. It typically involves ownership of at least 10 percent of voting shares and is associated with long-term participation in management, technology transfer, and operational decision-making (Hansen et al., 2025). Unlike portfolio investment, foreign direct investment inflow is not limited to financial returns; it includes tangible assets, managerial expertise, advanced production techniques, and integration into global value chains. International organisations and scholars describe foreign direct investment inflow as a core mechanism through which globalization affects firms and economies, particularly in developing and emerging markets (Kyove et al., 2021).

Within the globalization process, foreign direct investment inflow represents a practical channel through which global capital, knowledge, and organisational practices enter domestic business environments. As trade barriers fall and investment regimes become

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more liberal, multinational enterprises expand operations across borders to access new markets, reduce production costs, and leverage location-specific advantages.

2.2.5 Concept of labour mobility

Labour mobility refers to the movement of workers across jobs, firms, sectors, and national borders in response to economic opportunities, wage differentials, skill demand, and working conditions. It includes internal mobility within organisations, occupational mobility across professions, and international mobility across countries (Lazarova et al., 2023). In a globalized economy, labour mobility has become more pronounced as firms expand beyond domestic markets and workers increasingly seek employment opportunities that offer better pay, career advancement, and skill development. International migration, temporary work assignments, expatriation, and remote cross-border work arrangements are now integral features of modern labour markets. Labour mobility is therefore a critical mechanism through which globalization influences organisational structures, workforce composition, and productivity outcomes.

Globalization has intensified labour mobility by reducing barriers to the movement of people and information. Trade liberalization, regional economicagreements, and advancements in transportation and digital communication have made it easier for workers to relocate or collaborate across borders. Lazarova et al. (2023) explain that multinational enterprises rely heavily on mobile labour to coordinate global operations, transfer knowledge, and maintain consistent standards across subsidiaries.

2.3 Empirical review

A considerable body of empirical literature has examined globalization and its implications for firm performance and productivity, particularly within manufacturing and processing-oriented organisations. These studies employ diverse methodologies and geographic settings, providing relevant empirical foundations for understanding how information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility influence the organisational productivity of processing firms. In carrying out the empirical review, the study adopted the 5Cs (Cite, Compare, Contrast, Critique, and Connect) framework of empirical literature review.

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Cite

Alkharafi and Alsabah (2025) provided a broad empirical synthesis on globalization and its impacts on firms and national economies. Using analytical and descriptive approaches, the study showed that globalization enhances firm productivity through increased access to technology, global markets, and skilled labour. The findings emphasized that firms exposed to international trade and investment flows tend to improve operational processes and output efficiency, especially in sectors reliant on processing and value addition. The study concluded that globalization strengthens productivity when firms effectively adopt global technologies and competitive practices.

Similarly, Daniel and Iisokariari (2020) examined the influence of globalization on organisational performance using survey research methods. Data were collected from organisations operating in globally competitive environments, and regression analysis was applied. The findings revealed that globalization significantly improves organisational productivity through technology adoption, improved project delivery systems, and access to international expertise. The study established that globalization-driven efficiency gains are particularly evident in firms engaged in production and processing activities.

In addition, Saleem (2021) investigated the role of digitalization as a globalization channel affecting organisational performance. Using survey data and correlation analysis, the study demonstrated that information technology diffusion positively influences productivity by enhancing process automation, reducing operational costs, and improving coordination across production stages. The findings indicated that firms adopting digital technologies record higher productivity levels than those operating with limited technological integration.

Furthermore, Suprunenko et al. (2024) analyzed globalization trends within the digital economy and their effects on enterprise management systems. The study adopted analytical and empirical methods to assess how digital globalization affects business operations. Results showed that technology diffusion improves decision-making speed, production efficiency, and resource utilization in firms. Processing firms were identified as major beneficiaries due to their reliance on coordinated production systems and digital control mechanisms. With respect to foreign direct investment, Kyove et al. (2021) examined the

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impact of globalization on multinational enterprises using cross-country data. The study found that FDI inflows significantly enhance firm productivity through technology transfer, managerial expertise, and access to global supply chains. The results suggested that processing firms receiving foreign investment experience improvements in production capacity and efficiency, contributing to higher output levels.

Conversely, Perrine (2020) observed that globalization can introduce competitive pressures that challenge firms with weak internal structures. Using conceptual and empirical analysis, the study noted that productivity gains from globalization are not automatic and depend on firms' ability to adapt to global standards. This finding suggests that processing firms must strengthen internal systems to fully benefit from globalization. The findings suggest that firms operating in globalized environments tend to adopt more efficient strategies that support productivity growth. Similarly, Viera and Trapp (2015) analysed the impact of globalization on selected indicators of firm activities and found that globalization positively influenced firm output, market expansion, and operational performance, although the magnitude of the effect varied across industries.

Empirical evidence also highlights the role of information technology diffusion as a key channel through which globalization affects firm productivity. Daniel and Telmon (2025) examined organisational performance and technology innovation within globalization projects and found that technology adoption significantly enhanced productivity and operational outcomes. Their study indicates that firms exposed to global technological flows are more likely to adopt innovative processes that improve efficiency and output. Consistent with this, Jie et al. (2023), in a systematic review of early internationalizing firms, emphasized that technological and organisational capabilities driven by global exposure are strongly associated with superior performance outcomes.

Findings on foreign direct investment also show notable agreement. Kyove et al. (2021), Alfaro and Chauvin (2024), Behera (2023), and Javorcik (2022) collectively emphasized technology spillovers and learning effects as major productivity channels. Labour mobility studies by Lazarova et al. (2023), Bahar etal. (2022), and Breschi and Lenzi (2021) similarly converged on the role of skilled labourmovement in enhancing knowledge diffusion and production efficiency. Evidence from developing economies, including James et al. (2024), Agu et al. (2021), Ebhotemhen and Njoku (2024), and Adeoye (2024),

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reinforced these patterns by showing that globalization improves productivity in processing and manufacturing sectors when supported by effective management and institutional frameworks.

Contrast

Despite general agreement, the literature reveals differences in emphasis, scope, and outcomes. Some studies such as Alkharafi and Alsabah (2025) and Gasimli et al. (2022) adopted macro and sector-wide perspectives, while others like Agu et al. (2021), James et al. (2024), and Chen et al. (2025) focused on firm-level evidence. Variation also exists in the strength of globalization effects. Autor et al. (2020) reported that foreign competition improved productivity mainly for innovative firms, while less competitive firms experienced adverse outcomes. Perrine (2020) similarly observed that globalization can strain firms with weak internal structures. Differences are also evident across globalization dimensions. Trade liberalization studies often emphasized competitive pressure and scale effects, while FDI research highlighted spillovers and absorptive capacity. Labour mobility studies stressed skill transfer, whereas ICT-focused research concentrated on process efficiency and coordination.

3.1 Methodology

3.2 Research design

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional survey design is appropriate for collecting data from a defined population at a single point in time in order to describe existing conditions and assess relationships among variables. In cross-sectional survey research, data are gathered to provide systematic information about a population, group, or phenomenon through structured instruments such as questionnaires or interviews. According to Babbie (2016), descriptive research is useful for obtaining factual information on variables, patterns, and relationships as they exist.

The survey approach enables the collection of quantitative data required to measure the extent of globalization factors and their influence on operational efficiency within processing companies. Questionnaire are used as the primary data collection instrument because they allow for standardized responses, enhance comparability across respondents,

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and facilitate statistical analysis. The data obtained through this method support objective assessment of globalization-related variables.

Furthermore, the survey design supports hypothesis testing and enables the use of appropriate statistical techniques to analyze relationships between globalization factors and operational efficiency. Its structured nature enhances reliability and validity while reducing potential bias. The design is therefore considered suitable for achieving the objectives of the study, as it provides a systematic and efficient means of examining the effect of globalization on the organisational productivity of processing companies.

3.3 Study area

The study was carried out in Flour Mill Calabar, Lafarge Africa Calabar, and AA Universal Rice Processing Limited, Ogoja Cross River State. Calabar, the capital city of Cross River State in Nigeria, is situated approximately between latitudes 4°56'N and 5°00'N and longitudes 8°19'E and 8°25'E. Nestled along the Gulf of Guinea coast, it enjoys a tropical climate with lush greenery, marked by a blend of rainforests and coastal plains. This vibrant city is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, vibrant festivals, and historical landmarks. Its strategic location near the Atlantic Ocean has historically made it a hub for trade and commerce. Calabar serves as a melting pot of diverse ethnicities, reflected in its bustling markets, culinary delights, and traditional arts and crafts.

3.4 Population of the study

The population of this study comprised of all the staff from the three registered processing firms in Cross River State as captured by Corporate Affair Commission (2022). Specifically, the population of the study comprised of 1127 staff of Flour Mill Calabar, Lafarge Africa Plc and AA Universal Rice Processing Limited, Ogoja as obtained from the Human Resources Management Unit of the companies, 2024. The justification for using the three registered processing firms in Cross River State was because the number was manageable and to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the influence of globalization on productivity of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria. Table 1 presented the population distribution of the Companies.

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TABLE 1: Population of processing firms in Cross River State

S/N	Processing firms	Population of staff
1	Flour Mill	435
2	Lafarge Cement	637
3	AA Universal Rice Processing Limited	55
Total		1127

Source: *Human resource unit (2026).*

3.5 Sampling procedures and sample size determination

The study adopted the simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling is a basic and widely used technique in statistics and research. It involves selecting a subset of individuals or items from a larger population in such a way that every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. This sampling method is considered unbiased and provides an accurate representation of the population. The main reason why the simple random sampling technique was used for the study is to obtain a representative sample so that results can be generalized to the larger population without being biased.

In selecting the respondents, a unique identifier was assigned to each member of the population. This was in form of a number and alphabets base on the department and units of the respondents to distinguishes the individual member of the population. A randomization technique will be used with the aid of a random number generator to select the actual respondents based on the sample size of the three processing firms. The aim was to ensure that every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. Taro Yamane formula was applied on the population of the study to determine appropriate sample size for the study. Taro Yamane formula was given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size
N = Population
1 = Constant
e = error limit (0.05)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1127}{1 + 1127(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1127}{1 + 1127(0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1127}{3.8175}$$

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Therefore, the sample size is n = 295

Flour Mill = $\frac{435}{1127} \times \frac{295}{1} = 114$

Lafarge = $\frac{637}{1127} \times \frac{295}{1} = 167$

AA Universal = $\frac{55}{1127} \times \frac{295}{1} = 14$

3.6 Research instrument

The main instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire. The items on the questionnaire will be constructed by the researcher based on ideas obtained from literature review, observations, and researchers' personal experience on globalization and organisational productivity relationship and administered to the respondents in the selected processing firms. The structured questionnaire will be divided into two sections, A and B. Section A consists of the respondent's personal information (demographic data) ranging from sex, age, marital status, and educational qualifications. Section B consists of statements that measures the effect of globalization on organisational productivity in processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria. However, the questionnaire instrument was developed to cover the core variables of the study. The instrument developed with reference to literature in related studies (Adeleye et al., 2021, Asiedu & Lien (2020), Aderemi et al., (2021), Alkharafi & Alsabah (2025) and Daniel & Iisokariari, 2020). Items adapted from literature in related studies were adjusted to suit the core aims of the present study. The respondents in this section were measured on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

3.7 Validity and reliability of the research instrument

3.7.1 Validity of the instrument

Validity is the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. It determines whether the instrument accurately assesses the concept or construct under investigation. Content validity ensures that the instrument adequately covers all aspects of the concept being measured. Also, the construct validity assesses the degree to which the instrument measures the construct it intends to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). However, to ascertain the validity of the questionnaire constructs, the Confirmatory

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Factor Analysis (CFA) will be used. CFA is a statistical technique used to test the measurement model of a set of observed variables. It is often used in social sciences and psychology to determine the underlying factors that contribute to a set of related variables. In CFA, researchers test a priori hypotheses about the relationships between observed variables and latent variables, which are not directly measured but are inferred from the observed variables. The goal of CFA is to confirm or reject the measurement model, and to assess the goodness of fit of the model to the data (Hair et al., 2010).

4.1 Discussion of findings

The findings of this study are discussed in line with the specific objectives and hypotheses of the study. The discussion focuses on the effect of information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility on theprocessing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that information technology diffusion has a positive and statistically significant effect on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria ($\beta = 0.339$; $t = 15.399$; $p < 0.05$). The result implies that improvements in the adoption and diffusion of information technology significantly enhance efficiency among the selected processing companies. The finding suggests that the adoption of digital technologies, automated production systems, digital communication platforms, and information management systems improves production efficiency, coordination of organisational activities, decision-making, and resource utilization, thereby increasing over all activities of processing companies.

The findings showed that trade liberalization has a positive and statistically significant effect on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria ($\beta = 0.113$; $t = 4.507$; $p < 0.05$). This indicates that increased trade openness contributes significantly to productivity improvement among processing companies. The result suggests that reduced trade barriers provide firms with greater access to wider markets, quality production inputs, improved technologies, and competitive opportunities that enhance operational efficiency and productivity. The finding is in agreement with Daasi *et al.* (2020), who found that trade liberalization significantly improves manufacturing sector output in Nigeria through increased competition and access to intermediate production inputs.

Moreso, the findings revealed that foreign direct investment inflows have a positive and statistically significant effect on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria (β

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= 0.363; t = 16.962; p < 0.05). The result indicates that foreign direct investment inflows constitute the strongest predictor of the globalization dimensions examined in this study. The finding implies that increased inflows of foreign capital, advanced technology, managerial expertise, and international production practices significantly improve operational efficiency within processing companies. The finding agrees with Kyove et al. (2021), who established that foreign direct investment significantly enhances firms operational efficiency through technology transfer, managerial expertise, and integration into global supply chains.

The findings showed that labour mobility has a positive and statistically significant effect on the processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria (β = 0.229; t = 8.887; p < 0.05). The result indicates that labour mobility contributes significantly to organisational productivity through the movement of skilled employees, transfer of knowledge, acquisition of technical expertise, and improvement in managerial competence. The finding suggests that processing companies benefit from employees who possess diverse experiences and specialized competencies acquired through labour mobility.The finding is consistent with Breschi and Lenzi (2021), who found that labour mobility significantly enhances innovation and productivity through the transfer of tacit knowledge across firms and regions. The finding also supports Bahar et al. (2022), who established that skilled labour mobility improves firm productivity by strengthening knowledge diffusion networks.

5.1 Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that globalization constitutes an important driver of operational efficiency among processing companies in Cross River State, Nigeria. The dimensions of globalization examined significantly influence firms' operational efficiency, innovation, competitiveness, and productive performance. Effective utilization of globalization opportunities therefore remains essential for improving and sustaining the growth of processing companies within an increasingly competitive business environment. The empirical evidence established that information technology diffusion exerts a significant positive influence on processing firms. Processing companies that adopt modern information technologies are better positioned to improve communication,

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automate production processes, enhance operational coordination, reduce production costs, and increase output quality.

Therefore, Information technology diffusion, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment inflows, and labour mobility therefore remains an essential tools for improving and maintaining competitive advantage among processing companies in Cross River State Nigeria.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Management of processing companies in Cross River State should increase investment in modern information technologies by adopting digital production systems, enterprise resource planning software, process automation technologies, and information communication infrastructure.
2. Government and management of processing companies should strengthen the benefits of trade liberalization by improving access to international markets, encouraging export promotion, reducing unnecessary trade barriers, and facilitating access to quality production inputs and advanced manufacturing technologies that will improve operational efficiency.
3. Government should implement policies that encourage greater foreign direct investment into the processing sector through improved infrastructure, investment incentives, transparent regulatory frameworks, and favourable business environments.
4. Management of processing companies should develop effective human resource policies that promote the attraction, retention, and mobility of skilled employees through continuous training, career development programmes, competitive remuneration, and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

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