

EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF BUILDING CONSTRUCTION FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance of Building Construction Firms in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design. The population of the study consisted of One Hundred and Three (103) building construction companies operating in Rivers State. Due to accessibility and manageability, only Twenty (20) registered and functional building construction firms with more than five years of existence were studied. The sample size of the study consisted of the entire population since the population is small. Thus, the study adopted the census method of sampling. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection after ascertaining its reliability through the employment of Cronbach Alpha. Mean and Standard Deviation were used for univariate analysis of the study. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient and Partial Correlation were used for the bivariate analysis and multivariate analysis of the study, respectively. Findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance of Building Construction Firms in Rivers State. The study concluded that employee creativity correlate with organizational performance, and it is being moderated by the reward factors. Creative employees contribute innovative ideas, problem solving technique, and novel approaches to project management which can lead to more efficient processes, cost saving and improved project delivery timeliness. The study recommended amongst others that management of Building Construction Firms should create work environment that support employees' creative thinking characterized by problem solving ability, process and technical creativity as a way of enhancing organizational project management efficiency, road infrastructure quality and client satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational performance in building construction firms is a critical measure of their ability to deliver projects effectively, efficiently, and with high quality (Mohsin & Ali, 2022). These firms play a vital role in shaping the physical infrastructure that supports economic growth and societal development. The success of construction projects hinges not only on technical expertise but also on how well firms manage resources, mitigate risks, and meet client expectations. Thus, organizational performance is the extent to which the operational activities of a corporate entity bring about the achievement of client satisfaction, innovative products efficiency, delivery of quality service, and profitability for the organization. It is a process to enhance both the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization and as well as the wellbeing of its member through planned interventions (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014; Zheng & McLean, 2010). Among others, it is of importance to note that business performance was referring to the real output or outcome of an organization as measured against its intended outputs, goals and objective. Organizational performance encompasses various aspects, including road infrastructure quality, project management efficiency, and client satisfaction.

Road infrastructure quality is a cornerstone of societal development and economic progress, with building construction firms playing a pivotal role in its design, construction, and maintenance. The quality of roads directly impacts transportation efficiency, safety, and overall connectivity within communities and across regions (Wilkinson, 2016). For building construction firms, ensuring high standards in road infrastructure involves integrating advanced engineering techniques, innovative materials, and sustainable practices. Project management efficiency is another factor to measure

organizational performance. It is a linchpin of success for building construction firms, crucially influencing their ability to deliver projects on time, within budget, and to the highest standards of quality (Park, 2018). In an industry characterized by complex timelines, diverse stakeholders, and evolving regulatory requirements, efficient project management is indispensable. It involves meticulous planning, streamlined execution, effective resource allocation, and proactive risk management (Ghemawat & Ricart, 2014). To this end, it is necessary that products and services provided by building construction firms satisfy clients. Client satisfaction is a cornerstone of success for building construction firms because it embodies their ability to meet and exceed client expectations throughout the project lifecycle (Nagy *et al.*, 2018; Grau-Grau, 2013). In the construction industry, where projects are complex and multifaceted, satisfying clients goes beyond delivering a finished product rather it involves understanding their unique needs, providing proactive communication, and delivering exceptional quality and service.

Nevertheless, employee creativity is increasingly recognized as a catalyst for innovation and growth within building construction firms because it plays a pivotal role in driving advancements in design, construction techniques, and project management practices (Hazem *et al.*, 2021). In an industry that demands both technical expertise and ingenuity, fostering a culture of creativity among employees is essential for staying competitive and meeting the evolving needs of clients and stakeholders (Sherif, 2024). Therefore, employee creativity is worker's propensity to invent which can be conceived as complex behaviour consisting of idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization with the aim of enhancing task accomplishment and meeting set goals in novel ways.

Statement of the Problem

Building construction firms in Rivers State are currently facing significant challenges related to poor organizational performance, manifesting in several critical areas such as poor road infrastructure quality, low project management efficiency, and decline client satisfaction. Despite the region's infrastructure needs and the construction industry's pivotal role in meeting them, persistent issues in these key domains hinder the firms' ability to deliver optimal outcomes and maintain competitive edge (Mohsin & Ali, 2022). As identified by De-Koeijer (2014), the quality of road infrastructure in Rivers State is often compromised, characterized by frequent deterioration, inadequate design standards, and suboptimal construction practices. These issues contribute to increased maintenance costs, safety concerns, and inefficient transportation networks, impacting economic development and public welfare.

It appears building construction firms in the region also struggle with inefficiencies in project management processes. Challenges include delays in project delivery, cost overruns, ineffective resource allocation, and insufficient risk management strategies (Ghemawat & Ricart, 2014). These inefficiencies hinder firms' ability to execute projects on time, within budget, and to desired quality standards. It also seems that clients of building construction firms in Rivers State frequently express dissatisfaction due to discrepancies between project expectations and delivered outcomes. Issues such as communication gaps, quality inconsistencies, and inadequate post-project support diminish client trust and loyalty. Poor client satisfaction impacts firms' reputation, hinders repeat business opportunities, and undermines long-term sustainability (Nagy *et al.*, 2018; Al-Jazzazi & Sultan, 2017; Sweta & Bhawana, 2012).

Another issue that necessitated this study is the fact that there appears to be a dearth of empirical studies on how employee creativity interacts with organizational performance within the context of building construction firms in Rivers State. Although, there has been several research efforts interested in examining the relationship between variables under study, for instance, Mohsin and Ali (2022) examined the effect of employee creativity on organizational performance: a case study of tile and carpet (T&C) centre in Kenya; Hazem *et al.* (2021) explored the influence of perceived organizational support on employee creativity: The mediating role of work engagement; Sherif (2024) examined the impact of HRM practices on employee creativity through the mediating role

of employee engagement in the Egyptian Hotels context; Naveen *et al.* (2021) studied transformational leadership relationship with employee creativity: the moderating effect of knowledge sharing and mediating effect of creative self-efficacy in banking sector of Pakistan; Ramita *et al.* (2013) examined reward and employee's creativity: case of manufacturing organization in Shah Alam Selangor; Stradinger (2020) conducted a study on creativity in the workplace and its effect on employee retention in USA. Despite the above studies, none was able to reveal empirically the relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance specifically of building construction firms in Rivers State. Equally, none of the studies adopted dimensions, measures and indicators as fully presented in the conceptual framework of this study. It therefore means that there is a gap in literature, which is what this study stands to fill.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance of building construction firms in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought:

1. To determine the relationship between technical creativity and road infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State.
2. To assess the relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State.
3. To ascertain the relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives and questions posed above, the following null hypotheses were posed:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between technical creativity and road infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Employee Creativity

Employee creativity has been proved important to organizational success. Employee's creativity can be enhanced in the organization by empowering the employee and giving feedback on how they achieved their goals, giving them free hand how they want to achieve those goals which will result to enhance performance beyond imagination (Dvir, *et al.*, 2012). Firms need creative employees to initiate organizational innovation. Employee creativity is recognized as the key factor for generating a competitive advantage. Employee creativity gives an edge over the competitors and in turn helps a company succeed in terms of multiple measures of firm-level financial performance. Organizations that exhibit creative behaviors generate competitive advantages and better performances (Shelley, *et al.*, 2013). Organizations that encourage creativity experience increase in profit growth, and subsequently firm performance. Thus, creativity refers to original and novel work, emphasizing the generation of new and original ideas (Madjar, 2011). Amabile (2013) defined creativity as the process of idea generation or problem solving and the actual idea or solution. Creativity has vital impact on organizational performance and when it is the case of service firms, the creativity of frontline employees become more crucial. Firms need creative competition especially after the challenging capital employees to initiate organizational innovation. Creativity is defined as the production of novel, appropriate ideas in any realm of human activity, from science, to the arts, to education, to business, to everyday life, thus the ideas have to be new and appropriate to the opportunity or problem presented (Amabile, 2017). Creativity is

important because of its ability to yield novel and proper ideas to solve complex problems, to increase efficiencies and to enhance overall effectiveness (Diliello & Houghton in Amabile, 2017). Creativity is an act arising out of a perception of the environment that acknowledges a certain disequilibrium, resulting in productive activity that challenges patterned thought processes and norms, and gives rise to something new in the form of a physical object or even a mental or an emotional construct (Kharkhurin, 2014). Lebeda and Csikszentmihalyi (2018) defined creativity as the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others.

Operationally, employee creativity refers to a worker's propensity to invent which can be conceived as complex behaviour consisting of idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization with the aim of enhancing task accomplishment and meeting set goals in novel ways. Individuals, alone or in groups, undertake innovative activities from the intention to derive anticipated benefits from innovative change (Kante & Wilson, 2018). Creativity is central to innovativeness, but the concepts are not synonymous. Innovation can be seen as a successful and intentional implementation of creativity, which is more subjective and context specific by its nature (Miron, *et al.*, 2014). Creativity as such may be limited to idea generation alone but by definition innovation produces benefits for the people involved in the innovative process (Anderson, *et al.*, 2013).

Dimensions of Employee Creativity

Technical Creativity

According to Hassan, *et al.* (2021), technical creativity is the ability to generate novel and useful solutions to problems or challenges that require technical knowledge and skills. It is a vital component of innovation, which is the process of transforming creative ideas into marketable products or services. Startups, especially those in the fields of science, engineering, and technology, rely heavily on technical creativity and innovation to gain a competitive edge, attract customers, and achieve growth. Technical creativity enables startups to understand the needs and pain points of their target customers and come up with effective solutions that address them. For example, Airbnb, a startup that provides online accommodation booking services, used technical creativity to solve the problem of trust and safety between hosts and guests by introducing features such as verified photos, reviews, and identity verification (Babbie & Mouton, 2021).

Operationally, technical creativity refers to the ability to generate innovative and effective solutions to practical problems through imaginative thinking and the application of technical knowledge and skills. It involves combining engineering, science, technology, and creativity to develop new products, processes, or systems, or to improve existing ones. Creative technical approaches can lead to the development of unique architectural designs that meet clients' needs and preferences while optimizing functionality, aesthetics, and sustainability (Gong, *et al.*, 2013). Creatively addressing construction challenges, firms can find more efficient construction methods and materials, reducing costs and project timelines without compromising quality. Technical creativity enables firms to develop and implement sustainable building practices, such as energy-efficient systems, green materials, and waste reduction strategies, which are increasingly important in modern construction. Construction projects often encounter unforeseen challenges. Creative technical problem-solving allows firms to adapt and find effective solutions quickly, minimizing delays and additional costs. By offering creative and technically sound solutions, firms can better meet or exceed client expectations, leading to higher satisfaction and repeat business.

Lee and Tan (2012) opined that creative technical solutions can help firms navigate and comply with complex building codes and regulations more effectively, ensuring projects meet legal requirements without unnecessary complications. Creative solutions are essential for implementing green building practices and sustainable construction methods. This includes the use of renewable energy sources, energy-efficient designs, sustainable materials, and waste reduction techniques, all of which contribute to environmental conservation.

Problem Solving Ability

Problem-solving is a calculated and deliberate mental process that involves discovering, analyzing and solving organizational problems (Bill, 2020). The ultimate goal of problem-solving is to overcome obstacles and finding solutions to problems, especially by using a scientific or analytical approach. It is a vital everyday skill needed for personal and professional life. A good problem-solving skill is a pivotal employment prerequisite that shows employee's competencies like logic, creativity, resilience, imagination, lateral thinking, diligence and determination. It is an essential skill for all employees serving in any capacity, those with good problem-solving skills are a valuable and trusted asset in their team, they are the people who think of new ideas, better ways of doing things, make it easier for people to understand things or help save customers time and money. They are proactive thinkers who like to get things done and can help you progress more quickly and boost career opportunities. When employers talk about problem-solving skills, they are often referring to the ability to handle difficult or unexpected situations in the workplace as well as complex business challenges (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, 2020). This is yet another outstanding measure of employee innovativeness that behooved an employee to seek for possible means of resolving them in the work environment. Problems are unavoidable in the organization regardless of the nature of activities being undertaken therein. This is because organization is a social setting, operating in a social environment and controlled by social beings which are socially insatiable. Stauss (2002) averred that the dissatisfactory nature of these social forces constitutes an endless cause of problem for organizations. The destructive nature of these problems heralded the need for them to be properly resolved. Solving of problems within an organization is majorly the responsibility of the employees in that organization. Every employee is responsible for the problems in that organization inasmuch as the problems can be resolve internally.

This study defined problem-solving ability as the capacity to identify, analyze, and effectively resolve organizational challenges effectively. It involves using logic, creativity, critical thinking, and practical skills to find solutions that address the root cause of a problem and achieve desired outcomes. Problem-solving ability is a critical skill in various contexts, including professional settings, academics, daily life, and specialized fields such as engineering, business management, healthcare, and technology. Strong problem-solving skills enable individuals and teams to overcome challenges, innovate, and achieve goals effectively, contributing to personal and organizational success (Woods, 2022). Construction projects often encounter unforeseen challenges such as design changes, material shortages, weather delays, or technical issues. Effective problem-solving skills enable professionals to quickly assess the situation, identify solutions, and mitigate risks to keep the project on track. Problem-solving skills contribute to maintaining high standards of quality in construction. Professionals with strong problem-solving abilities can address issues related to building codes, structural integrity, safety regulations, and client requirements, ensuring that projects meet or exceed expectations.

Process Creativity

Process creativity focuses on facilities, skills, and technologies used for the production and delivering of products and services (Howard, 2017). Process creativity can result in a decrease in production cost and time and the improvement of certain processes or the elimination of certain barriers from the production process or consumption. Most of the times, process innovation is performed either within the equipment used, either within the technologies used for developing the product or even within the methods used by the employees. Process creativity is the introduction of new or significantly improved production methods or delivery of products (IGI Global, 2018). At industry, methods of production involve changes in techniques, machinery, equipment and software used in the process of transforming inputs into outputs. It is focused on the introduction of a new operating method, or improving an existing method in the production, commercial, administrative and managerial area, or generating a new way of using a production

factor in order to increase efficiency in terms of cost, quality and service. Process modeling, process optimization, and process innovation have been critical parts of organizations since the industrial revolution (Mathias, 2017). Today, with the increasing pace of business change, organizations are experiencing pressure to make continuous process improvements a part of daily operations. Given the increasing importance of processes as the key enablers in the transfer of the business strategy into execution, operational excellence, optimization, and standardization, a top management role has emerged. As with any other important area, good leadership is needed; hence, an appropriate management role is required. In this environment, the ability to rally resources and drive collaboration effectively is vital, especially in diverse organizations, making process leadership not only a management but a C-level imperative.

Process creativity refers to the ability to devise novel and effective methods for performing tasks, solving problems, or improving workflows within an organization or system. It involves thinking creatively about the steps, procedures, and techniques used to achieve goals, and finding innovative ways to enhance efficiency, quality, and outcomes (Richard, 2016). Creative processes can streamline construction activities, reduce redundancies, and optimize resource use. This leads to faster project completion times and significant cost savings. Innovative construction methods, such as prefabrication and modular construction, minimize material waste and lower costs associated with excess materials and labor. Creative approaches to project management facilitate better coordination, reducing misunderstandings and ensuring smooth execution of construction activities. Process creativity involves the implementation of a new or considerably improved production technology, service supply or product delivery methods in an organization. The result must be significant with respect to the level of production volume, the quality of the products (goods or services) or the costs of production and distribution (Richard, 2016). However, the establishment does not have to be the first to introduce the process. It does not matter if the innovation has been developed by its establishment or by another establishment. Simple organizational or managerial changes must not be included.

Concept of Organizational Performance

Organizational performance basically can be defined as the outcome that indicate or reflect the organization efficiencies or inefficiencies in term of reputation, competencies and financial performance (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014). It is of high important, among others, to note that organizational performance was referring to the real output or outcome of an organization as measured against its intended outputs, goals and objective. Organizational performance encompasses the real outcome or consequences of a company as compared alongside its future goals or objectives. It also cuts across strategic planners, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development as a matter of concern to authorities in many fields of endeavor. Also, it is psychotherapy of an organization's output as measured by goals and purpose. Inside business group, three main results are calculated: financial performance, shareholder value performance (in some cases, production capacity performance may be analyzed) and market performance. Four types of organizational performance measures exists. They are human resource outcomes, organizational outcomes, financial accounting outcome, and capital market outcomes (Alam, 2013). Organizational outcomes contain labour productivity, customer satisfaction, and quality of product services. Financial accounting outcomes included three measures such as returns on assets, return on equity, and profitability. Capital market outcomes reflect how market evaluates an organization which consists of the three indicators which is stock price, growth rate of stock price and market returns. Organizational performance is tied to work performance. Work performance here denotes the way employees perform their work. An employee's performance is determined during job performance review, with an employer taking into account factors such as leadership skills and productivity to analyse each employee on an individual basis. Job performance reviews are often done yearly and can determine raise eligibility, whether an employee is right for promotion or if an employee should be fired (Rowold, 2011). According to

Rowold (2011), high performance work system and practices have need identified as playing a key role in the achievement of business goals and improved organizational effectiveness. While there is no agreement on an ideal configuration or bundle of such systems and practices. The logic is that high performance work systems influence and align employee's attitude and behaviours with strategic goal of the organization and they increase employee commitment and subsequently organizational performance.

Organizational performance is denoted as sum of accomplishments that has been achieved by all departments. It is the business goals that have been set in a given period of time to outline its accomplishments that are involved in each stage. The idea of business performance is affiliated to the growth, development and survival of the business (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014). Organizational performance is a multifarious construct that consists of four elements via customer, financial, market and human. Hitherto, business performance among others include customer satisfaction, customer patronage and retention, financial performance (revenue, profits, market position, cash-to-cash cycle time, and earnings per share), management-employee organizational effectiveness (task accomplishment, quality output, productivity, time to market, level of innovation, management competency, companymanship, management utility function, etc.). In order to achieve the desired level of organizational performance, many organizations have restructured, and implemented total quality management programs and introduced competitive staff benefits. Analyses of the sustained superior business performance of some organizations have attributed their success to the specific cultures of the respective organizations (Zheng & McLean, 2010).

Measures of Organizational Performance

Road Infrastructure Quality

Quality represents the ongoing process of building and sustaining relationships by assessing, anticipating setting standard, and fulfilling stated and implied needs. Quality means that the organization's culture is defined by and supports the constant attainment of customer satisfaction through an integrated system of tools, techniques, and training (Sashkin & Kiser 2013). Furthermore, a manager who is deeply concerned on work quality might choose to initiate principle in terms of losses to reduce the tendency of loss averse employees to concentrate on quantity rather than quality. Work quality is a management technique used to communicate to workers what is required to produce, the desired quality of products and services and to influence worker actions to complete tasks according to the quality specifications. According to Akin and Hopelain in Jahan (2019), defined work quality as the key elements such as right types of human resources, identification with the job, teamwork, trust and support, status determined by knowledge of job and performance, support for accomplishment and autonomous use of skills. Without employees' involvement and support it is not possible to achieve success of any effort of improving productivity and quality. Improvement of productivity and quality is dependent upon how employees behave at work. Glover and Siu (2016) argued that work quality or quality of output is the establishment of new factories and machinery which sufficient in itself to ensure adequately. The work quality depends on the contribution, cooperation and commitment of employees and their organizations (Wilkinson, 2016). To meet increasing demand of customers an organization needs to improve its service quality. He also stated that due to increased customer expectations of high quality and increased competition organizations have to improve the service quality.

This study defines road infrastructure quality as the condition, design, and efficiency of roads and related transportation networks within a region. It encompasses various aspects that contribute to the overall performance and safety of road systems. Opatha (2015) opined that the smoothness, durability, and condition of road surfaces, including asphalt or concrete, which impact vehicle comfort and maintenance costs is determinant of quality. The ability of bridges, culverts, and other structures to support traffic loads safely and efficiently. Well-maintained and properly designed roads reduce the risk of accidents and fatalities, ensuring the safety of road users. High-

quality road infrastructure improves travel times, reduces congestion, and enhances overall transportation efficiency (Wilkinson, 2016). To De-Koeijer (2014), good road infrastructure enhances mobility and accessibility, improving access to jobs, education, healthcare, and recreational facilities. Road infrastructure quality is critical for promoting safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation systems that support economic growth and enhance quality of life for communities. Continuous investment, maintenance, and innovation are essential to ensure the resilience and reliability of road networks in meeting the evolving needs of society. High-quality road infrastructure ensures smooth transportation of construction materials, equipment, and workforce to and from project sites. Well-maintained roads reduce travel time, minimize delays, and improve logistics planning, which is crucial for meeting project deadlines and maintaining productivity. Accessible and well-connected roads facilitate easier site selection and development planning for construction projects. It allows firms to assess and choose locations that offer convenient access to suppliers, subcontractors, and labor pools, thereby supporting efficient project execution from start to finish.

Project Management Efficiency

Efficiency means doing things in the right way (Drucker in Ghemawat & Ricart, 2014). Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2019) defines efficiency as the capability to producing desired results with little or no waste (as of time or material). But what does it mean to actually be efficient in how you spend your days? Efficiency means negotiating each day's circumstances while ensuring there is enough time for non-negotiable like sleep and self-care. This nuance is especially important for working professionals. Efficiency is the ability to act or produce effectively with a minimum of waste, expenditure or unnecessary effort. Efficiency focuses more on resources and speed with which organizational goals are achieved. The efficiency of an employee in an organization is determined by how successfully they assign resources in order to achieve goals in the right way. In other words, how well employee of an organization converts input into output, such as products, programmes and services contributes to the success of organization (Love, 2016). Efficiency as a measure of employee performance is an employee characteristic and relates to the speed and accuracy of an employee at the job task. It closely relates to employee productivity, the more efficient they are the more productive they will be if managed correctly. Employee efficiency is therefore a complex measurable parameter which characterizes an output produced by efforts and by achievements of an employee.

This work defines project management efficiency refers to the ability of a project team to deliver intended outcomes successfully within constraints such as time, budget, scope, and quality. It involves optimizing processes, resources, and strategies to achieve maximum productivity and effectiveness throughout the project lifecycle. Efficient project management ensures that projects are completed within defined scope, budget, and schedule constraints while meeting quality standards (Park, 2018). This enables organizations to achieve their strategic and operational goals effectively. Effective resource management minimizes waste and maximizes the use of human, financial, and material resources. This leads to cost savings, improved productivity, and better allocation of resources across multiple projects. Access to accurate and timely project information, including progress reports, risk assessments, and performance metrics, enables informed decision-making at all levels of the organization. This fosters agility and responsiveness to changes in project scope or market conditions. Effective project management lays the foundation for scalable growth, operational excellence, and long-term sustainability. It ensures that investments in new initiatives or expansions deliver intended benefits and contribute to overall organizational success. Organizations that excel in project management efficiency can deliver projects faster, at lower costs, and with higher quality compared to competitors. This strengthens their market position and enhances their reputation for reliability and performance (Ghemawat & Ricart, 2014).

There is no single understanding of this quite wide term, but usually sense of employee efficiency refers to the following conceptions which intersect with each other in certain aspects and usually

are used in a mixture as identified by (Park, 2018). 1. Productivity-oriented approach: it stands for objective appraising of the value produced by efforts and talents of the employee and comparing this value against the worth of inputs and resources provided to this employee by the organization. In other words this attitude means determining the level of employee profitability: his or her ability to convert investments into direct profits or some long-term benefits; 2. Objectives-oriented approach: it stands for determining an ability of employee to accomplish certain amount of work (or to achieve some other required objectives) within a given period of time or/and other business resources. This attitude identifies an employee as efficient one if he or she properly fulfills certain working plans or matches certain productive norms.

Client Satisfaction

Client satisfaction is a component of business that defines the interaction between providers and clients where the provider offers a service, whether that be information or a task, and the client either finds value or loses value as a result. Client satisfaction is a measure of the extent to which the goods and/or services of a corporate organization meets the taste, needs, or expectations of their consumers. One quick way of ascertaining the health of an organization is to assess how satisfied her customers or clients are. Productive business organizations succeed in tailoring their product and service model to the unique needs of their target market (Nagy *et al.*, 2018). It is important to also develop honest relationships with customers that extend beyond business and to forge connections that treat clients as real people. The staff in a business environment needs to be humanitarian and approachable in order to enhance the quality of services rendered. It is not enough to have a fine product in the market. Those who market these products need to smile with customers, listen to them, and guide them on how to use purchased products.

Listening to customers, asking probing questions and reading body language opens communications channels to keep relationships strong and it promotes service delivery. The quality of human relationship that managers have with their employees influences service delivery. Following up with customers to make sure all of their expectations have been met and exceeded is a crucial part of providing great customer satisfaction. Immediate responses to any customer concerns make it possible to solve problems right away. This leads to an increased level of trust. According to Kreister (2009), employees must establish a clear and responsive process for handling customer complaints, and make sure he understands what a customer really wants to solve any problems that arrive. Customer complaints must be treated as a way to understand how to make customer satisfaction even more exceptional. Businesses must aim at attracting new customers and keep current customers.

Client satisfaction, in the light of this study, refers to the organizational effort put towards satisfying the needs of customers by giving them reliable service and as well as handling complaint redress and smooth booking management. Client satisfaction can be seen in the light of customer satisfaction. This is so because a productive organization is one in which, among other things, has customers whose satisfactions are met, provided those satisfactions are within the boundaries of the organization. Client satisfaction measures the performance of organizations according to their needs. This further provides a measurement of service quality. By providing feedback on service aspects, customers can actually comment on products and services (Al-Jazzazi & Sultan, 2017; Sweta & Bhawana, 2012). In today's marketplace, if organizations fail to provide product and service quality, they lose customers to other competitors (Cheng, 2013).

Theoretical Review

The study was mainly anchored on Diffusion of Innovation Theory, followed by Contingency Theory of Management.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

This work is mainly anchored on Diffusion of Innovation Theory. Diffusion of Innovation Theory was propounded by Rogers in 1962. It explains the processes involved in the adoption of innovations such as new technologies, techniques, and procedures and well as the resultant effects of such steps on organizational processes. The diffusion of innovation theory assumes that:

In a social system, there will always be a disparity in the level and time at which individuals within a given social system adopt new ideas, techniques, and technology; Individuals and arms of organization that adopt innovations early will naturally outperform late adopters and the laggards.

The implication of this theory is that as individuals advance in the use of critical thinking so as to create new ideas and novelty ways of executing task, there will naturally be a disparity on how effectiveness is enhanced by both category of people in the society. While some employees are creatively compliant and innovative enough to carry out operations, there are still those who still stick to traditional methods of accomplishing task. The fact is that while those employees with creative skills interface with better effectiveness, others are bedeviled with ineffectiveness. While those who embrace and adopt emerging work environment enjoy speed, efficiency and high level effectiveness in coping with socio-personal functions others are battling with job stress.

Contingency Theory of Management

Contingency theory of management was proposed by Fred Edward Fiedler in 1964. Contingency theory suggests that in order to be effective, management must be consistent with other aspects of the organization and/or external environment. Contingency decisions within management have largely been understood on the basis of external and internal fit. External fit, also termed vertical alignment, requires that the management practices of the organization must match the organizational strategy or environmental conditions faced by the organization. However, contingency theory is based on five assumptions:

- i. There is no one best type of organization which suites all enterprise. That is, different types of structures, processes and approaches are needed for different kinds of environments as well as internal situation.
- ii. Even in the same organization different approaches may be necessary to deal with different situations.
- iii. A large number of variables, including goals, attitude and sense of values of people technology and condition of the market determine the structure, process and overall approach of an organization.
- iv. Management has to develop the requisite diagnostic skill so that they can hit upon the right type of policy at the right time and in the right situation.
- v. Adaptability to change, particularly to environmental change constitutes one of the biggest challenges to modern organization. The organization should be so designed that it is flexible enough to change with the environment.

Justification of this theory to this study is predicted on it's relevance to both the dependent and the independent variable (employee creativity and organizational performance). This is because different organizations have set goals and objectives, they try as much as possible to achieve them. In cause of achieving these set goals, they encounter one form of problem or the other. These problem manifests as a result of poor employee creativity. Thus, they are obligated to develop their employees to be technically creative in solving organizational challenges at all point in time by adopting novelty ways.

Empirical Review

Mohsin and Ali (2022) examined the effect of employee creativity on organizational performance: a case study of tile and carpet (T&C) centre in Kenya. This study aimed at investigating the effect

of employee creativity and organization performance at Tile and Carpet Centre (T&C) in Kenya. The human resource management theory anchored the variables of the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. The study population was 750 staff working in 3 T&C locations while stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 100 respondents. The pilot testing was conducted using the questionnaire on 10 staff from ICD warehouse, Nairobi County. The measure of reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha at 0.7. The study was a descriptive research and primary data was collected using a questionnaire. Frequency distribution tables and figures were used to present the findings where interpretation was done in prose form. The researcher conducted simple regression analysis to find out the relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance of T&C. The inferential results on effect of employee creativity on organization performance show $R=0.588$ indicating a strong positive correlation and $R^2 =0.346$ and there was a significant effect between employee creativity and organization performance ($t=6.866$, $p<0.05$). The study established and provided evidence that work well being positively affects employee creativity and organization innovation capability thus having a positive influence on organizational performance. The study recommends that T&C should take the issue of employee creativity seriously to facilitate effective job delivery and performance.

Hazem *et al.* (2021) explored the influence of perceived organizational support on employee creativity: The mediating role of work engagement. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity mediated by work engagement. The study report the results from a questionnaire survey on a sample of 492 professional employees (219, 44.51% females and 273, 55.49% males) employed in two major industries in the United Kingdom. The findings based on regression analysis show that work engagement mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity. In summary, employees who experience perceived organizational support will promote work engagement and employee creativity more so than employees with low levels of perceived organizational support. The study contribute to knowledge by proposing an overall theoretical background to organizational support theory and the job demands-resources model by incorporating social exchange theory. To-date, very few studies have examined the role of work engagement in the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee creativity. While researchers know how perceived organizational support effects employees' commitment, productivity, satisfaction and turnover intention, this study concentrates on how perceived organizational support leads to employee creativity.

Sherif (2024) examined the impact of HRM practices on employee creativity through the mediating role of employee engagement in the Egyptian Hotels context. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between HRM practices, external factors, and their impact on employee satisfaction, performance, and creativity within Egyptian hotels. Key HRM practices considered include recruitment, selection, market-oriented training, productivity enhancement, and social security assessments. The research methodology involved a unit of analysis focusing on employees in Egyptian hotels. A convenient sampling technique was employed, with 331 respondents participating in the study. Data was collected through a questionnaire comprising 42 statements adapted from previous studies. The proposed framework positions HRM practices as independent variables, employee creativity as the dependent variable, and employee engagement as a mediator. Results indicate that recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, and career planning significantly influence employee satisfaction, while compensation, training, development, employment security, and employee involvement show partial support. Additionally, recruitment, selection, compensation, performance appraisal, and career planning significantly affect employee performance, with other factors showing partial support. Moreover, employee engagement is found to mediate the relationship between HRM practices and employee creativity. Employee satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between specific HRM practices and creativity, while employee performance partially mediates this relationship. These findings provide insights into the nuanced impact of HRM practices on employee outcomes, emphasizing the critical role of

employee engagement in fostering creativity. The study concludes with practical recommendations for organizations to optimize HRM practices and enhance employee engagement for improved creativity and overall performance.

Naveen *et al.* (2021) studied transformational leadership relationship with employee creativity: the moderating effect of knowledge sharing and mediating effect of creative self-efficacy in banking sector of Pakistan. The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership, creative self-efficacy, knowledge sharing and employee creativity from the perceptive employees working in banking sector of Pakistan. The study has targeted banking sector of Pakistan specifically private banks which are 22 in total all across Pakistan because they have contributed 57.37% GDP in Pakistan total economy and also private banks within Pakistan are trying to attain their competitive advantage by providing excellent quality innovation-based services to its customers. The population of this study includes employees working in private banks of Pakistan. 150 employees from different branches of private banks were targeted through convenience sampling. Questionnaires were distributed and voluntarily filled by respondents. Moreover, while data collection, the study ensured respondents that all of their data will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed. The five-points Likert scale was used in questionnaire range from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1-5) for this research. Cronbach's Alpha Test helps to measure the internal consistency or reliability. It was found that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership, creative self-efficacy, knowledge sharing and employee creativity in banking sector of Pakistan. To conclude, the main aim of this study is to find that how the transformational leadership influence the employee creativity, specifically in banking sector in Pakistan. This paper also adds more knowledge to the existing literature by mediating these two variables by creative self-efficacy and by moderating these variables with the knowledge sharing behavior. As organizations spent much money on the skill and competency development of their employees and this paper has revealed the answers regarding employee creativity questions.

Ramita *et al.* (2013) examined reward and employee's creativity: case of manufacturing organization in Shah Alam Selangor. The main objective of this study is to investigate strategic reward systems that are intrinsic and extrinsic reward for employees. The rewards address four areas that consist of compensation, benefits, recognition and appreciation. This study discussed whether the reward system gives more benefit to the organization and employees such as improving the employee level of creativity or vice versa. This study is a correlational study where the researchers examined the relationship between reward system and employee's creativity among administrative support personnel in the manufacturing industries. This study focused on five (5) selected manufacturing organization involved in electronic field located in Shah Alam Selangor. The total population is one hundred and sixty (160) staff. A set of questionnaire which was divided into 3 sections: demographic background, reward system and employee creativity behaviour was self administered to all respondent. From total of 160 questionnaire distributed, 120 (75%) questionnaire was returned and analyzed. The research findings show that rewards are contributing factors to the employees' creativity or ideas among administrative support personnel in the manufacturing industries in Shah Alam. By providing employees with extrinsic rewards is relatively straightforward and usually built into performance and particularly useful in the short-term for creativity and motivating employees to work towards one specific organizational goal.

Stradinger (2020) conducted a study on creativity in the workplace and its effect on employee retention in USA. This study was conducted with a sample of 99 employees from the Midwestern manufacturing company. Results demonstrate there is a strong relationship between participation in creativity in the workplace and retention in USA. No statistically significant support was found for the relationship between participation in creativity in the workplace and the employee - supervisor relationship. This study has extensive academic and practical implications, suggesting creative participation significantly increases employees' retention rates.

Miao and Cao (2019) examined high-performance work system, work well-being, and employee

creativity with focus to cross-level moderating role of transformational leadership in China. Using a sample of large and medium-sized enterprises in China, collected data using questionnaire, which are time-lagged and multilevel, from 266 employees in 61 departments. Results of the hierarchical linear model found that high-performance work system is positively related to employee creativity. High-performance work system positively affects employee work well-being. Work well-being positively affects employee creativity. Employee work well-being partially mediates the relationship between high-performance work system and creativity. Transformational leadership, which represents an important contextual variable in the workplace, moderates the relationship between work well-being and employee creativity. Moreover, the study also revealed that transformational leadership can moderate the indirect effect of high performance work system on employee creativity.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The explanatory cross sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. The explanatory cross sectional survey research design is interested in examining novel phenomenon through the generation of data from a portion of a large population via questionnaire and using such data to test hypotheses. This design is deemed fit for this study considering the fact that this study involves a survey of different building construction firms in Rivers State. The study also involves the test of hypotheses (which is explanatory in nature).

Population

The target population of the study consisted to Twenty (20) registered, functional and accessible building construction firms with more than five years of existence operating in Rivers. The information is obtained from Rivers State Yellow Page Directorate. Although there are about fifty building construction companies registered in Rivers State, most of them are either moribund or unwilling to interact with the researcher. To do justice to the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher settled for 20 accessible and operational building construction firms. Details of the population distribution are provided in the table overleaf:

Table 1: Population Distribution

S/N	Building Construction Firms in Rivers State and Address
1	Fisancol Transcontinental Service Ltd.; No. 104 East-West Road Port Harcourt
2	Airtrace Solution Ltd.; Shell Location Road Port Harcourt
3	Horandez& Detroit Construction Company Ltd. Km 20 Port Expressway, Refinery Port Harcourt
4	Kon-X Group; No. 26 Ohaeto Street D/Line Port Harcourt
5	Megastar Technical & Construction Company; No. 100 East-West Road Port Harcourt
6	Waterock Global Development Company; No. 51A Worenwu Lane D/Line Port Harcourt
7	Southern Basin Construction Ltd; No 41/42 Eastern Bypass EPENAL Port Harcourt
8	Chronax Nig. Ltd.; No. 80Ada George Road Port Harcourt
9	Dewhyno Engineering Ltd.; No. Iboloji Estate Rumuigbo Port Harcourt
10	Geoplus Civil Engineering Resources; No. 1 Unique Avenue, Off Trans-Kalabari Road Port Harcourt
11	Germain's Construction Nig. Ltd.; No. 10A Khana/Wurie Street Port Harcourt
12	Handyman Construction Nig. Ltd.; No. 16 Apamimi Street Woji Road Port Harcourt
13	i-Work Vibrated Blocks.; Igwuruta Airport Road Port Harcourt
14	Ironinnaija Ltd.; No. 441 Ikwere Road Port Harcourt
15	Mercury Engineering and Construction; No. 308 Aba Expressway Port Harcourt
16	Metojen Construction Company Nig. Ltd.; No.10 Rumuodaolu Port Harcourt
17	My Warri Construction; University of Port Harcourt Gambiama Port Harcourt
18	Taitor Construction Service Ltd.; No. 14 1 st Avenue Elekahia Housing Estate Port

Harcourt
 19 Tancong Global Resources; No. 28 St Michael Street Off Woke Road Port Harcourt
 20 Evomec Global Sevices Ltd.; No. 50 Evo Road Port Harcourt

Source: Rivers State Yellow Page Directory, 2024

Sources of Data

This study adopted both the primary and the secondary data

Primary Data: These are original data collected for a specific research study. Data was collected through the use of questionnaire. The questionnaire was closed ended and was structured in a response friendly manner to aid the easy understanding of the respondents. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the research objectives and research questions for the study. This method was adopted because it was the only possible way to reach a large number of respondents as it ensured unity and consistency of the information collected for study.

Secondary Data: These are historic in nature and were gathered through reviewing existing online and offline literatures relevant to the study; journals and articles, books, conference papers, unpublished research works. The literatures review was done in order to give the reader a clear understanding of the study based on already existing information.

Instrumentation and Measurement

Structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher. The research instrument was called "Employee Creativity and Organizational Performance Index" (ECOPI). The instrument was made up of two sections. Section A was designed to elicit demographic data concerning the respondents. Section B contained the main questionnaire items designed to measure the variables under investigation. The instrument was designed in a modified four (4) point likert scale with the following response options: Strongly Agreed (SA) =4; Agreed (A) = 3; Disagreed (D) = 2; and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity of instrument has to do with the capacity of a research instrument to measure what it ought to measure. This study adopted the face and content validity. To achieve this, the questionnaire that was used for the study was subjected to thorough scrutiny and adjustment by the experts in Test and Measurement. Their comments were used to validate the questionnaire items.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of an instrument is an indication of the firmness and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the "goodness" of the measure. Goodness of measure is the appropriateness of the constructs, dimensions and measures selected for variables in a particular study as contained in the measurement instrument. It deals with the characteristics of a good tool used for measurement and involves the assessment of such tool. Cronbach Alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument that was used for this study. The adoption of Cronbach Alpha in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument is based on assumption that Cronbach Alpha measures the internal consistency of the instrument. Details of the Cronbach reliability test are presented in the table below:

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test Results

Variables	Dimensions/Measures	Items	Alpha
Employee Creativity	Technical Creativity	4	.817
	Problem Solving Ability	4	.731
	Process Creativity	4	.773

Organizational Performance	Road Infrastructure Quality	4	.785
	Project Management Efficiency	4	.822
	Client Satisfaction	4	.838
Organizational Factor	Reward Factors	4	.761

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Administration of Instrument

In line with the study sample, a total of One Hundred and Twenty (120) copies of the questionnaire was administered to respondents through the help of two research assistance. The researchers were able to retrieve Seventy-Six (76) copies of the questionnaire distributed.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used for the univariate analysis, while the bivariate analysis was done using Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the aid of SPSS Version 23.0. Multivariate analysis was done using Partial Correlation. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was computed with the formula below:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6\sum id_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

n = number of pairs of data

d = difference between the ranking in each set of data.

Σ = Summation

If our statistical analysis shows that the significance level is below the cut-off value we have set (which is 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Alternatively, if the significance level is above the cut-off value, the null hypothesis was accepted. In testing the hypotheses one to ten, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting our null hypotheses. All the coefficient (r) values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and thus our alternate hypotheses was accepted and when no significance was indicated in the coefficient (r) value, we reject the null hypotheses. We set out confidence interval at 0.05 level of significance to test the statistical significance of this study. Both the significance values and the coefficient values were used.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between technical creativity and road infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Table 1: Correlations between Technical Creativity and Road Infrastructure Quality

		Technical Creativity	Road Infrastructure Quality
Spearman's rho	Technical Creativity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.666**
		N	.000
Spearman's rho	Road Infrastructure Quality	Correlation Coefficient	.666**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000
		N	76

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 1 above shows r value of 0.666 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating scope technical creativity and road infrastructure quality. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) which states that there is no significant relationship between technical creativity and road

infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_{a1}) was accepted. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between technical creativity and road infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State.

H_{o2} : There is no significant relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Table 2: Correlation between Problem Solving Ability and Project Management Efficiency

		Problem Solving Ability	Project Management Efficiency
Spearman's rho	Problem Solving Ability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.516**
		N	.000
	Project Management Efficiency	Correlation Coefficient	.516**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 2 above reveals r value 0.516 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating problem solving ability and project management efficiency. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{o5}) which states that there is no significant relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_{a5}) was accepted. This implies that there is a moderate positive relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State.

H_{o3} : There is no significant relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Table 3: Correlations between Process Creativity and Client Satisfaction

		Process Creativity	Client Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Process Creativity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.610**
		N	.000
	Client Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.610**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 3 above reveals r value of 0.610 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating process creativity and client satisfaction. Since the significance value 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{o9}) which states that there is no significant relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_{a9}) was accepted. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

Base on the analyses the study found that:

1. There is a strong positive relationship between technical creativity and road infrastructure quality of building construction firms in Rivers State.
2. There is a moderate positive relationship between problem solving ability and project management efficiency of building construction firms in Rivers State.

3. There is a strong positive relationship between process creativity and client satisfaction of building construction firms in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, the study concluded that project employee creativity with organizational performance of building construction firms in Rivers State. Also, there is a moderating effect of reward factors in the relationship between employee creativity and organizational performance of building construction firms in Rivers State. This is because creative employees contribute innovative ideas, problem solving technique, and novel approaches to project management which can lead to more efficient processes, cost saving and improved project delivery timeliness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of Building Construction Firms should create work environment that support employees' creative thinking characterized by problem solving ability, process and technical creativity as a way of enhancing organizational project management efficiency, road infrastructure quality and client satisfaction.
2. Management of Building Construction Firms should implement the utilization of advanced project management software and data-driven tools that provide real-time monitoring of project progress as a way to curb future problem.
3. Management of Building Construction Firms should create work environment where employees can experiment with creative process improvements without fear of failure.

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