

Employee Creativity and Organizational Performance in the Hotel Industry in Delta State

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of employee creativity on organizational performance of hotels in Warri metropolis of Delta State. The specific objectives are to: determine the effect of organizational climate on organizational performance, ascertain the influence of knowledge sharing on organizational performance and to evaluate how motivation influences organizational performance. The research design method that was employed for this study was the cross sectional survey research design. The population (411) of this study covered all employees of 9 selected hotels in Warri metropolis of Delta State. The sample size of 203 employees was captured for the study. The probability sampling method that was employed in this study is the stratified random sampling method. Data for this research was gathered from the primary source with the aid of structured questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The statistical techniques used for the study consists of descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regression analysis. The study found that motivation has the highest positive effect on organizational performance of Hotels in Warri Metropolis of Delta State. The study concluded that employee creativity dimensions (organizational climate, knowledge sharing and motivation) explained 58% of the variability of organizational performance. This implies that employee creativity has positive effect on organizational

performance. The study recommended that hotel managers should ensure that they create an organizational climate that encourages, nurtures and enhances organizational performance.

Keywords: Employee Creativity, Knowledge Management, Motivation, Organizational Climate

Introduction

Intense global competition is forcing the development of a culture that nurtures creativity. In a changing business environment, employees' creativity is seen to be a potential source of competitive advantage to companies. Employee's creativity help to improve on company's performance and it is employed to seek out novel technologies, product ideas, processes and techniques (Hazril, Aerni and Amirul, 2016). Any organization that fails to foresee the relevance of creativity activities, tend to have higher failure rates because of their weakness in developing a culture and climate that values new ideas. Promoting creativity in as a business culture would create innovation and increase competitiveness. Organizational challenges such as internal political problems, harsh internal competition, avoidance of risk, destructive criticism and overemphasis on the status quo are obstacles to creativity (Isaksen and Akkermans, 2011).

The employee's creativity relies on some components, which are organizational climate, knowledge sharing and motivation. Alajmi (2016) asserted that organizational climate is a set of attribute that differentiate one company from another. The set of distinctive features originates from internal and external elements of the company that exert positive or negative influence on the behaviour of employees in the work environment. From this perspective, organizational climate is not in isolation from the surrounding environment of the company as the company derives most of its inputs from its environment. As no company exists independent of its immediate environment, organizational climate is always influenced by components prevalent in the environment in spite of the formation or composition of any company. It demands that companies should continuously seek to improve performance in order to remain important among its competitors (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017).

Today, some companies have begun to join the knowledge trend. Knowledge is regarded as the key source of creativity which should be managed (Harris, McAdam, McCausland and Reid, 2013). In such setting those companies that are able to utilize their knowledge as a competitive advantage can have superior organizational performance (Parvaneh, 2017). Hence, knowledge sharing has become one of the vital tasks in companies that are trying to transform their products and services to meet current specification of customers. The ultimate aim of employee creativity is creative performance, namely, creative products (Gajda, 2016). Therefore, the relationship between motivation and creative performance warrants further exploration (Gajda, 2016). Scholars have employed intrinsic motivation as a major component when carrying out motivation research on creative behaviour tendencies (Hornig et al., 2016; Soroa et al., 2015). However, factors influencing creative performance are numerous, and both

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are vital (An, Song and Carr, 2016; Gajda, 2016). Hence, combining these two types of motivation can widely explain the driving forces of creative behaviour (Song, Kalet and Plass, 2016). Escriba'-Esteve and Montoro-Sa'nchez (2012) posit that creativity is and will remain a basic prerequisite of employees and company growth. Zhou, Hirst and Shipton (2012) contended that creativity is essential for employees, different jobs task and industries.

Creativity can be seen at the individual, team and company levels (Anderson, Poto'cnik and Zhou, 2014). Thus, to be creative, team or individual ideas should be both new, valuable and have essential value for organizational development (Wenjing, Svetlana, Bart, Evgenia and Jing, 2020). Creativity can therefore absorb both minor incremental adaptations and radical breakthroughs. Creativity differs from innovation, because innovation connotes development and execution of new ideas (Opoku, Choi and Kang, 2019). As a team or individual creativity is usually a first step to innovation, both practitioners and management scholars are looking for management tools and techniques to support employee creativity and thereby acquire a better means of initiating the innovation process (Anderson, *et al* 2014).

Employees' creativity has gradually become an essential factor of company performance and long-term survival. As companies try to use workers' ideas and suggestions, improving employees' creativity has become a determinant of a sustainable competitive advantage. For example, some companies encourage their employees to spend some amount of their time during work hours on their passion in order to foster creativity, thereby enabling it to initiate sustainable business models. As such, this study attempts to lay a cornerstone of understanding the link between employees' creativity and

organizational performance. Therefore, the study aims to examine the effect of employees' creativity on organizational performance of hotels in Warri Metropolis of Delta State.

Statement of Problem

Employee creativity-outcome is sometimes unpredictable and ambiguous, implying that employee creativity necessarily involves risk. When there is no trust-based relationship between employees and their managers. It may hinder employees on exploring creative ideas and innovative behaviours that deviate from the status quo, because they are not confident in their beliefs about the likelihood that their managers are at least not harmful or favourable to their innovative attempts. Some companies are aware of the relevance of creativity, but they do not have enough knowledge and experience about how to improve it.

The bureaucratic structure of some companies limits the sharing of knowledge specifically sensitive and relevant knowledge. When companies are faced with challenges concerning technological changes or management structure, employees' views are sought to in order for the company to arrive at the exact solutions. However, employees are uncertain in contributing their ideas, when they worry that their ideas may not be regarded as relevant or that an ill-conceived idea could be an impediment for their career progress. Noticeably in most companies, a suitable system is needed to allow employees to express their creativity. In reality, there are companies that give inadequate support to their employees in terms of knowledge sharing. Despite the relevance of employee creativity to companies, there is lack of emphasis on how it affects organizational performance of hotels. Therefore, the study will help to fill this gap in literature.

Objective of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of employee creativity on organizational performance. The specific objectives are to:

- determine the effect of organizational climate on organizational performance
- ascertain the influence of knowledge sharing on organizational performance
- evaluate how motivation influence organizational performance

Statement of Hypotheses

- H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational climate and organizational performance.
- H₂: Knowledge sharing has significant positive relationship with organizational performance.
- H₃: There is significant positive relationship between motivation and organizational performance.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Employee Creativity

Creativity is not only built from the overall company strategy and access to resources but more basically from the minds of the individual workers, alone or in group, carrying out assigned task of the company each day (Li-Yueh and Emmelia, 2012). Creativity is relevant to companies because creative ideas do not only support companies to become more efficient and more responsive to opportunities, but also aid them to adjust to change, grow and compete in the global market (Li-Yueh and Emmelia, 2012). Creativity might not have been resulted when the employees could not open their selves and when they were not convinced that their tasks and jobs as something that can be done easily. There are three psychological mechanisms that stimulate employees' creativity (Grand and Berry, 2011). Firstly, when workers are intrinsically motivated, they will exhibit a positive creative stimulation that encourages them to get more relevant information and in turn supports them to recognize and isolate the ideas they have in a flexible way.

Secondly, when workers are intrinsically motivated, their interest and curiosity to learn will promote flexibility in their way of thinking and ultimately encourage their risk-taking behaviour (Grand and Berry, 2011). Thirdly, the theory of self-determination indicated that intrinsic motivation can promote employees' creativity through increasing perseverance, since the workers with intrinsic motivation are meticulous and ready to do complex, challenging and unusual tasks (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

Rashidi and Shararay (2008) posited that creativity is the integration of four aspects including fluency (the ability of forming a relationship between thought and expression); originality (the ability of remarkable thinking and on the contrary to common habit); flexibility (the ability of thinking in diverse ways to solve a new problem); and elaboration (the ability of attention to the details during an activity). Dul and Ceylan (2011) affirmed that there are 21 factors of the work environment that can foster creativity: 'challenging job, teamwork, quantity of light, daylight, indoor (physical) climate, task rotation, autonomy in job, coaching supervisor, incentives for creative results, furniture, indoor plants/flowers, calming colors, inspiring colors, privacy, time for thinking, creative goals, recognition of creative ideas, window view to nature, any window view, sound and smell'.

Organizational Climate and Organizational Performance

The ability of a company to adjust towards the dynamic business environment is vital for survival. This is particularly true with the beginning of disruptive changes when the ability and capability to innovate becomes more relevant than ever (Annika, Karla, Paredes, Malin and Ritzén, 2019). Organizational climate exists when psychological climate perceptions are shared among staff of a work unit. Studies in the area of organizational climate have

identified significant features prevalent in the work settings as climate which is usually defined by workers' perceptions of the organization's policies, practices and social relationships (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017). Creating a supportive work environment has become a competitive management tool as a good working climate influences staff motivation, drive and self-confidence on the job performance (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017). Understanding organizational climate becomes a critical factor to be considered. Therefore an assessment of organizational climate vis-a-vis employee job satisfaction will help to determine employee performance and consequently organizational effectiveness (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017).

Kubendran, Sampath and Muthukumar (2013) opined that organizational climate is a set of perceived attributes of the organization which influences the way the organization, its members and their environment interact. Basically, the work environment is perceived by employees as favourable when benefits, resources and workload are reasonable and fair, equitable and mutual respect between employers and employees which culminates in steady, beneficial work outcomes and attitude (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017). It is clear that creating a healthy, inspiring organizational climate is imperative to maximizing the potentials of employees. A clear understanding of variables of climate assists management to channel efforts towards the attainment of organizational goals (Obiukwu and Alaneme, 2017).

Knowledge Sharing and Organizational Performance

Compared with other organizational factors, knowledge has gradually become an important factor among them. It would be wrong to think of creativity without knowledge (Akturan and Çekmecelioglu, 2016). To be creative and innovative the employees need to work together and share

willingly the needed knowledge (Akturan and Çekmecelioğlu, 2016). Knowledge is known as a key source for developing a company's sustainable competitive advantage (Fang, Jiang, Makino and Beamish, 2010). The sharing of sensitive and relevant knowledge will enable employees to understand the duties and responsibilities, companies and the top management's judgments and behaviours (Akturan and Çekmecelioğlu, 2016). Knowledge sharing is one of the most critical points for knowledge society. Without knowledge sharing, it is not possible to see an efficient knowledge society (Akturan and Çekmecelioğlu, 2016). As a matter of fact, creating a knowledge sharing culture is what most companies are working hard for because of the benefits it yields (Al-Kashari and Al-Taheri, 2019).

Intranets are commonly employed by workers to access, share and exchange knowledge; however, implementing such a system is not without its problems regarding employees who resist knowledge sharing (Al-Kashari and Al-Taheri, 2019). In that aspect, companies are encouraged to expand their methods to enhance the knowledge sharing capabilities and behaviours of the employees. Knowledge sharing aids companies to attain competitive advantage as they create new knowledge that can improve business processes and technology (Al-Kashari and Al-Taheri, 2019). By knowledge sharing, employees can get high valid information, and merge them with their own knowledge, which would finally result in creative ideas and new knowledge (Amin et al. 2011).

Motivation and Organizational Performance

Throughout the last three decades, the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on creativity and innovation was highlighted while extrinsic motivation was often seen as controversial and has been less examined in this context (Anderson, Potoènik and Zhou, 2014). However, employers cannot assume

that their workers are always intrinsically motivated as reasonably few employees find their jobs interesting enough to work without getting paid (Deci et al., 2017). Consequently, in order to improve creativity and innovation purposely, extrinsic motivators must also be considered. HRM practices are meant to influence workers' motivation and thus, to influence outcomes like innovation and organizational performance (Byron and Khazanchi, 2012; Ryan and Deci, 2017). Intrinsic motivation is attributed by a strong valuation of engagement and personal investment (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Transactional rewards are tangible rewards and refer to any form of financial compensation (e.g., increase in bonus, monetary awards, base pay and external training with certifications). Unlike transactional rewards, relational rewards are intangible. Thus, relational rewards go beyond financial considerations. They consist of recognition, praise and performance feedback (Armstrong, 2012). For instance in the form of thank-you cards, announcements in newsletters, hall of fame postings (Armstrong, 2012), or funding a successful team for a specific project that the team appreciates (Amabile and Pratt, 2016).

Such rewards need interpersonal skills and consider managerial and collegial behaviour in order to develop valuable relationships (Armstrong, 2012). Therefore, due to the personal factor, it is contended that relational rewards are difficult to be imitated by competitors than transactional rewards (Armstrong, 2012). Transactional rewards only require the definition and one-time execution of the specific financial rewards, whereas relational rewards are constantly time-consuming for managers. Thus, from a company point of view, it is contended that both types of rewards differ strongly concerning efforts and competitive advantage.

Empirical Review

Anggia and Nurul (2014) examined the impact of the environment support on creativity: Assessing the mediating role of intrinsic motivation. A survey is administered to 132 employees working in mass media industry in the Indonesian context. The result showed that the support from co-workers is dominant to promote the creativity of the employees. The supports from supervisor and family provide no important influence on creativity. Findings showed that intrinsic motivation partially influences the relationship between the support from co-workers and the creativity. Ghodrattollah, Mahdi, Ahmad and Reza (2013) examined the effect of individual creativity dimensions on employee's engagement at work in the central staff of Agriculture Organization of Qom. The study constructs comprise of individual creativity dimensions (ambiguity tolerance, listening to inner voice, steps of comparison and welcoming fortuity, lateral thinking, ideas collection and development, prevention from hasty evaluation of ideas).

Weinzimmer, Michel and Franczak (2011) examined the affiliation between creativity and performance. The results showed that action orientation mediated the relationship between creativity and organizational performance. Zhou, Hirst and Shipton (2012) examined the correlation between a job's problem solving demand and employee creativity in three Chinese companies. The findings showed a positive relationship between problem-solving demand and employees' creativity; this association was mediated by creative self-efficacy. Further, intrinsic motivation moderated the relationship between problem-solving demand and creative self-efficacy such that the correlation was stronger for employees with a high level of intrinsic motivation.

Theoretical Review

AMO Theory

AMO theory is one of the most established (HR) management theories concerning the

facilitation of employee performance. The theory suggests that people perform well when they have the skills, knowledge and abilities to perform (A = abilities); when they have motivation to perform (M = motivation); and when they are provided with opportunities and support from an organization to perform (O = opportunity) (Apelbaum, Bailey and Berg, 2000). The equation for this theory is $p = f(\text{Ability, Motivation, Opportunity})$. That is, to increase the three components in pursuit of high employee performance, companies can provide different HR practices: ability practices, motivation practices, and opportunity practices. Specifically, concerning ability practices, thorough selection and extensive training are used to ensure that workers have the right abilities to attain performance. Concerning motivation practices, incentives and rewards, promotion, performance appraisals and relationships with supervisors motivate workers to improve on working behaviours. Regarding opportunity practices, teamwork, employee participation, flexible job design, organizational climate and culture for support and information sharing empower workers to perform better (Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer, 2012; Miao and Cao, 2019).

Research Methodology

The research design method that was employed for this study is the cross sectional survey research design, it is the choice of the researcher because it aids the researcher in the assessment of public opinion using questionnaire and sampling methods at a particular point in time. The population 411 of this study covered all employees of 9 selected hotels in Warri metropolis of Delta State. This includes: BON Hotel (50), Warri Wetland Hotel (51), Bedouin Hotel & Suites (45), Signatious Hotel And Suites (55), Montelaire Suites (46), Manuex Place Hotel (45), Peemos Place (43), Park Royale Hotel (30) and Manuex Place Hotel (46) (Source: Human Resources Department of Hotels).

The required sample unit (203) of staff captured was determined by using Yamane's (1968) sample size determination formula. The probability sampling method that was employed in this study is the stratified random sampling method. Stratified random sampling was employed because it helped to represent not only the overall population, but also key subgroups of the population, especially small minority groups. Data for this research was gathered from the primary source. Structured questionnaire was used to obtain relevant data from the respondents. A five (5) point Likert-scale was used for assessment of the opinions of the respondents as provided.

The content validity was utilized in this study. A measure can be said to possess content validity if there is general agreement among researchers that constitute items that covers all aspect of the variables being measured. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was

employed. Hence, for this study a pre-test of the questionnaire was done. This pre-test enabled the researcher to detect certain irregularities that could have hampered the consistency of this research. Measurement of the model of reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (CA) based tests. An acceptable measure for CA is 0.7 or higher (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The first level of statistical analysis involved the use of simple and descriptive statistics. These descriptive statistics is used to describe and summarize the distribution of the variables, or sampling parameter across the sample without making interest to the larger population under study (Spiegel and Stephens, 2000). The second is correlation which helps to ascertain the strength of relationship among the variables. Lastly the multiple regression analysis was used to test the study hypotheses.

The general form of the equation to predict

$$OP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 OC + \beta_2 KS + \beta_3 M + \varepsilon$$

Results of Data Analysis

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, correlations and reliabilities

Variable	Mean (St. D)	Organizational Climate	Knowledge Sharing	Motivation	Organizational performance
Organizational Climate	19.0(1.09)	(0.82)			
Knowledge Sharing	18.9(1.05)	0.742**	(0.79)		
Motivation	18.9(1.12)	0.642**	0.733**	(0.81)	
Organizational performance	18.8(1.42)	0.649**	0.667**	0.715**	(0.78)

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

Table 1 indicated that organizational climate has a strong positive correlation coefficient with organizational performance (0.649**). Knowledge sharing shows a strong positive correlation coefficient with organizational performance (0.667**). Motivation exhibited a strong positive correlation coefficient with organizational

performance (0.715**). This implies that organizational climate, knowledge sharing and motivation are very good measures of employees creativity. From table 1 it was observed that the reliability coefficients are above the 0.7 benchmark. Favorable reliable scores were obtained from all the items in general. The estimation reported acceptable internal consistency.

Table 2: Employee Creativity and Organizational Performance Multiple Regression Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.065	1.306		-1.581	.116
	organizational climate	.323	.094	.247	3.445	.001
	knowledge sharing	.223	.110	.164	2.032	.044
	Motivation	.556	.090	.437	6.184	.000

a. Dependent Variable: organizational performance

Table 2 showed that organizational climate which is the first variable has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.247$, $P < 0.01$). Similarly, knowledge sharing which is the second variable has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.164$,

$P < 0.01$). Motivation which is the last variable has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.437$, $P < 0.01$).

Therefore, $OP = -2.065 + (0.323 \times OC) + (0.223 \times KS) + (0.556 \times M)$

Table 3: Model Summary**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.763 ^a	.582	.575	.9271

a. Predictors: (Constant), organizational climate, knowledge sharing, motivation

Table 3 showed that change in organizational performance was brought about by the variables (organizational climate, knowledge sharing and motivation) of employees' creativity by 58% (0.575) as indicated by the adjusted R^2 value.

Discussion of Results

Out of the 203 copies of questionnaire administered, 196 were returned, 2 were not properly filled, and 194 were useable. Therefore, the analysis was based on the usable sample size of 194.

54% of the employees are male and 46% are female. Majority (61%) of the employees are between the ages 18-35. In terms of educational level, most of the respondents (57%) are OND/NCE holders. 59% of the employees have been working for between

1-5 years, 41% of them have been working for more than 5 years in the Hotel Industry.

Table 1 indicated that organizational climate (0.649^{**}), knowledge sharing (0.667^{**}) and motivation (0.715^{**}) exhibited a strong positive correlation coefficient values with organizational performance.

Table 2 showed that organizational climate has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.247$, $P < 0.01$). Test of H_1 showed that there is positive significant relationship between organizational climate and organizational performance ($0.001 < 0.05$). This is in agreement with Obiukwu and Alaneme (2017) finding that creating a supportive work environment has become a competitive management tool, as a good working climate influences staff motivation, drive self-confidence on the job

performance. This indicates that organizational climate exists when psychological climate perceptions are shared among staff of a work unit.

Similarly, table 2 indicated that knowledge sharing has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.164, P < 0.01$). Test of H_2 indicated that knowledge sharing has positive significant relationship with organizational performance ($0.044 < 0.05$). This is in agreement with Al-Kashari and Al-Taheiri, (2019) finding that knowledge sharing aids companies to attain competitive advantage as they create new knowledge that can improve business process and technology. This implies that knowledge sharing is a relevant factor that aids individual creativity and organizational performance.

Table 2 showed that motivation has positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.437, P < 0.01$). Test of H_3 indicated that there is positive significant relationship between motivation and organizational performance ($0.000 < 0.05$). It is consistent with Amabile and Pratt (2016) finding that when intrinsically motivated, workers perform tasks out of enjoyment and interest for its own sake. This showed that HRM practices, are meant to influence workers' motivation and thus, to influence organizational performance.

Table 3 showed that employees' creativity explained 58% of the variability of organizational performance.

Conclusion

The study concluded that employee creativity dimensions (organizational climate, knowledge sharing and motivation) explained 58% of the variability of organizational performance. This implies that employee creativity has positive effect on organizational performance. The study found that motivation has the highest positive effect on organizational performance of Hotels in Warri Metropolis

of Delta State ($\beta = 0.437, P < 0.01$). Knowledge sharing has the least positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.164, P < 0.01$).

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

- i. Managers should ensure that they create an organizational climate that encourages, nurtures and enhances organizational performance.
- ii. To be creative and innovative, employees should work together and share willingly the needed knowledge that will help to enhance organizational performance.
- iii. In order to improve creativity and innovation purposely, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators should be considered by hotel managers.
- iv. In order to enhance organizational performance of companies managers should provide favourable organizational climate, ensure adequate knowledge sharing and motivation of employees.

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