



## **Employee Involvement and Organizational Resilience of Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State**

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the correlation between employee involvement and the organisational resilience of manufacturing firms located in Rivers State. A representative sample of 160 participants was selected from the population of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The research design employed in this study was cross-sectional. The data utilised in this study were acquired through the implementation of a structured questionnaire. The data that was acquired was subjected to analysis using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient. The study provides evidence to support the notion that employee involvement plays a crucial and substantial role in enhancing the adaptive capacity and innovativeness of manufacturing firms located in Rivers State. It is advisable for manufacturing firms to assess the influence of employee involvement as a means of monitoring their advancement and implementing any required modifications.

**Keywords:** Adaptive Capacity, Employee Involvement, Innovativeness, Organizational Resilience

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### Introduction

Organisational resilience is the ability of an organisation to quickly and successfully respond and adapt to changes in its processes, systems, and surrounding surroundings, with a focus on the safety and satisfaction of its employees. To be operationally resilient in the context of manufacturing means that a company can quickly identify and assess risks, react quickly, and effectively minimise the impacts of interruptions throughout the supply chain. In order to enhance their resilience, organisations are making investments in tools that enable real-time monitoring and prediction. Additionally, they are expanding their design specifications and establishing inventories (Kay, 2023).

The attainment of organisational resilience poses challenges for industrial and manufacturing companies due to inherent factors associated with their position within the value chain (Bell, Calder & Serda, 2021). Organisations that foster organisational resilience, driven by both crisis and opportunity, can obtain a significant and enduring competitive advantage over their rivals (Maor, Park & Weddle, 2022).

Disruptions within the manufacturing sector can result in detrimental consequences such as diminished market share, compromised brand reputation, and other related ramifications. Moreover, they can provide manufacturers with prospects to foster innovation and progress. Frequently, disruptions manifest concurrently and are commonly intensified by the technological condition of organisations. Disruption occurs when a novel and typically unforeseen event transpires in the market or within an industry (Clark & Reynolds, 2023).

Disruptions within the manufacturing industry encompass various factors, such as shifts in the business landscape and alterations in production methodologies (Clark & Reynolds, 2023). According to Wellener, Lindsey, and Scheuerman (2023), various factors such as trade restrictions, supply chain disruptions, workforce shortages, cybersecurity threats, and environmental concerns have been identified as disruptive elements and emerging manufacturing trends that are anticipated to exert significant influence across the industry in the coming decade.

Several studies have put forth adaptive capacity, innovativeness, and robustness as key parameters for assessing resilience. Notably, McManus, Seville, Vargo, and Brunson (2008), Chen, Xie, and Liu (2021), and Kantur and Iseri-Say (2015) have all contributed to this discourse through various evaluations. An organization's adaptive capacity is its propensity to prioritise the happiness and engagement of its employees in the face of change in the organization's processes, systems, and external settings. Within the manufacturing sector, the term "nimble, disruption-ready workforce" pertains to the capacity of manufacturers to cultivate a workforce that is adaptable and prepared to navigate unforeseen disruptions (Smith, 2020). The concept of innovativeness within the manufacturing industry pertains to the capacity of manufacturers to engage in innovative practises and adapt to changing circumstances. The implementation of innovative practises in the manufacturing sector propels the industry towards enhanced productivity, heightened efficiency, and improved quality. According to Wilson (2021), manufacturers can enhance their competitive advantage, fulfil customer requirements, and address industry obstacles through the implementation of innovative strategies.

Employee involvement in the manufacturing industry pertains to the active engagement of employees in the decision-making procedures that have an impact on their work (Sapot, 2020). The significance of employee engagement in the manufacturing sector cannot be overstated, as it has the potential to result in enhanced productivity, improved product quality, and heightened employee satisfaction (Ryba, 2021).

Sapot (2020) reports that the proportion of engaged manufacturing employees stands at 25%, which is 8 percentage points lower than the national average. Engaged employees are characterised by their active involvement, enthusiasm, and commitment towards their work and workplace. Adjustments to human resource policies that foster an environment favourable to active employee participation and a strong sense of communal belonging are essential for cultivating optimal levels of employee engagement within the manufacturing sector.

In their study, Santoro, Messeni-Petruzzelli, and Giudice (2020) investigated the phenomenon of resilience in the context of small family firms. Specifically, they explored the influence of resilience at both the employee and entrepreneur levels on firm performance. In a study conducted by Suryaningtyas, Sudiro, Eka, and Dodi (2019), the focus was on exploring the relationship between organisational resilience and organisational performance. Specifically, the researchers examined the potential mediating effects of resilient leadership and organisational culture. Cooke, Wang, and Bartram (2019) conducted a related study that looked into the same kind of questions. In a high-stakes job setting, could employees be more resilient if they worked in a more encouraging environment? *The Chinese Financial Industry: A Research Study*.

Based on the aforementioned studies and the reviewed literature, it has been observed by the researcher that there exists a dearth of scholarly works pertaining to the correlation between employee involvement and the organisational resilience of manufacturing firms situated in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### ***Aim and Objectives of the Study***

The objective of this study is to ascertain the correlation between employee involvement and organisational resilience within manufacturing firms located in Rivers State. Therefore, the subsequent specific objectives are articulated as follows:

- To investigate the correlation between employee involvement and adaptive capacity.
- The objective of this study is to examine the correlation between employee involvement and innovativeness.

### ***Research Hypotheses***

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and Adaptive Capacity.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and Innovativeness.

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## **Concept of Employee Involvement**

Different authors have proposed different ways to define employee involvement. According to Kumari and Kumari (2014), "employee involvement" is the process by which workers are given the authority to take part in managerial decision-making and improvement initiatives appropriate to their status in the organisational structure. Employee involvement, as defined by Price (2004), is a process that includes participation, communication, and decision-making that leads to the creation of industrial democracy and increased employee motivation. According to the author, workers who are involved in the day-to-day operations of their company feel more valued and have more control over their work, which in turn improves their productivity and the value they add to the company. Sofijanov, Zabijakin-Chatleska, 2013. Involvement can be characterised as employees' active engagement in decision-making and problem-solving activities, as well as the enhancement of autonomy in work processes. Giving workers a voice in matters of importance is what we mean when we talk about employee involvement. By giving workers more say in their day-to-day operations, this strategy hopes to boost morale and productivity. The goal is to increase organisational loyalty, enthusiasm, and contentment on the job.

According to research by Achukwu, Amah, and Okocha (2021), employee participation is critical for educating workers on the value of innovation and inspiring them to take on more challenging roles. According to Hewitt (2002), it is argued that the managerial strategy known as "Command and control" is no longer suitable for contemporary organisations. Employees feel ownership over decisions that have an impact on them when they are given the opportunity to contribute to their creation and implementation, whether through delegation of authority or another means. Consequently, they are motivated to actively contribute to the success of these decisions and their intended outcomes. Workplaces where employees feel valued and heard are more likely to have engaged workers, according to the literature (Kok, Lebusa, & Joubert, 2014; Akhigbemidu, Amah, & Okocha, 2021).

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## **Concept of Organizational Resilience**

The term "organisational resilience" (Umoh et al., 2013; Burnard & Bhamra, 2011) describes a business that can recover quickly from setbacks and continue operating normally after experiencing disruptions. Indicative of an organization's readiness for the unexpected is its ability to absorb and respond to shocks in the business environment by developing a resilient system (Umoh, 2007; Umoh et al., 2013).

Concepts such as environmental awareness, readiness, disruption prediction, adaptation, and recovery are all derived from various definitions of organisational resilience, as stated by McManus (2008). Organisational resilience is defined by Annarelli and Nonino (2016) and Annarelli et al. (2020) as an organization's ability to withstand disruptions and unexpected changes by capitalising on its strategic knowledge and promoting collaboration among its internal and external capabilities.

According to Langvardt (2007), resilient organisations are those that have the wherewithal to set up a structure that provides reassurance and stability even in the face of change. There is a push for organisational structures to be flexible enough to adjust to shifting economic, social, cultural, technological, and political conditions in the face of rapid technological development and a shifting business environment (Barlach, LimongiFrance, & Malvezzi, 2008).

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### Concept of Adaptive Capacity

Adaptive capacity is regarded as a constituent element of dynamic capabilities, which aims to comprehend how organisations align their internal strengths and resources with the prevailing market advantages (Wang & Ahmed, 2007). Adaptive capacity in this context refers to an organization's ability to successfully respond to and adapt to both internal and external changes (Grewal & Tansuhaj, 2001; Krohmer, Homburg, & Workman, 2002). According to Rindova and Kotha (2001), an organization's adaptability can be seen in how well it evaluates the strategic flexibility of its existing resources, how it arranges its internal resources, how it handles strategic change, and so on. The key difference between the two terms, "adaptive capacity" and "adaptive capability," is how each thinks about the long-term viability of an organisation. While adaptation pertains to the attainment of an optimal state of survival, adaptive capacity places emphasis on the pursuit of equilibrium through techniques for exploration and prospecting (Staber & Sydow, 2002). Adaptive capacity facilitates organisations in several ways: firstly, it enables them to actively pursue new markets and technologies; secondly, it allows for the continuous processing of new information; thirdly, it enables organisations to swiftly adjust and reconfigure their organisational structure and management; and finally, it facilitates the simultaneous study and exploration of recent learning (Staber & Sydow, 2002; Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). Therefore, it is imperative for companies to cultivate the ability to adapt by promptly reconfiguring their resources and coordinating processes. This is essential in order to develop items with superior performance compared to those of rival companies. However, according to Wang and Ahmed (2007), research on dynamic capacities, such as adaptive ability, has been undertaken in a disjointed fashion, leading to disparate study findings that fail to integrate factors and resources.

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### Concept of Innovativeness

The Latin word "innovare," meaning "into new," is the source of our English word "innovative." The most rudimentary definition of innovation is any behaviour that breaks with conventional usage. The word "innovation" is often used in the business world, where it usually refers to projects that include high levels of risk, major financial investment, and extensive time commitment (Costello & Prohaska, 2013). A novel idea, product, or piece of technology is an example of an innovation. The concept under consideration can be understood as a cognitive orientation, characterised by a mode of thought that transcends the immediate circumstances and extends into the realm of future possibilities. In the realm of business, the significance of innovations cannot be overstated. When effectively harnessed, innovations can serve as a multifaceted tool encompassing processes, strategies, and management techniques (Kuczmarksi, 2003).

Discussions pertaining to economic progress and prosperity often revolve around various dimensions of innovativeness (Nasierowski & Arcelus, 2012). While there is an abundance of research on innovation, a limited number of studies specifically examine the concept of innovativeness (Yusof & Abidin, 2011). Goswami and Mathew (2005) argue that there exists an observable deficiency in the presence of a cohesive viewpoint regarding innovativeness. Similar to the multifaceted nature of innovation, the concept of organisational innovativeness has been examined in various contexts within the existing body of literature. Consequently, a universally acknowledged definition of innovativeness does not exist. In contrast to the concept of innovation, organisational innovativeness takes into account multiple innovations and places emphasis on the characteristics of the organisation rather than the specific attributes of individual innovations (Moos et al., 2010).

Organisational management (or "organisational innovativeness") and the broader framework of national or regional economies (or "economic innovativeness") are both areas that have been explored in relation to the idea of innovation. Empirical studies have also been conducted on the notion, especially concentrating on customer reception of product innovations and on the characteristics of individuals or teams (Schweisfurth & Raasch, 2018).

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### Theoretical framework

#### Theory of Dynamic Capabilities

After realising the shortcomings of the resource-based view (RBV) theory, researchers Galvin, Rice, and Liao (2014) developed the theory of dynamic capabilities (DC) as a potential replacement. The concept of dynamic capabilities (DC) encompasses the notion that firms are able to effectively respond to dynamic and evolving environments by strategically managing their resources and capabilities portfolio (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). Nevertheless, prior to the 1980s, there was a notable lack of scholarly attention directed towards the field of strategic management. Porter's industry-based theory, as outlined in his works from 1979, 1980, and 1985, garnered significant scholarly interest, particularly during the 1980s (Barney & Ouchi, 1986). During that particular time frame, the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory garnered significant attention and became a prominent topic of discussion. The concept of the firm is that of a set of assets, both observable and unobservable, including people and skills. The company's skills lie in its ability to combine various assets in a productive and novel manner. Scholars like Wernerfelt (1984), Grant (1991), Helfat et al. (2007), and Barney (1991) agree with this view. According to Barney (1991), a company has a competitive advantage if it is pursuing a value-creating strategy that is not being pursued by any of its current or potential rivals. However, sustainable competitive advantage is achieved when a company adopts a value-creating strategy that no other

companies are using at the same time, and no other companies can copy the benefits that come from using that strategy (Barney, 1991). Barney (1991) and Tondolo and Bitencourt (2014) provide background on the VRIN framework, from which this study's ideas are developed.

### Empirical review

Adiele and Eketu (2023) looked into the connection between hotel staff participation and Port Harcourt establishments' overall resilience. In order to learn more about these establishments, the researchers used a cross-sectional study method. The 237 workers that participated in our survey made up the study's population. Completed questionnaires from a total of 204 individuals were collected for this study's field survey. Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was used as the method of analysis for this investigation. Correlations between variables were evaluated using the coefficient statistic, and preconceived notions were put to the test using the p-value. To investigate the moderating role of organisational culture in the association between the predictor and criterion variables, a multivariate level analysis was performed using regression analysis. The study found that indicators of resilience, such as adaptive capacity, innovation, and robustness, were positively correlated with various aspects of employee performance management, such as employee involvement, reward system, and performance appraisal. The role of organisational culture in mediating the association between these factors was also shown to be substantial.

Dynamic capacities and organisational resilience were investigated by Akpan, Johnny, and Sylva (2022) for the setting of Nigerian manufacturing enterprises. The study was conducted using a cross-sectional survey approach, and primary data was collected by means of a questionnaire. The sample for this study consisted of 86 individuals drawn from the ranks of foremen, supervisors, and managers at 11 different industrial enterprises in Port Harcourt's Trans Amadi Industrial Area. The surveys were randomly distributed to the respondents. Two research goals were developed, each with its own associated questions and hypotheses. The 25.0 version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to conduct the descriptive statistics analysis. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), implemented in SmartPLS 3.2.7, was also used to evaluate the hypothesised connections. The results showed that there is a positive relationship between dynamic capabilities and measures of organisational resilience, lending credence to the alternative hypotheses. This research shows that dynamic skills strengthen manufacturing companies' resistance to shocks.

## Methodology

### Research Design

A cross-sectional survey approach was used for this investigation. The sample population comprised of 15 active manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, each employing at least 50 people. The sample for this study consists of 160 supervisors and managers who were selected from a pool of individuals employed by 15 different firms. The analysis of demographic data involved the utilisation of descriptive statistical analysis. For further inferential analysis, we also used Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. Hypotheses were evaluated using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

## Result and Discussions

A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed, with 147 questionnaires retrieved, indicating a retrieval rate of 91.87%. However, a total of 13 copies, accounting for 8.13% of the sample, remained uncollected due to the inability of the respective participants to allocate sufficient time to complete them. Despite the researcher's diligent efforts, including multiple visits, email reminders, and phone calls, these respondents were unable to fulfil their commitment to participate in the study. Because of the researcher's hard work, 91.87 percent of the surveys were recovered, or 147 out of 150. These retrieved questionnaires were found to be completed and usable for the purposes of the study.

**Table 1: Demographic (Descriptive) Data Analysis**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Response Rates</b>
Male	95
Female	52
Total	147 (100%)
<b>Age of the Respondents</b>	<b>Response Rates</b>
31-40Yrs	60
41-50Yrs	55
Above 50Yrs	32
Total	147 (100%)
<b>Education Qualification</b>	<b>Response Rates</b>
M.Sc/MBA/M.A	7
O/level (GCE, WASE, SSCE)	47
OND/B.Sc/B.Ed/B. A	93
Total	147 (100%)

According to the data presented in Table 1, it can be observed that 95 respondents, accounting for 64.6% of the total, are male, whereas 52 respondents, representing 35.4% of the total, are female. The demographic data indicates that the respondents consist of a higher proportion of males.

According to the survey results, the participants' ages fall into one of three brackets: 31-50, 51-60, and over the age of 70. Among all age groups, those between the ages of 31 and 40 had the highest representation (40.8 percent). The age group of 41-50 years follows closely behind with a percentage of 37.4%. Participants above the age of 50 constitute 21.7% of the total respondents. This implies that the companies possess a workforce that exhibits high levels of productivity with respect to age.

Table 1 illustrates that 93 participants possess an Ordinary National Diploma or a First Degree, while 47 participants have an O-Level qualification. Additionally, 7 respondents hold a second degree.

This observation highlights the prevalence of employees holding Ordinary National Diplomas and First degrees within the workforce, suggesting that the company places significant emphasis on the education and self-improvement of its employees. Additionally, it is evident that a majority of employees engage in self-development during their tenure in the workplace.

## Testing

### Hypothesis One

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and adaptive capacity

**Table 2:** Analysis of the effect of employee involvement (EIT) on adaptive capacity (ACY)

		EIT	ACY
EIT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.729
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	147	147
ACY	Correlation Coefficient	.729	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	147	147

**Source:** SPSS 25.0 output on research data

The Spearman Correlation coefficient between employee involvement and adaptable capacity is 0.729, as shown in Table 2. This statistic indicates a strong positive linear correlation. A p-value of less than 0.005 indicates statistical significance when using the Correlation test. There is a positive correlation between employee participation and adaptive ability, such that higher levels of employee involvement are accompanied by higher levels of adaptable capacity.

The results of this study show that there is a connection between employee engagement and adaptable ability. This led researchers to reject the alternative idea.

According to these results, increased employee engagement correlates positively with increased adaptability. Adiele and Eketu's (2022) study on the connection between engaged staff and hotel resilience in Port Harcourt is corroborated by the present finding. Their research showed that a number of indices of resilience—such as adaptive ability, innovation, and robustness—were positively correlated with employee engagement. Employees that show excitement for their work are more likely to give it their entire attention and effort, as claimed by Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, Sleafbos, and Maduro (2014). In alternative terms, individuals possess the capacity to anticipate potential issues or detect current deficiencies in procedures due to their heightened state of consciousness. Owalabi and Abdul-Hameed (2011) found that in the manufacturing sector of Nigeria, employee participation in decision making was significantly correlated with business success. There is a clear difference in the performance of firms with high and low levels of employee participation in decision making, with the former showing better results than the latter, as shown by the study's findings.

### Hypothesis Two

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between employee involvement and innovativeness

**Table 3:** Analysis of the effect of employee involvement (EIT) on innovativeness (INS)

		EIT	INS
EIT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.783
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	147	147
INS	Correlation Coefficient	.783	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	147	147

**Source:** SPSS 25.0 output on research data

According to the findings presented in Table 3, the Spearman Correlation coefficient is calculated to be 0.783. This value indicates a robust positive linear association between employee involvement and innovativeness. The significance threshold of the correlation test was set at 0.005, hence the result is statistically significant. There is a positive correlation between employee engagement and creativity, suggesting that more involved workers also tend to be more creative.

According to the results of this study, there is a beneficial connection between enthusiastic workers and creative output. This led researchers to reject the alternative idea.

The results of this study are in line with those of Arshi and Rao (2019), who conducted an empirical study of the link between employee engagement and innovation, accounting for the mediating role of innovation readiness. According to the findings, employee engagement is a good predictor of creativity because of the strong association between the two. Additionally, the ready of innovation element helps to boost predictability. According to the available literature, there is a direct and positive connection between engaged employees and new ideas. When looking at the knock-on consequences, however, it becomes clear that innovation readiness is the medium of this connection. More evidence that employee engagement is correlated with innovation may be found in the works of Langelaan et al. (2006), Abraham (2012), Slatten and Mehmetoglu (2011), and Gichohi (2014). Employee engagement is correlated with innovation because creative and innovative work environments present unique challenges, and engaged workers are better equipped to meet those obstacles. These employees exhibit a proactive approach by surpassing their individual responsibilities and actively engaging in collaboration with their colleagues. Additionally, they contribute valuable suggestions to enhance the overall functioning of the organisation and strive to enhance its innovative capabilities. Engaged workers, as defined by Sundaray (2011), show a lot of excitement for and commitment to their work, which in turn encourages new ideas and approaches. Unsworth (2003) analysed Amabile et al.'s (1996) componential theory of creativity. Organisations can increase their inventive capability by actively involving their staff, as proposed by Unsworth, who maintained that engagement and innovation are purposeful activities. Similarly, McEwen (2011) found that businesses that invest in their employees saw positive results like increased creativity and the ability to predict employee turnover as well as increased productivity, financial success, and client satisfaction.

## Conclusion

The findings derived from the conducted research indicate a favourable correlation between employee involvement and indicators of organisational resilience, specifically adaptive capacity and innovativeness, within manufacturing firms located in Rivers State, Nigeria. Organisations aspiring to enhance their resilience in the face of challenges should contemplate augmenting employee involvement.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis of this study, it is recommended that manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria consider the following actions in order to enhance their organisational resilience through employee involvement.

1. Businesses that produce goods should create a culture of trust and respect among employees. Individuals need to feel valued and respected in the workplace if they are to become actively engaged in their work.
2. Manufacturing enterprises ought to offer comprehensive training and development initiatives for their workforce. It is imperative for employees to possess the requisite skills and knowledge in order to actively participate in the decision-making process.
3. Manufacturing enterprises ought to establish a well-defined procedure for employee engagement. It is imperative for employees to possess an understanding of their potential involvement and designated responsibilities within the decision-making process.

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