



Optimizing Management Practices for Boosting Creativity and Innovation in Multinational Corporations: Evidence from PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc.

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Abstract : The research focused on optimizing management practices for boosting creativity and innovation in multinational corporations. Rapid technology advancement, shorter product life cycles, dynamic services, and globalisation are becoming increasingly prevalent features of the business environment. The specific objectives were to investigate the role of access to technology on idea conversion rate, analyse digital infrastructure on idea conversion rate and examine the skills development initiatives on the idea conversion rate. Resource-based view theory was adopted for this study. A descriptive survey research design was utilised for the study, and a self-structured questionnaire was used to gather information. The study population was 946 PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc employees and a sample size of 211 was determined using the Raosoft (2004) formula. Multiple linear regression was used to test the hypothesis, and socio-demographic data were analysed using a frequency table and percentage. The result showed a positive correlation of 0.487. The result indicates that access technology has a negative coefficient of -.156 on idea conversion rates, while digital infrastructure and skill development initiatives have positive coefficients of .451 and .574 on idea conversion rates. It was therefore recommended that establishing management rules that are adaptable and sensitive to the ever-changing business landscape is advised for businesses.

Keywords : Management Policies, Idea conversion, Access to technology, Skills development initiatives, Digital infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

Satisfying client demands and wants is the cornerstone of any firm. Even if a company develops a fantastic new product or service, it won't be purchased if it doesn't meet a genuine customer need or wants, ultimately leading to the business's demise (Wolcott & Krippendorff, 2024). Multinational organisations operate in complex and dynamic environments, requiring them to continually innovate to maintain competitiveness and market relevance (Olawale & Garwe, 2020). Business concepts were typically implemented through trial and error, loose guidelines, or rules of thumb, hoping they would eventually lead to business performance and success provided they appeased the local gods and ancestors. Rapid technology advancement,

shorter product life cycles, dynamic services, and globalisation are becoming increasingly prevalent features of the business environment.

In today's volatile business environment, employees' creativity and innovation are critical in boosting organisational success and the essential capability organisations must cultivate (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Business employees attempt to alter particular aspects of their work or work products through their creative and innovative efforts to get benefits they value for the company or themselves. New markets are created to meet organisational objectives and obtain a competitive edge. Other benefits include improved employee work performance, greater productivity, better products, production processes, and service delivery (Odetunde & Ufodiana 2020). Creativity and innovation are buzzwords used, whether appropriately or not, in almost every aspect of human endeavour (Obialo, 2020). These two words have redefined the world and will continue to do so. Therefore, developing and applying creativity and innovation in daily life is necessary, as change is the only constant. Life involves business in one way or another.

Individual initiative is the most crucial component among the characteristics required for a successful business (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). However, for innovation to thrive, visionary leadership and perseverance are vital. It takes an individual to have an idea, vision, or dream and translate it into business-related products and procedures. The notion must be adapted to align with the realities of both internal and external environments, overcoming various obstacles. Exploring multiple factors influencing these organisational processes is essential to understanding how creativity and innovation promote corporate success. Access to technology and digital infrastructure is a critical variable that significantly impacts the diffusion of innovation. In the modern business environment, companies with access to advanced technology and solid digital infrastructure share and implement innovative ideas more efficiently (Hustad & Olsen, 2021). This access enables employees to collaborate, communicate, and execute ideas efficiently by accelerating innovation. Skills development initiatives also play an essential role in fostering creativity and innovation. By investing in continuous learning and upskilling programs, organisations cultivate a workforce that is adaptable, creative, and capable of generating new ideas (Rampa & Agogué, 2021).

Technological breakthroughs, shifting consumer preferences, and fierce market competition are causing significant changes in the global corporate landscape (Agustian et al., 2023). Amidst these obstacles, international corporations increasingly realise the importance of creativity and innovation in maintaining long-term success. Adaptability, innovation, and

staying ahead of the curve depend on management policies and organisational culture that foster an environment conducive to creativity. However, fostering creativity and innovation within the workforce of multinational organisations operating in Nigeria is challenging, mainly due to the need for effective management strategies (Taiwo, 2022). Creating and implementing novel concepts, procedures, and products are often impeded by a lack of clear and supportive policies, reducing an organisation's capacity to compete internationally (Adenuga, 2022).

One of the issues that has emerged is the role of access to technology and digital infrastructure in shaping innovation diffusion. Inadequate access to modern technological tools and infrastructure significantly affects the ability of multinational corporations to disseminate and implement innovative ideas effectively (Pandey et al., 2022). Lack of access to technology and digital infrastructure will affect the innovation process and limit the company's ability to respond quickly to market changes. Also, skills development initiatives are crucial for cultivating a workforce capable of generating and converting ideas. If management policies do not prioritise continuous learning and skills enhancement, employees will lack the necessary tools to drive innovation. Hence, the potential for creativity within the organisation is insignificant, and the company will struggle to maintain a competitive edge.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) was adopted for this study as the concept states that an organisation's ability to accomplish its objectives should be evaluated. RBV views a business or town as a repository of people and material resources that can be used as a competitive edge to promote economic development (Jang et al., 2016). The idea posits that businesses can achieve and maintain high rates of growth if they acquire resources that are rare, valuable, hard to duplicate, and distinctive (Bittencourt et al., 2019). Through internal and external strategies, businesses can use these resources to create long-lasting competitive advantages. RBV is based on the idea that an organisation's resources and capabilities affect how effectively it performs and survives in its surroundings. According to Miller (2019), resources vary from company to company and are not readily moved between firms.

The resources can be classified as follows: intangible resources (such as product quality, brand name, and brand image), tangible resources (such as financial capital and physical assets), or personnel-based resources. According to Russo and Fouts (1997), a firm can acquire a competitive advantage using competency as a lateral component. The organisation's capacity to develop, combine, and apply its material, intangible, and human resources will dictate how long it can sustain a competitive edge and guarantee its survival in a changing environment. As per the resource-based view, an organisation's ability to effectively handle and optimise its

assets dictates its ability to fulfil its goals and achieve its objectives. In line with this study, the resource-based view theory highlights the importance of technology and skills development as strategic assets influencing innovation and creativity within PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. This study explores how these resources are leveraged and convert ideas into successful products and how management policies enhance these processes.

Empirical research is needed to confirm the validity of this model, especially concerning multinational corporations in Nigeria, specifically PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc employees, as there is concern about the model's frequent citation. Additionally, very few studies have examined how optimizing management practices for boosting creativity and innovation in multinational corporations, particularly among PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc employees. This research focused on employees of PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. This research explores how access to technology, digital infrastructure and skills development initiatives, influence the idea conversion rate at PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. By comparing and analysing the management policies that influence these variables, the study seeks to identify best practices and provide recommendations for enhancing organisational creativity and innovation

RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive survey research design was utilised in this study. Primary data and secondary sources were employed in the study's data collection. The study population consisted of 946 employees of PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc, as provided through their website. The sample size was determined using Raosoft (2004) formula for a confidence level of 90% and a confidence interval of 5%. Hence, the sample size for this research study was 211 employees. Simple random sampling was employed to select and distribute the study questionnaire to respondents, ensuring that all respondents had an equal chance of being selected for the research. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire consisted of questions on optimizing management practices for boosting creativity and innovation in multinational corporations in PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. Multiple linear regression was used to test the hypothesis. Data were computed using the (SPSS) 26.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on Access to Technology

Items	Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
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1. I have frequent access to the internet.	13.3%	21.3%	5.7%	48.3%	11.4%
2. I have enough digital skills to use technology effectively for work.	11.4%	15.2%	3.8%	40.3%	29.4%
3. My company use online service for financial transactions and it made work easier.	6.6%	4.3%	1.9%	37%	50.2%

The table above revealed that responses indicated varied levels of access to technology. A significant proportion of respondents (48.3%) agreed they have frequent internet access, in terms of digital skills 40.3% agreed that they have the skills needed for effective work technology use while when asked about online financial transaction services, 50.2% strongly agreed these systems made work easier, suggesting that such services are well-received and likely benefit efficiency.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Digital Infrastructure

Items	Statement	SD %	D %	N	A %	SA %
1.	The current digital infrastructure supports my daily work tasks effectively.	8.1%	9.0%	3.8%	32.2%	46.9%
2.	The internet connection in my workspace is reliable and fast enough for my needs.	12.8%	8.5%	5.7%	32.2%	40.8%
3.	PZ Cussons provide secure access to necessary digital tools and resources remotely.	6.2%	7.1%	1.4%	53.1%	32.2%

Table 2 revealed that employees largely agreed that the digital infrastructure supports their daily work, with 46.9% agreeing and 32.2% strongly agreeing, the majority also felt positively about internet reliability in the workplace, with 40.8% agreeing and 32.2% strongly agreeing that it met their needs. Additionally, 53.1% agreed that they have secure access to digital tools remotely, which suggests a strong focus on digital security and remote resource access by the company.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Skill Development Initiatives

Items	Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
1.	I feel that the training provided has improved my performance at work.	6.6%	3.8%	2.4%	37%	51.2%
2.	Access to online learning platforms for skill development has impact on company performance.	9%	8.5%	4.3%	41.2%	39.8%
3.	I am satisfied with the leadership development opportunities offered.	8.1%	9%	3.3%	38.4%	41.2%

Table 3 opined that regarding skill development initiatives, the data indicate a generally favorable reception. A total of 51.2% strongly agreed that training initiatives improved work

performance, with another 37% agreeing. Similarly, online learning platforms received positive feedback, with 41.2% strongly agreeing and 41.2% agreeing on their positive impact on company performance. Leadership development opportunities had slightly lower ratings, with 38.4% strongly agreeing and 41.2% agreeing, though a small portion (9%) disagreed or were neutral, suggesting there may be room for improvement in leadership development.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics on Idea Conversion

Items	Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
1.	There are structured processes for evaluating new ideas within my team.	8.5%	9%	4.3%	39.8%	35%
2.	I am given resources (time, funding, support) to develop my ideas into actionable projects.	8.5%	7.1%	0.9%	48.3%	36.6%
3.	My organization has a transparent process for converting ideas into projects.	9%	8.1%	3.3%	41.2%	38.4%

Table 4 data showed that while many respondents feel that there are processes for evaluating ideas, there is still room to increase transparency and resource allocation for idea conversion. Around 48.3% agreed that they receive resources to develop their ideas, and 36.6% strongly agreed. However, 9% disagreed on the availability of structured evaluation processes, and 8.5% were dissatisfied with the transparency of the idea-to-project conversion process. This indicates that while a majority feel positively about these processes, a subset of employees feels that resource availability and transparency could be further improved to enhance idea conversion.

The following hypotheses were tested for this study; H₀₁: Access to technology has no significant effect on idea conversion rate at PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. H₀₂: Digital infrastructure has no significant effect on idea conversion rate at PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. H₀₃: Skills development initiatives has no significant effect on idea conversion rate at PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc.

Table 1. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.764 ^a	.584	.579	.799

a. Predictors: (Constant), Skill development initiatives, Access to technology, Digital Infrastructure

A positive linear relationship between the independent variable, access technology, digital infrastructure and skill development initiatives, and the dependent variable, idea conversion rates, is indicated by the correlation coefficient (R = 0.764) in Table 2's model

summary. Furthermore, it shows an R^2 value of 0.584, meaning that when all variables are taken into account at once, this model can predict 58.4% of the variance in idea conversion rates. Stated differently, the model's predictors account for 58.4% of the variability of idea conversion rates, with the remaining 41.6% being impacted by characteristics not included in the study.

Table 2. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	214.369	3	71.456	112.021	.000 ^b
	Residual	152.454	239	.638		
	Total	366.823	242			

a. Dependent Variable: Idea conversion rate

b. Predictors: (Constant), Skill development initiatives, Access to technology, Digital Infrastructure

The table above displays a significance value of 0.000, less than 0.05. This result indicates that the model is statistically significant in predicting access technology, digital infrastructure, skill development initiatives, and idea conversion rates. The F-statistic suggests that the overall regression model is highly statistically substantial regarding how well it fits the data. Its calculated F-value of 112.021 surpasses the critical F-value at the 5% significance level of 3.04. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. In conclusion, this study establishes a significant positive relationship between access technology, digital infrastructure, skill development initiatives and idea conversion rates in PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc.

Table 3. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.487	.219		2.220	.027
	Access to technology	-.156	.061	-.147	-2.568	.011
	Digital Infrastructure	.451	.082	.390	5.485	.000
	Skill development initiatives	.574	.074	.519	7.722	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Idea conversion rate

Table 4 shows the contribution of the predictor on the dependent variable. As per the regression equation derived, when keeping access to technology, digital infrastructure and skill development initiatives constant at zero, the expected idea conversion rate is .487. Furthermore, the data analysis indicates that for each unit increase in access technology, there is a decrease of -.156 in idea conversion rates. In contrast, for each unit increase in digital infrastructure and skill development initiatives, there is an increase of .451 and .574 in idea conversion rates, in

line with a t-value of 2.220. At a 5% confidence level, this impact is statistically significant for idea conversion rates. Consequently, the analysis confirms a strong and positive correlation between management policies to boost creativity and innovation in multinational organisations, rejecting all the null hypotheses.

The first hypothesis implies that access to technology is a valuable resource, and the analysis finds that an increase in access to technology alone has a negative impact on idea conversion rates. This result aligns with Faggio and Silva (2014). The second hypothesis showed a positive coefficient for digital and idea conversion rates. This ties in with the resource-based view, as the availability of digital infrastructure supports the organisation's ability to leverage other resources to generate innovations. The result aligns with the findings of Bashir (2023), Hjort and Poulsen (2019), and Tian & Lu (2023). Hypothesis three showed that Skill development initiatives have the highest positive impact on idea conversion rates with a coefficient of 0.574. From a resource-based view perspective, human capital is one of the most critical resources. Developing employees' skills enhances the ability to innovate, adapt, and utilise technology effectively. Organisations will improve innovation by implementing policies focusing on developing infrastructure and enhancing employee skills. This finding is aligned with previous research like Sobakinova et al. (2020), Valerio et al. (2014), and Bughin (2018).

Implication of Findings. The resource-based view has evolved from the theoretical implication perspective to stress the role of complementary assets such as digital support and human resources in developing innovation. This finding implies that technology hurts innovation when it is just made available. Enhancing human capital as a valuable resource is an active participant in innovation. It is also seen as a critical resource in line with the theoretical assumptions stating that innovation is more probable when an organisation invests in building employees' skills and encouraging training. Looking at the practical implications, technology and talent are the two factors that define a company's digital readiness to foster innovation, and they should be invested in for multinational organisations to achieve better results. In this case, organisations can achieve high results in idea implementation rates and unlock full innovation capacities by emphasising the proper infrastructure and practising recurrent training. It also points out that integrating technology with human resources is also important because the efficiency of the technology largely depends on other resources, especially human resources. Management policies should thus seek to optimise the complementary of the different resources to create a resource that encourages innovation regarding skills, infrastructure and technology.

Pro-technology approaches and substituting technology for focused capacity development to support innovation should be avoided.

CONCLUSION

The research objectives were met effectively, providing insights into the complex relationship between access technology, digital infrastructure, and skills development initiatives on idea conversion rates. After extensive investigation and analysis, conclusions were reached. Most importantly, it is clear that access technology, digital infrastructure, skills development initiatives, and idea conversion rates significantly impact PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc positively and foster creativity and innovation. This supportive environment results in increased job satisfaction and high employee retention rates. Such organizations are better positioned to attract the best talent and maintain a competitive advantage in their respective industries. However, organizations with inflexible or outdated standards may inadvertently limit the creative and innovative potential of their workforce. The study also looked at the relationship between multinational companies' skills development initiatives and management practices. These rules encourage the creation of innovative concepts and products while creating an environment that attracts and retains the best people, thereby enhancing the company's position in the market.

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