WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT, JOB STRESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AS PREDICTORS OF EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY AMONG LECTURERS IN UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the predictive roles of work-family conflict, job stress, and perceived organizational support on employee creativity among lecturers at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Social exchange theory among other theories guided the study. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, involving a sample of 419 lecturers was determined by Krejcie and Morgan formula and selected through stratified random sampling across various faculties. Participants age ranging from 30 to 69 years ($\bar{x}$ = 50.70; SD = 9.83). Standardized instruments were utilized to measure work-family conflict (α = .90), job stress (α = .93), organizational support (α = .82), and employee creativity (α = 95). Five hypotheses were tested using linear and multiple regression analysis. Result showed that work-family conflict ($\square$ = -.164; t = -3.662, p < .01) and job stress ($\square$ = -.120; t = -2.671, p < .05) are significant negative predictors of employee creativity, indicating that increased conflict and stress levels correspond to decreased creative performance. Contrarily, perceived organizational support ($\square$ = .343; t = 7.465, p < .01) appeared as a positive predictor, suggesting that supportive institutional environments enhance lecturers' creative capacities. In conclusion, there is a significant prediction of work-family conflict, job stress, and perceived organizational support on employee creativity. The study recommended that universities management should implement policies that alleviate work-family conflict and job-related stress while promoting a supportive organizational culture.
Keywords: Work-family conflict, Job stress, Perceived organizational support, Employee creativity, Lecturers of University of Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria.

Introduction

Every organization seeks to record high level of creativity and overall performance and there are different factors that are put into consideration in ensuring that an organization remains competitive in the industry. One of the various organizational outcomes that points to the competitiveness and overall performance of an organization is employee creativity. Employee creativity is very important in enhancing organizational productivity and efficiency and helping organizations to survive and thrive in the face of today's dramatically changing environment. A major challenge that is confronting managers in the 21st century is how to use the potential capabilities of employees to enhance and accelerate organizational innovation. Encouraging employees to be creative or motivating them to engage in creative thinking will affect work environment in a way that employees will see organization as supportive of creativity and will engage in such behavior.

To achieve this goal, employees can use their intellectual capabilities to activate positive organizational changes by using their knowledge and creativity to empower such changes (Alirezaei & Tavalaei, 2008). Creativity research has a long history in psychology, focusing on individual differences in personality, cognitive abilities, and problem-solving styles. However, recent theoretical and empirical work has looked at creativity as something the brain does naturally that is, creativity is an adaptive feature of normal cognitive functioning that evolved to aid problem solving under conditions of uncertainty.

Employee creativity research was in its infancy until recently, with the majority of earlier studies concentrating on organizational innovation. In the new century, employee creativity started to draw more attention (Wang et al., 2022). Employees who are creative at workplace generate ideas that benefit the organization (El-Kassar et al., 2022). Employee creativity may effectively enhance organization development as the key driver of innovation within the organization and because creativity fosters innovation, growth, and competitiveness, most organizations invest heavily in finding effective ways to encourage employee creativity (Wang et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2020). The unique ways in which employees handle their assigned jobs and the variety in performing their jobs have always had a profound effect on organizations, managers, and employees. It not only highlighted the unique aspects of human behaviour, but also influenced productivity, therefore, the examination of creative behaviour through such individual factors holds interest for both scholars and practitioners.

The creativity of employees is an important aspect of solving employee problems because it encourages the solution to current problems (Sourchi & Liao, 2015). One of the basic human needs is creativity, which is the need for self-realization (self-actualization) and is the greatest human need (Munandar & Fuady, 2017). In the current competitive world, these studies will investigate the views of individuals in organizations or manufacturing companies about the variables that help promote the imagination of the representative of organizations in their work environment. Recent studies have attempted to determine what factors in the business environment affect creative output.

Employee creativity is very important because it is a competitive advantage that institutions need. In order for employee creativity in the tertiary institution lecturers to increase, encouragement from the management is needed by implementing organizational support. The support is needed to influence, motivate and invite individuals within the institution to contribute to shaping creative behaviour. Research suggests that employee creativity is influenced by several factors including work-family conflict, job stress and organizational support amongst others. Though, there has been considerable research on employee creativity via psychological, organizational, and work factors in isolation, however, the question remains: how do these factors work collectively to contribute to employee creativity? One of the objectives of every organization is to increase efficiency and effective productivity through its committed and satisfied employees but this has not always been easy to realize especially where both couple work in order to earn income for their livelihood. Balancing work and family demands require people to divide their time and energy between these two vital and demanding spheres.

Work-Family Conflict is a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Work-family conflict occurs when demands from work and family are mutually incompatible to some degrees, hence workfamily conflict occurs when demand from one role affects one's ability to meet the demands associated with another role in another domain (Greenhaus et al., 1985; Jaga et al., 2013). Work-family conflict occurs when one is forced to handle two different and incompatible roles at the same time. Work-family conflict is an internal role that arises because of pressure from work and family. Prolonged conflict, not only can reduce performance, but can cause stress. Stress occurs because prolonged conflict causes physical and psychological imbalance, as a form of reaction to pressure whose intensity is too high.

Work-Family Conflict experienced by employees can reduce their performance where an employee fails to fulfil multiple roles because work often interferes with the family or, on the contrary, the family interferes with work so that it is not easy for employees to divide their time between the two roles. Employees often take a break beyond the normal break time because they have to take care of their family, so they work less time than they should. For instance, there may be conflict when a person finds it hard to strike a balance between her role as a mother and her role as an employee especially when her child's demands for time and attention distracts her from fulfilling the role for which she is employed. For a working mother, there could be conflict when she returns to work after maternity leave and management did not give her time off during the day to pump milk or breastfeed. This can cause difficulty in meeting both role expectations fully.

Research also shows that studying the work-family relationship is not relegated only to those who are couples, but also to those who are living in traditional nuclear family structures also. For example, an employee who is unmarried, or does not have a family or children, may also be subject to conflict between the work and family or personal domain due to the number of recent changes in the business environment and family/life roles.

The success of an organization in achieving its goals is highly dependent on its human resources or employees in carrying out the assigned tasks. If the tasks performed are not completed within the allotted time, this will create new jobs thereby, increasing the workload of employees. Workloads are needed to help individuals improve their performance, but they must be watched out for when workloads reach optimal or moderate levels. Excessive workload will have a negative impact and it can cause fatigue, both physically and mentally. If the ability of workers is higher than the demands of the task, they will become bored. Excessive workload will cause job stress and affect performance. Job stress is an objective event, where everyone experiences stress differently. Job stress is a condition that arises from human interaction with work (task demands), relationships between colleagues, and leadership attitudes and is characterized by humans as human changes that force them to deviate from their normal functions.

Organizational support is related to work-family conflict and job stress. Various supports received by workers in the form of family-friendly policies and supportive work-family culture will enable workers experiencing conflict between their work and family roles to adjust. When work and family life are balanced, then workers will also be satisfied and committed to their jobs. Organizational support is viewed as global perceptions about the extent to which an organization is supportive of an employee's work-family balance (Allen, 2001). Organizational-related work support embraces family-friendly policies and supportive organizational culture which is necessary to enable workers to become committed and satisfied with their jobs.

Organizational support includes every support received from the employer as policies or programs developed to help accommodate the needs of employees in the form of flexibility in work schedules, on-site child care, family leave, maternity leave provisions, lactation room and other breastfeeding support and child care support (Dixon & Bruening, 2005). Organizations must provide a conducive work environment for employees to remain engaged, resourceful, and health (Stansfeld & Candy, 2006). The creative behaviour of employees remains at the heart of any performance initiative. It includes generating novel solutions to the emerging problems as well as exploring unique ways to improve routine tasks.

Based on the background description, this study aims to analyse and explain the effect of 1) work-family conflict on employee creativity, 2) job stress on employee creativity and 3) organizational support on employee creativity. Indisputably, tertiary educational institutions are vital to the growth and development of any country, the performance of these institutions largely depends on the employees. Regrettably, the creativity of employees in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria have been neglected and relegated to the background over the years, despite having many public universities in Nigeria. Also, the Nigerian University system statistical digests of 2017, universities in Nigeria have over 189,258 employees among which 9,459 are professors yet the country is still described as a technologically backward country, suggesting that creativity and innovation had been greatly undermined in tertiary institutions (Mohamed, 2020).

This raises the question as to whether the importance of employees' creativity is embedded in tertiary institutions of Nigeria, and whether the structure and programs as well as policies area adequate. Among the key challenges is if the leadership of these tertiary institutions understand and promote creativity of their employees, despite accumulating significant professional experience on management of tertiary institutions.

Despite the recognition of the benefits of creativity for individuals and their personal achievement as well as for society, with the exception of isolated initiatives in some countries, the development of creativity is not a priority in education. Along the same line, an article published in The Economist, in which it is pointed out that "the biggest challenge facing organizations today is not finding or hiring cheap workers, but rather hiring individuals with brainpower (both natural and trained) and especially the ability to think creatively" (Gilson, 2008). These examples suggest that creativity has often been neglected in educational systems.

The importance of creativity in teaching and learning processes has been widely underestimated in the context of higher education, since higher education institutions tend to give more value to critical thinking (Ucar et al., 2021). In addition, Jackson calls attention to the limited knowledge of creative approaches to teaching by many university faculties, who are also unfamiliar with the literature on how to foster creativity in educational settings.

The amount of formality, complexity, and concentration of structure inside an organization may elicit feelings of contentment or frustration among employees. The attainment of heightened employee creativity is greatly contingent upon the organizational structure. The main challenge faced by every organizational structure striving for success is the coordination of activities among a varied set of individuals. The present organizational structure of tertiary institutions has numerous impacts on employees' capacity for innovative thinking.

Based on the existing data, it is evident that workers have encountered barriers to progress, including isolation and confinement to monotonous and mundane tasks. Furthermore, employees are rarely given opportunities to go beyond their current responsibilities, leading to burnout and negatively affecting performance and creativity. Within the tertiary institution, several aspects of the current structure impede innovation and creativity, reduce teamwork and cooperation, diminish job satisfaction and advancement opportunities, lower dedication and productivity, and create a sense of being unwanted and unstable among employees within the organization.

This encompasses challenges related to the process of making decisions, the act of accepting something, and the sense of responsibility and control over something. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with the existing organizational support in tertiary institutions and this is primarily due to problems such as inefficient management and coordination, a lack of authority for employees to make immediate decisions, unequal distribution of workloads, rotational work assignments, ambiguous roles and communication channels, slow decision-making processes that may result in conflicts, and other related issues.

Generally, university lecturers spend a significant amount of time interacting with their students which make them spend longer time at work and little time with their family and also making them suffer from stress. When employees are under stress, they are not using their skills in the proper way as they are mentally under pressure which affects productivity at work. Many workers report that inability to explore their creativity interferes with their productivity at work. A lot of universities do not allow their employees use their creative skills as they do not give room for them to have freedom, independence and use their discretion to carry out tasks of the job.

With the stiff competition in the tertiary institutions, as well as the increase in the use of technology over the last decade, it is important for organizations to have creative employees that can impact and add value, as well as growth, to the organization. Lack of employee creativity can affect many areas of workers' lives, their attitude to work, job completion time, innovation and overall performance at work.

To date, there has been minimal research done regarding the creativity of employees in organizations, especially in tertiary institutions, as most of them have been conducted to investigate the determinants of employee performance. In recent decades, this issue aroused interest in Nigeria as well, and unfortunately, it is observed that there is not enough research made in Nigerian universities about employee creativity. However, investigating the determinants of employee creativity is important as it increases understanding of the factors associated with employee creativity, especially among lecturers in tertiary institutions.

Hypotheses

The study sets out to examine how work-family conflict, job stress and organizational support predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State. It is based on this topic that the following hypotheses were generated:

- Work-family conflict will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

- Job stress will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

- Organizational support will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

- Demographic factors (age, gender, marital status) will jointly and independently significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

- Work-family conflict, job stress and organizational support will jointly and independently significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design to be adopted for this study is cross-sectional survey. In this study, the independent variables are work-family conflict, job stress and organizational support while the dependent variable is employee creativity.

Population of the Study

Population means the totality of individuals from which the sample is drawn. In this study, the population comprised of lecturers in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State. University of Ibadan was used for this research because it has a long-standing commitment to research and also attracts and retains exceptional faculty members who are experts in their fields. It is also the first university in Nigeria, established in the year 1948, and has a broad range of academic programmes across its 17 faculties (which include: arts, science, basic medical sciences, etc.), 205 departments and over 40,000 students.

Table 1: List of Lecturers for the Study

S/N	LEVEL	No.
1	Assistant Lecturer	77
2	Lecturer I	216
3	Lecturer II	197
4	Senior Lecturer	380
5	Reader	179
6	Professor	566
	Total	**1615**

Source: Human Resource & Development, Academic Staff, U.I. (2024)

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study participants cut across all lecturers in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, and all levels of staff (Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers I & II, Senior Lecturers, Readers, and Professors) were involved to ensure accuracy. Stratified random sampling technique was utilized for this study in the selection of participants. Selection of participants was based on population stratification based on their levels: Assistant Lecturer, Lecturers I & II, Senior Lecturer, Reader, and Professor. Participants were distributed equally into all the strata, and this enabled the researcher to capture key population characteristics in the study sample. Stratified random sampling gives fewer error margins when compared with an outright simple random sampling technique. The instruments were then distributed to individuals who represented the population according to their specific traits (strata). The sample size was drawn from the sampling frame (see table 1) using the sample determination for a finite population, that is, Krejcie and Morgan 1970 formula, because the study cannot use the entire population. The formula is shown below:

$$S = \frac{X2NP(1-P)}{d2(N-1)+X2P(1-P)}$$

Where:

S = required sample size

X^2 = Chi-square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom (1.96 for 95% confidence level)

N = the population size (1615)

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.5)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

$$S = \frac{(1.96)21615 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)2(1615-1) + (1.96)2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{(3.8416)1615 \times 0.5(0.5)}{(0.0025)(1614) + (3.8416) \times 0.5(0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{6204.18 \times 0.25}{(4.035) + (3.8416) \times 0.25}$$

$$S = \frac{1551.05}{4.035 + 0.9604}$$

$$S = \frac{1551.05}{4.9954}$$

S = 310.5 ≈ 311

To enhance the response rate 30%, 100 of the sample were added to the computed sample size. The addition of 100 samples was to address attrition and the sample size for the research were 411, therefore, 411 copies of questionnaire were administered to the lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, as presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

S/N	Level	No.	Calculation	Proportion to each Level
1	Assistant Lecturer	77	77/1615 x 411	20
2	Lecturer I	216	216/1615 x 411	55
3	Lecturer II	197	197/1615 x 411	50
4	Senior Lecturer	380	380/1615 x 411	97
5	Reader	179	179/1615 x 411	45
6	Professor	566	566/1615 x 411	144
	Total	**1615**		**411**

Source: Researcher's Computation (2024)

Research Instruments

Data collection is a basis for acquiring data and it involves the gathering of relevant and important data used for conducting a particular research work. Data can be collected in two ways, which are; primary data and secondary data. Primary data was used for gathering data in the research work. The questionnaire research instrument was used in the research work to gather information because it helps to access a large number of respondents at a minimal cost. The questionnaire comprised of 5 different sections; Section A-E

Section A: Demographic Information
This section contains all the demographic information the respondents, such as; Age, Gender, Marital Status, Job Grade and Years of Working Experience.

Section B: Employee Creativity
The Employee Creativity Measure was developed by Tierney, Farmer, & Graen in the year 1999 for use in a study that used data from R&D employees of a large chemical company to test a multidomain, interactionist creativity model of employee characteristics, leader characteristics, and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) (Tierney et al., 1999). Supervisor ratings of employee creativity were assessed using the Employee Creativity Measure. This instrument consists of nine items. Four items were adapted from an existing self-report instrument and the remaining items were based on a literature review and results of a pilot study. The items are rated on a six-point scale, and higher scores indicate higher levels of creativity. Reliability analysis of this instrument yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .95. Discriminant validity was examined via SEM of a model that included this instrument and measures of LMX, cognitive style, and intrinsic motivation.

Section C: Work-family conflict
The Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict Scale (WFC & FWC Scale) is a questionnaire commonly used to assess conflicts that arise when required time devotion and strain for work obligations interfere with family responsibilities (work-family conflict) and conflicts that arise when family responsibilities interfere with work responsibilities (family work conflict). Work-family conflict was measured using the Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFC). The Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFC) was developed and validated by Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian in the year 1996. Confirmatory factor analyses based on data from three different United States samples show that two-factor models had satisfactory fit indices (comparative fit index (CFI) >0.93; Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) >0.91). Furthermore, the scales had acceptable internal consistencies (Cronbach's alphas >0.83) (Netemeyer et al., 1996). The WFC scale was calculated by summing all the 1 to 7 responses for the five items to give a scale ranging from 5 to 35. It has 5 items with a Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Section D: Job Stress
Job Stress measured using the Job Stress Scale. This measure (Job Stress Scale) was developed by Parker and Decotiis in the year 1983. The measure uses 13 items to measure job stress along two dimensions. One dimension is time stress (feelings of being under constant pressure) and the second dimension is anxiety (job-related feelings of anxiety) (Parker & Decotiis, 1986). Responses are obtained using a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 = *strong disagreement* and 5 = *strong agreement* with the following statements. Coefficient alpha values ranged from .71 to

.82. Job stress was negatively correlated with organizational commitment and job satisfaction and positively correlated with role ambiguity and overload (Jamal & Baba, 1992).

Section E: Organizational support

Organizational support measured using the Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POS). The Perceived Organizational Support Scale, developed by Eisenberger et al. in 1986, describes employee perceptions about the extent to which an organization is willing to reward greater efforts by the employee because the organization values the employee's contribution and cares about his or her well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The measure includes eight items that measure an employee's perceptions of the degree to which the organization values the worker's contributions and nine items about actions that the organization might take that would affect the wellbeing of the employee. Responses are obtained on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree.* Coefficient alpha values ranged from .74 to .95. Perceived organizational support correlated positively with overall job satisfaction, organizational commitment, direct and indirect control at work, job discretion, interpersonal helping and affective attachment to the organization, pay/promotion expectancies, approval/recognition expectancies, and employee performance ratings.

Data Analysis

A well-structured questionnaire constructed using already existing scales with all their psychometric properties in place was used to get information from the respondents who were selected using the stratified sampling technique. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized for data analysis. Demographic variables were analysed using descriptive statistics. Hypotheses were tested using appropriate inferential statistics.

Results
Table 3: Correlational Matrix

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	50.70	9.83	-						
2. Gender	1.49	.50	-.128**	-					
3. Years of working experience	15.42	8.16	.917**	-.079	-				
4. Work-family conflict	19.91	8.59	.245**	-.052	.283**	-			
5. Job stress	33.42	12.54	.346**	-.018	.319**	.112*	-		
6. Organisational support	56.64	14.52	-.552**	.104*	-.575**	-.219**	-.235**	-	
7. Employee creativity	31.34	14.33	-.593**	-.034	-.656**	-.253**	-.219**	.407**	-

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2tailed).

The results of the zero-order correlation in Table 3 show that employee creativity has a significant negative relationship with work-family conflict (r = -.253, P < .01), meaning that high employee creativity is associated with low work-family conflict. There is a significant negative relationship between employee creativity and job stress (r = -.219, P < .01), meaning that high employee creativity is associated with low job stress. There is a significant positive relationship between employee creativity and organizational support (r = .407, P < .01), meaning that high employee creativity is associated with high organizational support. There is a significant very weak positive relationship between job stress and organizational support (r = .112, P < .05).

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one stated that work-family conflict will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State was analysed using linear regression analysis as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of linear regression analysis showing prediction of Work-family conflict on employee creativity

Model	SS	df	MS	R^2	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5492.634	1	5492.634	.064	28.517	.000[b]
Residual	80317.562	417	192.608			
Total	85810.196	418				

The results in Table 4 show that there is a significant prediction of work-family conflict on employee creativity (R^2 = .064; F (1,418) = 28.52; p < .01), this implies that work-family conflict accounted for 6.4% variance on employee creativity, other factors not captured in the model accounted for a larger part of employee creativity, hypothesis one is therefore confirmed.

Hypothesis two stated that job stress will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State was analysed using linear regression analysis as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of linear regression analysis showing prediction of Job stress on employee creativity

Model	SS	df	MS	R^2	F	Sig.
1 Regression	4126.886	1	4126.886	.048	21.068	.000[b]
Residual	81683.310	417	195.883			
Total	85810.196	418				

The results in Table 5 show that there is a significant prediction of job stress on employee creativity (R^2 = .048; F (1,418) = 21.07; p < .01), this implies that job stress accounted for 4.8% variance in employee creativity, other factors not captured in the model accounted for a larger part of employee creativity, hypothesis two is therefore confirmed.

Hypothesis three stated that organizational support will significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, was analysed using linear regression analysis as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of linear regression analysis showing prediction of organizational support on employee creativity

Model		SS	df	MS	R^2	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14211.935	1	14211.935	.166	82.773	.000^b
Residual		71598.261	417	171.698			
	Total	85810.196	418				

The results in Table 4.2.3 show that there is a significant prediction of organizational support on employee creativity (R^2 = .166; F (1,418) = 82.77; p < .01), this implies that organizational support accounted for 16.6% variance in employee creativity, other factors not captured in the model accounted for a larger part of employee creativity, hypothesis three is therefore confirmed.

Hypothesis four stated that demographic factors (age, gender, years of working experience) will jointly and independently significantly predict employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State was analysed using multiple regression analysis as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing prediction of age, gender, and years of working experience on employee creativity

Predictors	β	t	P	R	R^2	F	P
Age	.022	.239	> .05				
Gender	-.085	-2.274	< .05	.662	.438	107.869	<.01
Years of working experience	-.683	-7.391	< .01				

The results in Table 7 reveal that there is a significant joint prediction of age, gender, and years of working experience on employee creativity (R^2 = .438; F (3, 415) = 107.87; p < .01), this implies that age, gender, and years of working experience accounted for 43.8% variance on employee creativity. Also, gender (β = -.085; t = -2.274, p < .05) and years of working experience (β = -.683; t = -7.391, p < .01) have significant independent prediction on employee creativity, however, age (β = .022; t =.239, p > .05) has no significant prediction on employee creativity. Hypothesis four is confirmed.

Hypothesis five stated that work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational support will have a significant joint and independent prediction on employee creativity among lecturers in University of Ibadan, Oyo State was analysed using multiple regression analysis. The result is presented in Table 8.

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Table 8: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational support on employee creativity

Predictors	β	t	P	R	R^2	F	P
Work-family conflict	-.164	-3.662	< .01				
Job stress	-.120	-2.671	< .05	.455	.207	36.196	<.01
Organisational support	.343	7.465	< .01				

The results in Table 8 reveal that there is a significant joint prediction of work-family conflict, job stress and organizational support on employee creativity (R^2 = .207; F (3, 415) = 36.196; p < .01), this implies that work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational support accounted for 20.7% variance on employee creativity. Also, work-family conflict (β = -.164; t = -3.662, p < .01), job stress (β = -.120; t = -2.671, p < .05), and organizational support (β = .343; t = 7.465, p < .01) have significant independent prediction on employee creativity. Hypothesis five is confirmed.

Discussion

Based on the first hypothesis, employee creativity is negatively predicted by work-family conflict. The study's conclusions confirmed the notion that employee creativity is significantly predicted by work-family conflict. This contradicts the results of a study, which suggested that employee creativity is positively impacted by work-family conflict (Naseem, 2017). Family members' aspirations and desires may not align with any characteristics that are valued in the workplace. Therefore, large levels of irritation are likely to result from employees' incapacity to attend to family matters on the job.

Therefore, stressful experiences at work are caused by employees' aggravation at not being able to take care of their families due to their work role and their need to perform surface acting to convey the emotions that consumers desire to feel. For example, spouses who are so consumed by their work to the detriment of their families will be viewed negatively by society. Women who excelled in their careers but were unable to support their families were criticized, particularly in light of Nigerian culture's patriarchal orientation, particularly Yoruba culture.

In the study, work-family conflict is exacerbated when an individual's self-concept is based on their job and family obligations and when there are obvious negative repercussions for failing to fulfil role expectations (Wang et al., 2022). To the degree that cultural orientation emphasizes the importance of the family as a component of an individual's identity and is appreciated when workers notice that their work is demanding and takes up time and energy needed to provide for their families, these workers may feel less responsible, which could be interpreted as a danger to their status and identity. Employees who devote their time and energy to family activities are likely to experience psychological stress, which may interfere with their ability to carry out their job duties.

The findings of the second hypothesis established that job stress significantly predicts employee creativity, the results indicate that stress has a negative impact on employee creativity. Employees in the educational industry, particularly at universities, must regularly deal with

students; if they are under stress, this could negatively impact their degree of creativity. Stress boosts creativity, according to the findings, which also supported the idea that more creative people are strengthened when they experience unpleasant emotions, which in turn have good effects (Ferreira et al., 2019).

The findings further support research showing that challenging stressors foster creativity (Vatankhah et al., 2017). Additionally, the study found that employee creativity is negatively predicted by job stress. This runs counter to another study, which found no connection between stress and worker creativity (Reiter-Palmon et al., 2019). The methodological flaw in the study, which used an experimental stress induction, may be partially to blame for the observed discrepancy between these investigations (Reiter-Palmon et al., 2019). There was a difference between the subjects' assessment of their stress levels and the experts' assessment of the subjects' stress levels based on the physiological signals used in their study.

The findings of the third hypothesis revealed that organizational support has a significant prediction on employee creativity. This is in line with some recent empirical research that found a strong and positive correlation between employee creativity and perceived organisational support (Duan et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2016). Nonetheless, there is ongoing discussion over how perceived organisational support affects employee creativity[8]. According to some recent research, there is no meaningful connection between individual creativity and perceived organizational support (Zaitouni, & Ouakouak, 2018). According to another study, supportive management may have varying effects on individual variances in personality and cognition (Shalley & Gilson, 2004).

Further study of the significance of individual differences in personality, temperament, comprehension, and abilities in creativity is necessary to explain these contradictory findings. Factors in the organization's internal environment may provide further context for contradictory findings. Organisational cultures may vary, for instance, in their ability to foster strong employee trust and support from teammates and coworkers (Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2018). Employee behaviours are less likely to be encouraged if the management style or organizational culture fosters low levels of individual job autonomy and does not implement adequate point-of-sale (POS) (Pinnington, & Haslop, 1995; Suifan et al., 2018). Additionally, organizational support is essential in promoting creative individual service behaviours and giving managers ideas on how to improve creative employee activity (Su et al., 2020). The earlier study suggests that workers who receive this kind of organizational support are likely to be highly motivated and engaged in creative endeavours (Su et al., 2020).

The fourth hypothesis suggested that demographic factors were the predictors of employee creativity. This shows that an employee's age, gender, and working experience have a significant joint influence on employee creativity. This suggests that an employee's age, gender, and overall job experience are all related to their level of originality. However, aging alone does not significantly affect employee inventiveness on its own. The current study's conclusion of a nonsignificant association between employees' age and creativity level confirms the findings of another study, which found no correlation between age and creativity (Eder & Sawyer, 2007)

In the same line of reasoning, a laboratory experiment was carried out on how young and old employees perceived the creativity of a team (Chan et al., 2013). They found no discernible

differences in the individual traits assigned to the four characters on the teams, supporting the notion that employees' creative behaviour is age-neutral. This discovery, however, conflicts with another conclusion (Weiliang, 2011). The belief that older workers may be less productive and efficient due to diminishing strength as they age may have a negative impact on age diversity and employee performance (Schlick et al., 2013). However, because of their wealth of knowledge and experience accumulated over the years, older workers are also thought to perform at a better level.

Additionally, younger workers in the current generation are more receptive to technology and innovative methods of doing their jobs swiftly and readily, but older workers may be less productive due to aging-related weaknesses. Additionally, the organization's age variety enables the younger, tech-savvy staff to impart their technical skills to the more senior members of the company. On the other side, the older employees teach the younger employees the business standards and operational procedures that support the organization's performance and productivity.

The fifth hypothesis revealed that work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational support have significant joint and independent predictions on employee creativity. Different authors and several earlier investigations are in agreement with this (Aftab & Javeed, 2012; Ahlam & Hassan, 2012; Al-Khasawneh, & Futa, 2013). The results of other studies discovered that stress was negatively associated with creative task performance and that reported stress partially mediated the relationship between participants' wisdom and their performance on the creative task, which is also supported by this study (Avey et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the results are consistent with other research conducted, which also found that while positive activating moods (like happiness) increase employee creativity more than positive deactivating moods (like relaxation), negative activating moods (like sadness) did not correlate with employee creativity, while negative activating moods (like fear and anxiety did (Reiter-Palmon et al., 2019). Once more, the study supports its findings by showing that a heavy workload and household responsibilities led to high levels of tiredness, which had a detrimental effect on performance (Gandi et al., 2011). It has been discovered that creative people exhibit high levels of positive energy and are more receptive to new experiences. According to research, people are more likely to generate original ideas when they are in a joyful mood as opposed to when they are in a neutral or negative one (Gandi et al., 2011). Good emotions have been shown to have a good impact on workers' social and cognitive performance, as well as the ability to make decisions more effectively and creatively when faced with challenging tasks.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance employee creativity:

i.   Organizations should implement flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flexible scheduling, to help employees manage work-family conflict effectively.
ii. Employers should introduce stress management interventions, including wellness programs, mindfulness training, and counseling services, to reduce job stress among employees.

iii.   Organizations should foster a supportive work culture by providing mentorship, career development opportunities, and adequate resources to aid employee creativity.

iv.   Training for managers and supervisors should focus on supportive leadership practices that encourage open communication, psychological safety, and recognition of creative efforts.

v.   Companies should establish EAPs that offer professional guidance to employees dealing with personal and work-related stressors.

vi.   Organizations should integrate policies that promote innovation, such as idea-sharing platforms, hackathons, and incentives for creative contributions.

vii.   Periodic evaluations should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of work-life balance policies, stress reduction programs, and organizational support initiatives in enhancing employee creativity.

The findings from this study provide a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the intricate prediction of work-family conflict, job stress, and organizational support on employee creativity. Employee creativity is an essential component of organizational success, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries, where innovation drives growth. The study confirms that work-family conflict and job stress negatively impact employee creativity, while organizational support plays a significant positive role. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the detrimental effects of stressors on cognitive flexibility and innovative thinking.

The results indicate that these variables jointly predict employee creativity. This underscores the importance of workplace dynamics in shaping employees' creative capacities, thereby extending theoretical perspectives on organizational behavior, stress management, and employee innovation. The findings of this study highlight the necessity for organizations to proactively address work-family conflict and job stress to foster creativity among employees. Given that work-family conflict and job stress negatively influence employee creativity, organizations should consider implementing policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements, family-friendly policies, and stress management programs. Additionally, the strong positive effect of organizational support on creativity suggests that organizations that invest in supportive workplace environments can significantly enhance employee creativity.

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