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IDENTIFYING AND CREATING SERVICE QUALITY PROBLEMS IN CONSTRUCTION FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract

This study was on identifying and creating service quality problems in construction firms in Port Harcourt. The study aim is to identify and creating service quality problems in construction firms in Port Harcourt. The study adopted cross-sectional survey method. The population comprised of 40 selected construction firms in Rivers State. One hundred and twenty (120) copies of questionnaires were distributed; one hundred and nineteen (119) copies were fit for analysis. Using a five point scaled questionnaire, data was collected and analyzed via Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient, with the aid of SPSS version 23.0. The findings of the study showed that service quality through continuous improvement and employee training significantly relates with access to finance and economic recession. Based on the findings, the study, recommended that the management should always get important feedback from her customers in respect to their service delivery quality. The management should as well maintain the quality service delivery which will contribute immensely to the growth of the firm.

Keywords:

Service Quality, Continuous Improvement, Employee Training, Access to Finance, Economic Recession, Construction Firms, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

1.0 Introduction

Construction is one of the largest individual contributors to GDP in every nation. The construction industry in Nigeria is recovering from the worst recession in a generation. As the industry emerges from the recession, it must do so with a new vision toward identifying and managing the quality service problems that have plagued the industry for decades. The staggering unemployment levels at double the national average have led to an exodus of workers in design and construction to seek opportunities in other industries. The result is a growing concern about the erosion of experience, skills and quality. The construction industry is unique because it incorporates services of different stakeholders at different project phases in its bid to deliver the project successfully. The delivery activities involve different stakeholders, various processes, different phases and stages of work. These stakeholders are the users' group, the client group, the contracting group, the supply chain group and the project management group (Chinny, 2007). The contracting group consists of the main contractors, sub-contractors and specialist contractors. The supply chain group consists of manufacturers and suppliers. The project management group consists of architects, engineers, designers, quantity surveyors, project managers operating as consultancy firms or professional service providers. The service quality of the different stakeholders is an important vehicle of firm's sustainability in the globalised industry.

According to Sunindijo et al. (2014), service quality is an important element affecting client satisfaction and behavioural intention and it often leads to the business success of construction firms. The client is often of the opinion that the of construction firms possesses standard expertise and therefore are expected to operate within accepted guidelines. Findings from previous studies (Torbica& Stroh, 2001; Soetanto& Proverbs, 2002; Tang et al., 2003) showed that clients perceive service quality in the construction industry in different ways. This could be as a result of different background and knowledge of the client concerning the services being rendered. In recent time, service quality has received attention by business managers, researchers and practitioners over the years (Angelova&Zekiri, 2011). However, the quality of service of of construction firms has remained a problematic issue in Nigeria. This is because their services are important drivers of the activities in the construction industry. Each construction project involves a team of architectural, structural engineering, mechanical and electrical (M&E) engineering and quantity surveying firms. The performance of each firm influences one another. The need for team approach was highlighted by Olatunde et al. (2017), who emphasised that the composition of the team and the quality of

their services tend to impact positively or negatively on the outcome of building projects. In the service of these consultancy firms, there exists a general perception of dissatisfaction with their performance in the industry (Kamara et al., 2002). This was corroborated by Oyedele (2010) which emphasised continuous research on performance of consultants on construction project in order to achieve client satisfaction. Meanwhile, quality of service as a lifeblood of service delivery is a predictor of client satisfaction.

In Nigeria, the construction industry has been identified as occupying a significant segment of the capital base of the Nigerian economy and also attracts a significant percentage of the labor force in the economy (Sanni&Windapo, 2013). Due to its prime position within the economy, the successful or non-successful performance of the industry impacts either positively or negatively on the whole economy. The construction industry has been slow to apply total quality management, which is standard for most manufacturing concerns, despite the construction industry's capital requirement being equal to many years of output from a typical manufacturing organisation. However expressed, quality is obtained if the stated requirements are adequate, and if the completed project conforms to the requirements (Arditi&Gunaydin, 2017). Arditi (2014) defines quality in terms of professional liability, a legal concept that requires all professionals to know their trade and practice it responsibly. Architects, Engineers and Builders who offer his or her expertise to owners are subject to professional liability laws, some design professionals believe that quality is measured by the aesthetics of the facilities they design. It is at this backdrop the study aims to investigate service quality problems in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aim is to identify and creating service quality problems in construction firms in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives are to:

i. Examine the relationship between continuous improvement and access to finance in construction firms in Port Harcourt.
ii. Determine the relationship between continuous improvement and economic recession in construction firms in Port Harcourt.
iii. Ascertain the relationship between employee training and access to finance in construction firms in Port Harcourt.
iv. Know the relationship between employee training and economic recession in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between continuous improvement and access to finance in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between continuous improvement and economic recession in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between employee training and access to finance in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between employee training and economic recession in construction firms in Port Harcourt.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation: Expectation-Confirmation Theory

Every individual consumer has something at the back of their mind which they look out for, before making a purchase. Expectation-confirmation theory originated by Oliver (1980), which involves a customer behavior model commonly used to define and predict satisfaction and repurchase intention. According to Oliver (1980) arguments, re-buy intentions significantly depend on prior satisfaction while satisfaction is obtained from confirmation and expectation for the products or services of which confirmation has the strongest direct influence upon satisfaction. The theory of expectation confirmation predicts the behaviour of consumers and the deployment of the necessary marketing strategies based on consumer satisfaction status (James & Gary, 2009). Expectation-confirmation theory also holds that satisfaction is determined by interplay of prior expectations and perception of delivery as stated by James & Gary, (2009). The authors further explained that the theory simply implies that before any event, one already has an expectation and if that expectation is met in a positive manner, then one is satisfied but a situation where the expectation is met in a negative manner then one is dissatisfied.

Perception with expected service quality delivery is considered a function of expectation and deviation from expectation (Ilgen, 1971). The Expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) explains that expectations, coupled with perceived performance, lead to satisfaction. This effect is mediated through positive or negative confirmation between expectations and performance. If a service delivery outperforms expectations (positive confirmation), then

satisfaction will result. For instance, if a product/service falls short of its required expectations (negative confirmation), the consumer is likely to be dissatisfied (Oliver, 1980). Expectations serve as the comparison standard in ECT, that is, what consumers use to evaluate performance and form a confirmation judgment. Confirmation is hypothesized to affect satisfaction, with positive confirmation leading to satisfaction and negative confirmation leading to dissatisfaction.

2.2 Concept of Service Quality

Quality has become one of the essential elements in recent years due to conceptual changes in the construction industry. In any industry the product should be manufactured according to the required standard which provides the worth of money and satisfaction of the customers. Quality is nothing but the satisfaction of the customer with the performance, appearance, and reliability of the project for the valuable cost range. In all the phases of the project life cycle quality of construction project is linked with proper quality management. Because of the poor quality management systems lots of failures where occurred. Service quality is a process of conforming to requirements of an assignment and a key factor that contributes to satisfaction of clients in the construction industry. Service providers are expected to improve service quality from time to time so as to remain competitive in the globalised world of business (Sunindijo et al., 2014). The characteristics of services in the professional sub-sector of the construction industry make it difficult to measure. Services are intangible, heterogeneous and involve interaction between the service provider and the clients. As a result, the level of control of the service quality by service providers is low. Services are related to performances as evaluated by clients other than through products that can be counted, verified and tested (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Fundamentally, the concept of service quality is a product of the "European school of thought" led by the work of Gronroos (1984). According to the concept, service quality is viewed from both technical and functional quality. In the study of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985), service quality is considered as a function of the difference (gap analysis) between expectations and perceptions of the service. According to the study, it is the customer's overall impression of the relative inferiority and/or superiority of the organisation and its services. Based on this gap analysis, Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) developed a SERVQUAL gap model. This was viewed as the delivery of excellent or superior service relative to customer's expectations. In the model, 10 dimensions of service

delivery that are generic and relevant to services in general were identified. These dimensions are "Tangibles", "Reliability", "Responsiveness", "Communication", "Credibility", "Security", "Competence", "Courtesy", "Understanding the customer" and "Access". Factor analysis was used in later studies to condense the dimensions into "Tangibles", "Reliability", "Responsibility", "Assurance" and "Empathy" (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1994); which have formed the basis of studies on service quality.

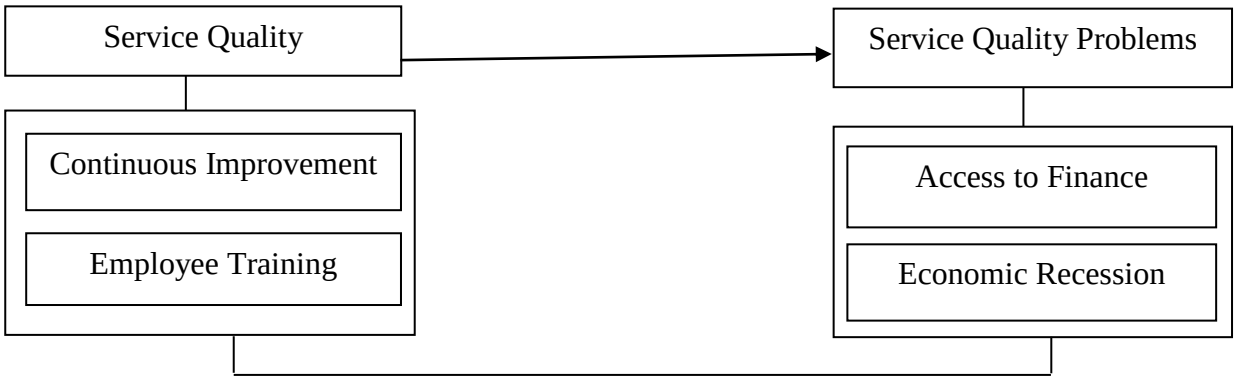

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the relationship between service quality and service quality problems of construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Dimensions of Service Quality

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement focuses on a culture of sustained improvement through process waste elimination (Bhuiyan &Baghel, 2005). Some experts concluded that continuous improvement success is dependent on an organization's success to drive culture change through the development of innovative ways to view quality delivery (Womack & Jones, 2003). Managers of organizations apply continuous improvement strategies as an evolutionary process that leads to a better way to compete and add value to existing processes that cover the entire workforce of the organization (Paraschivescu, 2015). Continuous improvement implementation requires a cultural adjustment and input from the entire organization (Fryer & Ogden, 2014). Continuous improvement is a gradual never-ending change that occurs through incremental improvement (Fryer & Ogden, 2014). Companies should try to regain the competitive edge and adapt to a continuous improvement program. Management's job is to provide the leadership for continuous improvement and learning. Continuous improvement should be a part of the management of all systems and processes (Evans, 2011).

Continuous improvement refers to both incremental and "breakthrough" improvement. Improvement and learning need to be embedded in the way an organization operates (Evans, 2011). The results of continuous improvement are effect on enhancing value to the customer through new and improved products and service. "Improvements in service delivery will result in more satisfied customers with greater loyalty and increased sales. Continuous improvement contributes to the organizational efficiency and effectiveness considering the total productive maintenance initiatives (Cooke, 2000). The continuous improvement consists of establishing customer requirements (internal or external), meeting the requirements, measuring success, and continuing to check customers' requirements to find areas in which improvements can be made (Chang, 2005). According to Bessant et al. (2001) Continuous improvement is viewed as a particular set of routines that can help an organization to improve performance.

Employee Training

The importance is recognized by every quality expert. Under TQM, quality becomes everyone's responsibility and the training must be targeted for every level of the company. There should be customized training plans for management, engineers, technicians, home and field office staff, support personnel and field labour (Sanni&Windapo, 2013). It can be argued that the transient construction work force is quite different from the relatively stable manufacturing work force. This transient nature may make it more difficult to train workers, particularly craft labour, for the construction industry (Burati*et al.,* 2011). If TQM concepts become widely accepted throughout the construction (Oberlender, 2009 cited in Lawal et al., 2020) industry, workers switching from one company to another should require less TQM training since all workers would have received basic quality awareness in their previous employment (Burati*et al.,* 2011). The training effort may include instruction in the basics of TQM, cause-and-effect analysis, team problem solving, interpersonal communication and interaction, rudimentary statistical methods and cost of quality measurement. \

A study of TQM in more than 200 companies found that skills in human interaction, leadership, and initiative are instrumental to the success of any quality improvement effort. The demands on these interpersonal skills increase as the complexity and sophistication of the technical systems increase. The training effort follows a specific plan, and its implementation and effectiveness are carefully tracked. It is initiated in a limited number of pilot teams (Gunaydin, 2013). It follows that operation and maintenance crews working in

constructed facilities should be the main recipient of training efforts, Findings are parallel to ISO 9001 which emphasizes the importance of training and underlines that activities demanding acquired skills should be identified and the necessary training provided (Doyle, 2011 cited in Lawal et al., 2020).

Service Quality Problems

Access to Finance

Access to finance is one of the major business concerns and specific obstacles in Africa (GEM, 2014). Access to finance refers to a situation where the poor and other disadvantaged groups are able and/or unable to access formal financial services, owing to their perceived vulnerability (Mishra, Igwe and Lean, 2014). It is obvious that the primary function of banking institution is the provision of loan facilities to deserving customers located in their sphere of jurisdiction. Banks are in business with the sole aim of making profits and so, they seek to generate profits through giving out loans and investment in other assets. It will be a challenge to enact the most favourable credit policy as the best amalgamation of the variables of credit policy is quite arduous to acquire. An institution might decide to manipulate some of the variables within a period and observe the effect. It should be noted that the firm's loan guide is greatly influenced by economic conditions (Pandey, 2008). The guidelines of the construction firms on access to credit may experience a shift as the prevailing conditions of the economy also metamorphose.

However, these economic benefits can only materialise if small businesses survive and thrive. Access to finance is often cited as an important factor in the survival and growth of small businesses. The lingering effects of the global financial crisis, persistent financial instability and diffused risk in credit markets are putting downward pressure on job creation and income security in Nigeria. The financial service landscape of Nigeria is one that shows a lack of access to a range of affordable, safe and reliable financial services (Igwe, Newbury and Icha-Ituma, 2018). The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN, 2005) indicate that the formal financial system provides services to about 35% of the economically active population while the remaining 65% are excluded from access to financial services in Nigeria. As a result, households have traditionally patronized informal credit lenders some of whom charge higher interest rates and give short-term small loans (Igwe, 2016; Igwe and Icha-Ituma, 2016b).

Economic Recession

Economic recession is the combination of two different words “economic” and “recession”. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word ‘economic’ deals with managing the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. According to the same dictionary, recession is the period of reduced economic activities. The economic activities earlier mentioned are production, distribution, and consumption. According to Study.com, a recession is a general downturn in an economy. It is associated with high unemployment, slowing gross domestic product and high inflation.

Economic recession is simply refers as a general slowdown in the level of economic activities around its long-term growth trend for two consecutive quarters. It is the fluctuations between periods of relatively rapid economic growth (boom), and periods of relative economic stagnation or decline (a contraction or recession) that is characterized by a decrease in certain macroeconomic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, investment spending, capacity utilization, household income, business income, exchange rate access to finance and inflation while indebtedness illiquidity, bankruptcies, and unemployment rates increase (Ezeanyeji, Imoagwu, and Ifeako, 2019). Economic recession is the period of decline in economic activity as defined by Claessense and Kose (2012).

Empirical Review

Lawal et al. (2020) study aimed at assessing quality management practices of building construction firms in Jos metropolis. Data used for the study were gathered through the use of 40 returned questionnaires administered to construction sites in Jos metropolis. A random sampling technique was used in determining the sample. A sample size of 52 and a population size of 61 were used. Descriptive statistics and relative importance index (RII) were used in the analysis. The research findings shows that adequate of site personnel (RII=0.87), adequate of project control (RII=0.86), certification of materials (RII=0.83) ranked highly significant as factors of quality management. Whereas onsite supervision (RII=0.86), education of employee on the need for quality (RII=0.83) and compliance to quality standard (RII=0.83) ranked highest as the most significant among the practices that firms conform with ensure quality management.

Fishgrund and Omachonu (2014) examined the quality gaps in construction projects by expanding on the previous gap analysis studies by Parasuraman, et al., 1985. Data is gathered through a series of unstructured interviews involving 11 construction services’ clients and

four constructions firms. There are significant disparities between construction firms and construction services clients in terms of their perceptions about the importance of industry knowledge, architectural drawings, and codes & ordinances. The findings also demonstrate that there are differences in the perceived level of satisfaction between both groups. These findings led to the expansion of the gap analysis model proposed by Parasuraman et al., 1985. Aluko et al. (2022) study aimed at evaluating and comparing service quality of consultancy firms who provide professional services in building projects in Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The population of the study consisted of 488 representatives of public and private clients with a sample size of 385. Data were analysed using weighted mean and paired-sample *t*-test to determine the severity of differences in the expected service quality and perceived service quality. The result shows significant differences between the expected service quality and perceived service quality in structural engineering, mechanical/electrical engineering and quantity surveying services along all the dimensions of service quality.

3.0 Materials and Method

Research Design: On this backdrop therefore, this study adopted cross-sectional research design. A cross-sectional research design gives the researcher the drive to investigate reality and relationships between variables by employing copies of questionnaire as instrument of data collection. The cross sectional survey research design relies on a sample of elements from the population of interest which are measured at a single point in time.

Population of the Study: To determine a genuine population, the members of that particular group must have some unique characteristics. Hence, the target population of this study is made up of the construction firms in Port Harcourt. There are forty (40) registered and selected construction firms in Port Harcourt (see table 3.1). During the time of this study, no definite number of staff in these selected firms and it has affected the number participants to be chosen, thereby leading us to consider non-probability sampling.

Table 1: 1 List of Construction Firms in Port Harcourt

S/N	Construction Companies	Location
1	Airtrace Solutions ltd	Shell location road(opposite) Agbada 2, Off Airport Rd, Igwuruta, Port Harcourt
2	Ar7 Solution	12 Wobasi Str., Ikwerre Rd, Mile 4, PH
3	Arab Contraction Company	Mile 7, Ikwerre Road, Port Harcourt,
4	Arrow construction company	Plot 13, Trans-Amadi Rd, Nkpogu, PH
5	Ben-Prince Engineering Construction Ltd	Plot 30 East-West Rd., PH
6	Ceepron Construction Company Ltd	10, Unity str., Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout,
7	Chess-t Group	Plot 70 Forces Avenue, old GRA, PH
8	Chronax Nigeria Ltd	80, Ada George Rd. Port Harcourt
9	Construction Kaiser Ltd	52 Emekukwu Str/, Amazing Grace Plaza, 3rd Fico, Right Wing D/Line, PH
10	Dewhyno Engineering Ltd	8 Iboloji Estate, Rumuigbo, Port Harcourt
11	Fisancol Transcontinental Services ltd	104 East-West Rd, Port Harcourt
12	Flees Global Services Ltd	13A Oroazi location rd.,GRA phase 111, PH
13	Fountain Construction Company	47 Tombia Str. PH
14	FTZ Construction	1 Emeni Str. PH
15	Geoplus Civil Engineering Resources	1 unique avenue, off Trans-Kalabari Rd, PH
16	Germain's Construction Nigeria Ltd	10A Khana/Wurie Str., off Landmark Hotel,
17	Gilbraltar Construction Nig. Ltd	73 Nkpogu Rd., PH
18	Handyman Construction Nigeria Ltd	16, Apamimi Str., Woji Rd, PH
19	Horandez& Construction Company ltd	Km 20 Port Expressway, Refinery Rd, PH
20	Imhotep Engineering Nig. Ltd	122 Rumuola Rd, PH
21	Ironinnaija Ltd	441 Ikwerre Rd, Port Harcourt.
22	JAFAC Construction Company Ltd	Km. 18 Airport Rd, Igwuruta,
23	Julius Berger	Port Harcourt
24	Kon-X Group	26, Ohaeto street, Ground Floor, D-Line, PH
25	Lee Engineering & Construction Company	21, Obagi Str. PH
26	Lubrik Construction Company Ltd	Forces Avenue, Old GRA 12, Port Harcourt,
27	Macro Drill and Construction Ltd	Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout, PH
28	Megastar Technical and Construction Company	100, East-West Rd, Rumuokoro, PH
29	Mercury Engineering and Construction	308 Ph/Aba expressway, PH
30	Metojen Construction Company Nig. Ltd	10 Rumuodaolu-Rumuola, PH
31	Monier Construction Company (MCC) Nigeria ltd	Mile 7, Ikwerre Rd., Rumuigbo, PH
32	Nel-Holdman Nig. Ltd	26 Aba rd, PH
33	Ponticelli Nig. Ltd	Plot 100, Rivoc Rd. beside ITF, 232, Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout
34	Reynolds Construction Company (RCC)	Slaughter rd. Woji, Trans-Amadi, PH
35	Setraco Nigeria ltd	14, Tombia Str. GRA, Port Harcourt

36	Southern Basin Construction ltd	41/42 Eastern Bypass EPENAL Yard, PH
37	Taitor Construction Services Ltd	14, 1st avenue, Elekahia housing estate, PH
38	Teacon Plumbing Engineering	1 Bridge Rd, PH
39	Waterock Global Development Company Ltd	51A, Worenwu Lane, former Emekukwu Lane, D-Line, Port Harcourt
40	Weco Engineering and Construction Company	Ordinance Road, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Source:**https://www.yellowpages.net/places/construction-company/Port-Harcourt**

Sampling Technique and Sample Size Determination: This study adopted purposive sampling technique in selecting the top and middle managers of the selected construction firms in Port Harcourt. By so doing, three (3) top and middle managers were drawn from each selected construction firms in Rivers State. These means three (3) participants were chosen purposively from each firm, in total one hundred and twenty (120) participants. This made up our sample size. One hundred and twenty (120) copies of questionnaire were distributed to each of the selected forty (40) construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Data Analysis Techniques: Based on this, subjecting the stated hypothetical test requires analyses were analyzed using Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient assisted by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Questionnaire distribution and retrieval: One hundred and twenty (120) copies of questionnaire were distributed of which one hundred and twenty (120) copies representing a response rate of 100.0% were retrieved. Out of the one hundred and twenty (120) retrieved only one hundred and nineteen (119) which represent 99.2% were usable and one (1) which represent 0.8% was not usable.

Demographic Profile of Respondents: In terms of gender, the male respondents accounted for 90.8% corresponding to one hundred and eight (108) respondents thus exceeding the number of their female counterparts who account for 9.2% corresponding to eleven (11) respondents. This shows that a greater number of men participated and made up the respondents for the study compared to their female counterparts. The data on marital status indicated that forty-five (45) respondents representing 37.8% were singles while fifty-nine (59) respondents which represent 49.6% were married. A total of fifteen (15) respondents out

of one hundred and nineteen (119) of the respondent representing 12.6% were separated or divorced.The data on academic qualification of respondents indicates that twenty (20) respondents corresponding 16.8% obtained OND/NCE, 52.1% corresponding to sixty-two (62) respondents obtained Degree/HND. Respondents with M.SC/M.BA were twenty-seven (27) respondents representing 22.7%, this is followed by those with Ph.D/DBA certificates occupying 8.4% representing ten (10) respondents.

4.1 Testing of Hypotheses

As specified in chapter three, the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis showing the Relationship between Continuous Improvement and Access to Finance and Economic Recession

			Continuous Improvement	Access to Finance	Economic Recession
Spearman's rho	Continuous Improvement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.898**	.904**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	119	119	119
	Access to Finance	Correlation Coefficient	.898**	1.000	.912**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	119	119	119
	Economic Recession	Correlation Coefficient	.904**	.912**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	119	119	119

Ho_1: ***There is no significant relationship between continuous improvement and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt.***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between continuous improvement and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt. The correlation coefficient0.898 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicative of a very strong relationship between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there was a significant relationship between continuous improvement and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt.

H_{O2}: ***There is no significant relationship between continuous improvement and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt.***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between continuous improvement and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt. The correlationcoefficient of 0.904 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between continuous improvement and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis showing the Relationship between Employee Training and Access to Finance and Economic Recession

			Employee Training	Access to Finance	Economic Recession
Spearman's rho	Employee Training	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.918**	.944**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	119	119	119
	Access to Finance	Correlation Coefficient	.918**	1.000	.912**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	119	119	119
	Economic Recession	Correlation Coefficient	.944**	.912**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	119	119	119

H_{O3}: ***There is no significant relationship between employee training and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt.***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between employee training and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt.The correlation coefficient0.918 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicative of a very strong relationship between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there was a significant relationship between employee training and access to finance of construction firms in Port Harcourt.

H_{O4}: ***There is no significant relationship between employee training and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt.***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between employee training and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt. The correlationcoefficient of 0.944 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between employee training and economic recession of construction firms in Port Harcourt.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

This section sought to discussion various findings as regards to analysis of data and findings.

i. **Continuous improvement significantly and positively correlates with access to finance and economic recession**

Overall, the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient indicates that perceptions of continuous improvement were a much stronger predictor of the result-specific measure of project service quality problems than they were when examining the context-free measure of project success. It was expected that service quality would capture larger portions of the variance in performance, as this outcome specifically describes how construction firms' management feel about themselves in relation to their business environment. Nevertheless, the ability of continuous improvement to capture a significant proportion of the variance in project service quality problem is in agreement to previous management research where perceptions of change and awareness predicted project performance measures after controlling for the effects such as access to finance and economic recession.

ii. **Employee training significantly and positively correlates with access to finance and economic recession**

The evidence on the relationship between employee training and service quality problem is also observed to be significant; with employee training having a significant impact on all two measures of service quality problems: access to finance and economic recession. More importantly, results of our research indicate that service quality predicts additional variance above and beyond employee training in order to predict project service quality problem outcomes. Specifically, employee training was shown a strong and positive relationship with project service quality problems. Finding shows that employee training has strong effects on service quality problems of construction firms' projects in Port Harcourt. This implies that it

is better to implement employee training in service quality problems of construction firms' projects in Port Harcourt. The relationship shows that 102.3% change in employee training will lead to proportional success in service quality problems of construction firms in Port Harcourt. Meanwhile, it was found that employee training has high positive and significant contribution to construction performance.

5.0 Conclusion

The subject point of this study was to establish the influence of identifying and creating of service quality problems of construction firms in Port Harcourt. The study considered two dimensions of service quality – continuous improvement and employee training (independent variables) and two measures of service quality problems – access to finance and economic recession (dependent variable). Analysis was done using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. Based on the results from analysis, it was concluded that service quality is strongly and positively relates with service quality problems of construction firms in Port Harcourt as it creates a means of attachment with customers which leads to customer loyalty that most times leads to access to finance and economic recession.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following are recommended:

i. In order to keep the good performance in construction firms, the management should always get important feedback from her customers in respect to their service delivery quality.
ii. The management of construction firms should as well maintain the quality service delivery which will contribute immensely to the growth of the firm.
iii. The study also recommended that, the employee training toward customers should be monitored from time to time.
iv. The research recommends building construction firms to conform strictly to quality management practices.
v. Construction firms should ensure all site personal are adequately qualified to delivery on the tasks assigned to them.
vi. Construction firms need to invest more in the education and training of employees on quality management systems and the need to adhere to suitable quality management practices.

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