

MANAGERIAL EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORKERS' PRODUCTIVITY: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The study examines managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity in hotel operations in Nigeria. The research adopts cross-sectional survey design with a sample of 183 administrative and lower level workers obtained from the 173 registered hotels in Bayelsa State Ministry of Tourism Development. The stratified random sampling technique was utilized. Spearman's Ranked Order Correlation Statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that Managerial self-regulation and motivation gave rise to workers' efficiency and effectiveness in hotel operations in Nigeria. Based on the findings, we concluded that workers and managerial staff in hotel operations be given motivational incentives (monetary and non-monetary) to boost their morale at workplaces. The study therefore recommends that in checkmating deviations of employees' behaviours at work, hotels' management should endeavour to treat all workers the same not minding sex, race or region and this should be done with courtesy and fairness as it has significant impact on hotels' productivity. Hotels leadership should practice and encourage participatory culture among their workforce as this has potential impact on productivity.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Self-regulation, Self-motivation, Workers productivity.

Introduction

Increased productivity in hotel operations gives room for employment as it reduces restiveness among our young generation. It is important to note these days that organizations are interested in maintaining peak in their productivity level, taking into cognizance the drive to enhance productivity through employees' commitment and dedication to work. Due to increase in corporate anticipations, right people are needed to fill strategic positions (Iiona and Evelina, 2013). Workers who show high level of concern to their employing organizations are better equipped with the needed skills, abilities and expertise to create unique solutions for customers (Harris, 2000).

Alman (2013) argued that organizations these days are only interested in productivity increase as a priority because it increases enterprise growth, reduce enterprise costs, improve efficiency, rebuild the economy, attract and retain new customers, restore accountability to government etc. In an attempt to sustain an increased level of performance in organization, some managers abandoned the traditional valuation, even when these valuations worked for them in the past (Iiona and Evelina, 2013). It is imperative for corporations to always appraise their performance knowing well that this singular act can help them to achieve excellence in their operations.

The concept of emotional intelligence is an expanding construct in management sciences and workplace organizations, though its emergence has passed two decades (Hasan, Ali, Asad and Mohammad, 2012) yet its definition has no unified accepted ground. The concept gains its foundation and starting point from the works of Salovey and Mayer (1990); Goleman (1995) and Bar-on (1997). These works focus on the mental abilities of individuals. These abilities are inter related and as such individuals who can control their emotions and those of their subordinates, distinguish and make use of the information to direct the actions and behaviours of others in organizations are said to have emotional intelligence. This implies that as human beings are different in colour and size, their attitudes, actions and behaviours are different and unique to us in special ways even for identical twins. It is also argued by Cicetti (2013) that people with high emotional intelligence are always open and agreeable with high verbal skills to solve problems for others with less thought. Emotional intelligence entails individual characteristics such as the will power to act, individual-esteem and a higher quest for better outcome (Mittal and Sindhu, 2012). An individual's self-confidence and drive for result is an ability to manage ones feeling and handle stressful conditions that will lead organizations to attain higher result. Organizational support of individual emotional intelligence depends on the individual emotional competence which is the underlying strength of the organization. Goleman (1995) has identified five broad "dimensions of emotional intelligence which includes; self awareness, self regulation, self motivation, empathy and social skills".

However, several studies have examined the role of emotional intelligence with constructs such as performance, leadership, organizational culture, organizational commitment and workers behaviour in the works of *Ali, 2013; Mittal and Sindhu, 2012; Sahdat, Sajjad, Farooq and Rehman, 2011; Rathi and Rastogi, 2009; Dayo and Sunday, 2012; John, 2015*. Also, productivity has been measured with constructs such as occupational stress, motivation, organizational culture, employees performance and working conditions from researches conducted by *Job, 2014; Ibrahim, 2013; Mohammad, Rumana and Saad, 2013; Ali, Abdiaziz and Abdiqani, 2013*.

Even after these studies were conducted by these scholars in their various angles, there is no linkage between managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity in the hotel operations. Therefore, this perceived gap in the literature informs our present study. Based on this premise, the study deemed it necessary to "investigate the relationship of managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity in the Nigerian hotel environment".

Hotel operations in Nigeria especially Bayelsa State are always facing the challenges of extinction as a result of poor management by owners, operators and managers. These challenges are mostly attributed by some to insecurity, wrong location, poor tourism facilities, dwindling economic situation bewildering the state in recent times, etc, but personal observation and interactions with workers of hotels show the opposite in the above argument. To this end, we want to empirically investigate how productivity can be enhanced within the domain of managerial emotional intelligence.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

The review of this literature focuses on views, opinions, contributions and assertions of experts, intellectuals, eminent scholars and professionals on the concepts of discussion on "managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity". The theoretical framework is rooted from the work of the sociologists *Homans, 1961; Blau, 1964; Thibaut and Harold, 1959* on the "social exchange theory". The central tenet of the exchange relationship is built on the behaviourism and economic theory where human actions are seen as a function of its payoff. The basic assumptions of the social exchange theory are built on the nature of individual and its relationship (Sabatelli and Sheham, 1993). This relationship assumes the fact that individuals who involve in any interaction with others are rationally seeking to maximize profit for their businesses while minimizing cost. Individuals always seek for rewards while avoiding punishment in organizations and they are goal oriented in a free competitive economic system and that most rewards of human come from others. The exchange relationship here centers on the interdependence of individuals. The interdependence rest on the norms of reciprocity which means repayment (Gouldner, 1960) or results comes from the combination of both efforts.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) posit "that the exchange relationship develop when employers show concern to employees which emanate to beneficial consequences". This simply means that an organization that wants to attain greater heights in their quest for higher productivity should pay specific attention to its employees' emotions. This is the only way such employees can be motivated and committed to duty within the organization. Witt and Broach (1993) argue that employees' level of satisfaction at work can increase when the exchange ideology is strong with adequate training. Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) in Wikhamn and Hall (2012) believed that the exchange relationship becomes solidified if parties involved in it are ready to offer valuable resources to each other where employees' seek fair treatment from owners of businesses, employer's desire total commitment and loyalty from workers.

The theoretical framework as seen above stems from the fact that individuals are always committed to that which will add value to them in their organizations. Organizations that tend not to show certain degree of concern for its employees' feelings at work tend to receive in return employees reluctance at work with weak or poor morale and commitment,

especially in the hotel operations where much commitment and dedication of employees is required.

Relevancy of the Baseline Theory

The relevancy of the exchange relationship in managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity cannot be overemphasized in the sense that social exchange as the baseline theory of this study involves series of interactions that evolve into trusting, loyalty and mutual commitments (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). These interactions between managers and employees who work together grow on daily bases and become stronger as both parties believe on the norms of reciprocity. This reciprocity leads to interdependence of both parties where outcomes are combination of both effort and contributions. Wikhamn and Hall (2012) are of the view that emotionally committed employees are important organizational resource and such employees offer many benefits to their employing organizations. If this is true, then, organizations need to consider the feelings of employees when making decisions that will affect them at workplaces.

The Concept of Emotional Intelligence

The term "emotional intelligence" is a construct of two different meaning and as such one need to understand the meaning of each construct before delving into the construct EI itself. The word emotions according to Frijda (1993) are the "intense feelings that are directed at someone or something". Oxford advanced learners dictionary seventh edition (2005) sees emotion as "strong feelings such as love, fear, anger or an aspect of individuals' character". Khanka (2008) describe "emotions as the strong mental and instinctive feelings such as love or fear". Intelligence in its part is the "ability to learn, understand and think in a logical way about things" (Oxford advanced learners dictionary seventh edition, 2005).

The construct "emotional intelligence" was first utilized by Salovey and Mayer (1990). To them "emotional intelligence is a type of social intelligence that involves personal ability to monitor feelings and emotions, differentiate and use the information to direct the actions and thinking of individuals". Bar-On (1997), on his part posits that emotional intelligence is the collection and grouping of social and personal abilities including feelings that influences individuals' total ability to respond effectively to demanding situations and pressures within the environment. Goleman (1995) sees "emotional intelligence" to be skill and ability that enable one to distinguish and normalize feelings in oneself and others. This skill and ability entail the capacity to recognize individual feelings, motivate and persist, control impulse, regulate ones mood and empathize to hope. Eskandarpour and Amiri (2012) assert that emotional intelligence depend on individual's knowledge of oneself and others, interpersonal relationship, environmental consistency in the way of meeting one's own need and social exchange.

Based on these definitions above, one tend to posit that emotional intelligence focuses on how one take control of his mental feelings in line with the dynamism of the environment to control the behaviours and actions of others which will in-turn lead to increase productivity in organization. This position agrees with Goleman (1995) who posit that emotional intelligence increases the productivity and performance of employees. Lauren (2013) believe that improving emotional intelligence in organization especially those at the top echelon or holding leadership positions can help by improving employees' morale and productivity which then lower the rate of turnover and absenteeism. This stand toes the findings of Mittal and Sindhu (2012) who suggested that effective leaders who are high on emotional intelligence are always sensitive of the impact of their behaviours on subordinates and as

such use it to gain comparative advantages. They further added that effective leaders understand and experience others feelings but still effect difficult decisions and balance feelings and logic in decision making process.

Individual capability to manage his/her feelings and handle stressful conditions is an aspect of emotional intelligence that is relevant for the success of organization (Cherniss, 2000). This success can only be achieved by organizations if only they are fair in their treatment. Though the individual’s ability to manage and monitor feelings at the workplace constitutes an attribute which is likely to manifest the components of been an effective leader with transformational qualities (Palmer, Walls, Burgess and Stough, 2001).

Emotional Intelligence Dimensions

The dimensions as adopted by this work are drawn from the work of Goleman (1995) who have identified five broad dimensions. These dimensions include “self awareness, self regulation, self motivation, empathy and social skills”. The study only concentrates on two dimensions which are shown in the figure below:

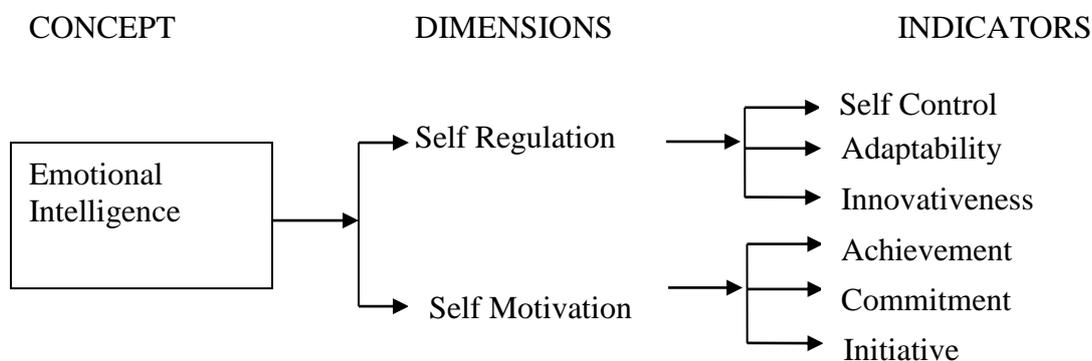


Figure 1.1: Emotional Intelligence Dimensions Model
Sources: Researchers Conceptualization, 2017.

Self Regulation.

When people in organization regulate their behaviours, they set outstanding standards that will attract better results or goals for themselves and their organization (Jones and George, 2008). Self regulation speaks of the ability to control ones impulsive judgement and reactions. An organization without regulation is like an individual without blood. Self control, adaptability and innovativeness are the underlying keys to success in every organization, because these are the rule that regulate the activities of individuals working in the organization. When individuals in organization control their own behaviour by setting goals that will attract better outcomes for themselves and that of their organizations, they feel accomplished seen that their desires are attained. Organizations cannot attain better productivity if corrective measures are not put in place to checkmate deviations of employees’ behaviour at work. Jaja and Obipi (2005) affirm that to take corrective action involve the thorough analysis of any identified deviation in performance from set standards and correcting such deviations.

The relevance of the indicators in the model cannot be overstressed in that it allows organizations to assess or measure how efficiently individual as well as how an organization

produces its goods and services. Tracy (2010) affirms that an individual ability to respond effectively to set backs and his respond ability is the measure of his readiness to success in life as well as business. This means that no individual or organization can succeed in this turbulent business environment without self control or discipline. From the positions of the scholars above, the following null hypothesis is stated;

Ho₁: Is there any significant relationship between managerial self regulation and workers efficiency/effectiveness in the hotel operations in Nigeria?

Self Motivation

Motivation is the process of inducing workers behaviour aimed at achieving organizational goal (Agba, and Ushie, 2010). It is the psychological force that propels an individual's behaviours in organization; employees' exerted effort and persistence in the face of obstacles (Jones and George, 2008). These efforts exerted by individuals are geared towards goal attainment. Khanka (2008) affirms that self motivation is an individual ability to pursue goals persistently as a higher calling and not for money or status alone (achievement drive and commitment). These abilities in individuals always trigger them to drive for higher result and achievement of their needs. The persistency here means continuous resilience in the face of challenges. Individual with high self motivation always have a driving force for action. As Ibrahim (2013) succinctly put it that "motivation is an individual effort put into action for a definite purpose".

A self motivated individual always believe in his/her capability to achieve desired goals by lending supporting hands to his/her employing organization who may gain comparative advantages (Jones and George, 2008). On the other hand, hotel business requires retaining and motivation within and among its workforce. Motivating and retaining committed employees can bring out the best in such individuals, but lack of it will be an adverse effect on its activity such as reluctance among workers, decrease in productivity, absenteeism etc. Employees' retention entails putting measures that will instill courage among workers to remain committed to their working organization for a considerable time frame. Agba and Ushie (2010) are of the view that in Nigeria rather than providing modalities to motivate and retain workers for adequate performance, workers are rather deprived on daily basis of their basic needs in the form of salaries, incentives, bonuses, benefits etc, and these have a behavioural effect on their level of performances in the workplace. The above arguments have necessitated the following null hypothesis;

Ho₂: Is there any significant relationship between managerial self motivation and workers efficiency/effectiveness in the hotel operations in Nigeria?

These hypotheses are raised to solve the research problems.

Concept of Workers Productivity

Productivity which is a combination of performance and economic use of resources has a significant impact on organization and the economy in general (Amah, 2010). This implies that high productivity in hotels indicates that resources are well utilized and waste is minimized to its barest minimum in the organization. In the contemporary business world, organizations seek to improve their productivity with employee's effort and commitment to duty. However, Lipman (2013) put in the question of how regular organizations examine the practices adopted by their management as a strategy of attaining desired result? In trying to proffer solutions on how organizations can enhance productivity within their power, since

increased productivity has a serious effect on workers' living standard and the growth of the economy in general. Job (2014) suggested that the management of organizations should establish stable environment that is stress-free so that employees can perform assigned task assiduously, since increased productivity is the utmost desire of every organization. Also in support of the above position, Ibrahim (2013) added that working in a healthy organizational structure is a desirable situation for employees and this will increase their commitment at workplace which will in turn improve workers' productivity in the hotels.

Measures of Workers' Productivity

The study adopted effectiveness and efficiency as proxies to measure productivity. These proxies were adapted from the works of Alman (2013); Amah and Alamina (2015). The study conceptualized the model below as a guide.

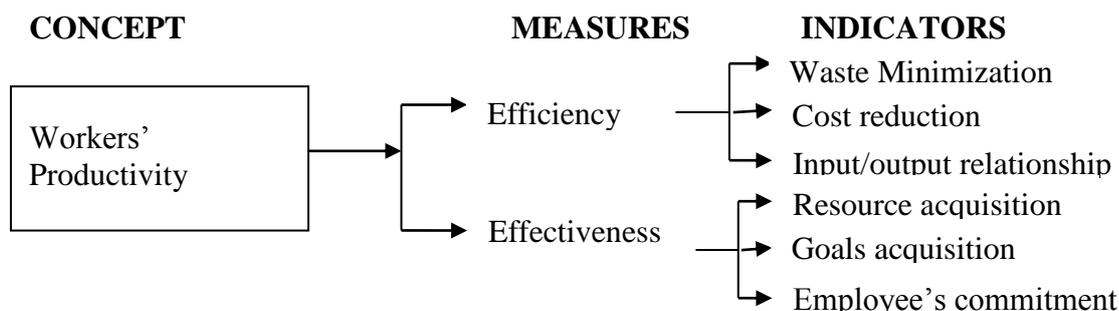


Figure 1.2: Workers' Productivity Model
Sources: Researchers Conceptualization, 2017.

Workers' Efficiency

The efficiency of an organization (workers) can be achieved through maximizing outcomes of employees' actions in connection to the resources used (Mihaiu, Opreana and Cristescu, 2010) and this is calculated by comparing effect obtained from effort. It is the result obtained from effort made by individuals. The effort of an individual input into the hotels business in the form of service rendering, monetary and non-monetary resources and the output gotten are the efficiency of that individual in the organization.

Workers' Effectiveness

Effectiveness reflect the extent an organization go to get its desired goals; and to achieve this goals, organizations must maintain good interaction and communication among workers, lay emphasis on good leadership directions and adapt to the environment (Ilona and Evelina, 2013). Employers of labour as well as workers in the hotel business operations are supposed to consider their emotions at workplace if they must succeed in their quest for higher productivity, since its product are abstract features being added concrete ingredients to be offered as service (Ibrahim, 2013). Employees that are devoted to their duties and can manage their emotional feelings at work can always contribute immensely to the growth and survival of their organizations. Majority of employees in organizations are well aware of the relevancy of achieving desired result in their respective place of duties and as such strive to get the best for themselves and that of their organizations. Ilona and Evelina (2013) once argue that oriented organizations are those concerned with output, sales, quality, value creation, cost reduction etc, and these measures the degree at which organization achieves its goals. If this is true, then organizations must place much emphasis on the emotional state of

its workforce to achieve greater productivity especially in the service (hospitality) industry where much tolerance is required among staff and management.

METHODOLOGY

The study is designed to investigate the relationship between managerial emotional intelligence and workers' productivity in the hotel operations in Nigeria. The study adopts the cross sectional survey design because of its nature, and it utilizes the stratified random sampling technique with a sample of one hundred and eighty three (183) administrative and lower level employees selected from the one hundred and seventy three (173) registered hotels obtained personally from the Bayelsa State Ministry of Tourism Development as at the time of carrying out this research. The study uses primary data (questionnaires and observation) to sample respondents' opinion concerning their emotional state at workplace and those of subordinate, while the secondary data was sourced from reputable Journals, textbooks, assertions and contributions of experts in the field of emotional intelligence and productivity as to contribute and enrich the growing body of knowledge.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

The study makes use of Spearman's Ranked Order Correlation Co-efficient to ascertain the relationship existing among the variables under investigation.

Correlations

		SELF REG.	SELF MOTIV.	WORKERS' EFFIC.	WORKERS' EFFECT.
Spearman's rho	SELF REGULATION	1.000	.921**	.877**	.931**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	183	183	183	183
	SELF MOTIVATION	.921**	1.000	.943**	.889**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	183	183	183	183
	WORKERS EFFICIENCY	.877**	.943**	1.000	.869**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	183	183	183	183
WORKERS EFFECTIVENESS	.931**	.889**	.869**	1.000	
Correlation Coefficient					
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	
N	183	183	183	183	

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

The results from the above table shows a strong positive relationship existing between self regulation, workers' efficiency and effectiveness which was statistically significant at $r = .877^{**}, .931^{**}, n = 183$ and $p < 0.01$. This therefore implies that 88% of workers' efficiency and 93% of workers effectiveness in hotel operations can be explained by managerial self regulations.

Our second bivariate result also shows significant correlation existing between self motivation, workers efficiency and effectiveness in hotel operations which has statistical values of $r = .943^{**}$, $.889^{**}$, $n = 183$ and $p < 0.01$, indicating that 94% of workers' efficiency and 89% of workers' effectiveness in hotels activity can best be explained by their managerial staff.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The results are discussed within the province of existing literature on the predictor and criterion variables of our study (emotional intelligence and workers' productivity). From our findings, we discovered that managerial self regulation in the hotel operations gave impetus to workers' efficiency and effectiveness. This is true and supported by Jaja and Obipi (2005), that organizations cannot attain better productivity if corrective steps are not taken to checkmate deviations of employees' behaviours at work. These corrective measures involve thorough analysis of identified deviation in performance from set standards.

The outcome of the second hypothesis shows that managerial self motivation gave rise to workers' efficiency and effectiveness in the Nigerian hotel environment. This result is influenced by the nature of the study and the mediating influence of corporate culture. The results agrees with the positions of Azmi (2010); Agba and Ushie (2010); Armstrong (2004); Smrita, et al (2010) as cited in Awan and Tahir (2015) and Khanka (2008). These scholars revealed that employees who are well motivated by their employing organizations through monetary and non-monetary incentives will attract positive work attitudes and behaviour. They further stress that employees' persistent pursuit of a goal as a higher calling is most times influenced by the culture of the organization and as such hotels should reward competent and potential employees as this will stimulate workers' behaviour into action when it comes to services delivery and attendance to customers need.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Given rise to the facts that organizations that promote managerial self regulation and individual self motivation among staff in their industry are likely to increase their profit base. From the study, we conclude that workers and managerial staff should be given motivational incentives (monetary and non-monetary) by hotel management because the survival and extinction of their businesses lies in the hands of the duo. Given all of these, it is obvious that motivating workers in hotel operations will increase organizational productivity bearing in mind that a Nigerian worker can be better motivated to work and customers better satisfied to sustain their patronage upon an understanding of the persons' character. Based on our conclusion, we recommend the following:

1. In checkmating deviations of employees' behaviours at work, hotels management should endeavour to treat all workers the same not minding sex, race or region. This should be done with courtesy and fairness as it has significant impact on hotels productivity.
2. The incessant rate of kidnapping in the Nigerian state is posing serious threat to the viability of the hotel businesses; therefore, the government should enact laws warranting capital punishment on culprits to curb the menace in our societies.
3. Part of government fund generation comes from taxes paid by organizations therefore, they should provide adequate security to registered hotels as this act will

attract potential tourist from various part of the globe since security is paramount to human life.

4. Hotels leadership should practice and encourage participatory culture among their workforce as this will lead to increased productivity. Culture been a social glue among workers has a way of bridging people differences together in organizations and making them pull resources together for the purpose of achieving common goals for themselves and their organizations.
5. Government should also ensure the availability of steady power supply to compliment hotels effort as to reduce running cost of hotel operations in Nigeria.

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