

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORKERS' CONSCIENTIOUSNESS IN SELECTED HOTELS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract

The study examined the association between emotional intelligence and workers' conscientiousness in selected hospitality firms in Port Harcourt. It adopted a cross-sectional research survey. The target population consists of registered hotels with the Rivers State Tourism Board. The accessible population is 30 registered hotels. The study adopted a purposive non-probability sampling technique and the size of 198 was chosen out of 392 using Taro Yamane formula. A total number of 198 questionnaire were distributed to the hotels. 139 questionnaire were correctly filled and returned indicating 70% return rate. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was used as a statistical tool with the assistance of SPSS. We found a positive significant relationship between the two constructs. We concluded that emotional intelligence is a strong tool to promote the workers' conscientiousness in the hospitality industry and other service organizations. The study recommended that hotel executives should see emotional intelligence as a tool to promote workers' conscientiousness.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, workers' conscientiousness, competence, orderliness, self-awareness, self-regulation, hospitality firms, hotels.

INTRODUCTION

A well planned organization need employees that are conscientious to succeed in a competitive world of business. However, the business environment is not static but dynamic, workers who carry out the job must invest more effort & strive to be reliable. According to Morrison (2011), those taking care to do things carefully and correctly also go beyond their conventional job engage in helping others and advocate for the organization. They are efficient, easy-going and organized as against publicly violent or noisy employees. Hence there is the need for employees to imbibe the spirit of conscientiousness in the workplace. On another hand, employees who exhibit conscientiousness in their assignment are likely to be productive because of their zeal to conquer in the midst of toughness. This implies that; managers who want to be on top of their competitors must look out for such personalities during recruitment exercise.

Nevertheless, one cannot do without being conscious in terms of business dealings especially in times of turmoil. There must be goal getters since the establishment of every business

competition. Highly conscientious workers can help the organization to break even beyond the margin of expectation. It is necessary for every manager especially in this digital age where the world is under one platform. Decisions on how to be effective and surpass the set objective, all hands must be on deck to ascertain and identify those conscientious employees as their contribution will go a long way to boost organizational objectives (Tangirala and Parke, 2013). Workers' in the hospitality industry must be conscientious oriented people so that; the concept of continuity will have value. Meanwhile, organization's member he organization is important because when it comes to hard times, every contribution counts for business to prevail.

Conscientiousness minded business practitioners are those who knew that doing it alone cannot fetch them half of what they bargain for (Russell et al, 2013). Managers' that are conscientious allow every member of the organization to be involved in strategy crafting and other decision making processes (Morrison, 2011). Extra role behaviours in the workplace help businesses to grow higher than their expectation. Therefore, people need to be encouraged and persuaded to see the business as their own. In doing so, individual members will bring their best knowledge for the organization to prosper.

Studies have been done in the area of conscientiousness around the globe. In his study, Kyle (2012) emphasized conscientiousness to be a moderator of work autonomy and job satisfaction and it shows a strong effect on conscientiousness and autonomy. It also indicates that person autonomy could try to end the effect of autonomy on the people of South Korea and on the performance of job. However, when someone does not agree with organization objectives, the resultant effect becomes lack of trust as well as lack of extra-role behavior. It is very clear that most of the studies above did not cover the Nigerian work environment especially the hospitality industry. This has created a literature gap. Hence, we would study the association between emotional intelligence and workers' conscientiousness in selected hospitality firms in Port Harcourt.

This issue became attractive because the hospitality industry is a service oriented and competitive. Therefore it will require conscientious workers who will move it from where it is now to where it is expected to be. Ekwueme (2006) argued that the hospitality industry has faced several challenges in terms of weak workforce, ineffective and unproductive employees. For the hospitality industry to serve as one of the major contributor to the development of the economy practitioners must begin to search for employees that are well coordinated in terms of orderliness and competence as this will enable them to achieve the stated objective and compete globally (Ekwueme, 2006).

The researcher's argument is that; the hospitality industry if well harnessed by placing conscientious workers on the right job, Nigeria will be amazed on how much this sector will generate from the foreign exchange. Workers who are conscientious tend to be courteous in doing their job, they are orderly when it comes to service and this if recognized, will increase the efficiency and effectiveness in the industry. This work tends to address the influence of emotional intelligence on workers' conscientiousness in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of Emotional Intelligence

What forms an individual's understanding & skills that they gain through education or experience which involves the importance of emotions, understanding of one's character is emotional intelligence. Woods (2000) argued that when being aware of your emotions & feelings, this will enable one to manage and does not mean suppressing it. "The goal is balance, not emotional suppression: every feeling has its value and significance. However, to manage emotions means that we express them in an appropriate manner and not let them run out of control. For example, if hot tempered with reason, uncontrolled anger can lead to rage and violence. People with high emotional intelligence should learn how they can regulate their moods and not let anger, boredom, or depression ruin their lives. Managing your emotions is learning how to cheer yourself up, soothe your own hurts, reassure yourself, or otherwise temper an inappropriate or out-of-control emotion" (Goleman, 1998). When one is able to understand & relate with other persons emotions & feelings we could say that individual is emotionally intelligent.

The ability of one to manage its emotions & understand others emotions are components of emotional intelligence highlighted by Goleman (1995). As an optimistic person attributes his failure to a problem he refuses to identify and ensures that when next he tries, he will succeed (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

Linguistic, logic, musical, physically appearing to have, connected with relationships between people are multi-pattern intelligence proposed by Gardener (1983), Carmeli (2003), Green Hill, Friday & Friday (2005). According to Reuven Bar-on (1998) who developed EL as a measure of well-being explained that it's the capacity to motivate oneself and manage emotions when interacting with other people. In this study two dimensions of emotional intelligence was considered; self awareness and self regulation.

Self awareness

This is about what one feels by comparing self against standards. Directed towards self and when it is low, it is unseen on the relationship between self and other individuals & when it is high, the difference between two or more things that should be the same (Treisman & Gelade, 1980).

Self Regulation

It's an individuals' ability to understand & control their learning cited in Eniola (2007). In this type of emotional intelligence, individuals who are said to be visually impaired are able to control their emotion and be less aggressive (Schunk and Zimmerman (1994); Winne, 1995). Self-regulation are transactional series of things that are done in order to achieve a particular result on different conditions (Karoly, 1993).

The Concept of Workers' Conscientiousness

According to Goldberg (1993), Roberts & Jackson (2008), It's thought as various aspects of a person's character that make them interesting and attractive which reflects the regular feelings that do not support an imaging situations.

Previous research works have focused on nomological network and also a review of the concept as a personality trait. Workers' conscientiousness in this study was viewed in terms of competence and orderliness.

Competence: In his study, Norman (1985), exclaimed that it's the ability to understanding knowledge by way of technical, clinical and communication skills to enable one solve problems using clinical judgment in creating an environment that assist in empowerment, accountability and evaluation of work done which always behaves in the same way & equally (Verma, 2006). It could be achieved through talent, experience and training. According to Black and Wolf (1990), it is an ability to perform in a way that produces the intended result on different occasions & unexpected contexts.

In NCSBN (1996, 1998), competency was viewed as application of knowledge and the interpersonal, decision-making skills expected of a practicing nurse in a public health and safety context.

Orderliness: This is when something is arranged or organized in a neat, careful and logical way which enhances creativity. It is an atmosphere for hospitality that adds to a peaceful atmosphere and spirit.

Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional research survey. The target population consists of registered hotels with the Rivers State Tourism Board. A simple random sampling technique was adopted. The accessible population is 50 hotels. A total of 704 workers were obtained from the human resource department of the hotels which represent the sample frame. The study adopted a simple random sampling technique. The sample size for the study is 255 using Taro Yamane formula. A total number of 255 questionnaire were distributed to the hotels. 139 questionnaire were correctly filled and returned. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was used as a statistical tool to test the hypotheses with the aid of SPSS. **Emotional intelligence** was measured by **self-awareness (4-items)** and **self-regulation (4-items)** on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = *Great extent*; 4 = *Moderate extent*; 3 = *Considerate extent*; 2 = *Slightly extent*; 1 = *Not at all*. Workers' **Conscientiousness** was measured by **competence (4-items)** and **orderliness (4-items)** on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = *Great extent*; 4 = *Moderate extent*; 3 = *Considerate extent*; 2 = *Slightly extent*; 1 = *Not at all*. Face and content validity was used to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the cronbach alpha test with the following coefficients (a) self-awareness, 0.72; (b) self-regulation, 0.81 (c) competence, 0.76 (d) orderliness, 0.74.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The formulated research hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficients.

Decision Rule for Accepting and Rejecting Null Hypotheses

Mehran et al (2014) highlighted the benchmark for rejecting and accepting null hypotheses using SPSS as follows: (a) when the significant level of correlation (Sig., 2-tailed) is less than the coefficient of error (0.05), reject the null hypothesis (b) when the significant level of

correlation (Sig., 2-tailed) is greater than the coefficient of error (0.05), accept the null hypothesis

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and workers' competence in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt

| | | self-awareness | competence |
|-----|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Rho | Corr. Coeff. | 1.000 | .852** |
| | Selfawareness Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | N | 139 | 139 |
| | Corr.Coeff. | .852** | 1.000 |
| | competence Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | N | 139 | 139 |

** Corr. is sig. at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The SPSS output above shows that the significant level of correlation (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Based on Mehran et al (2014) decision rule, the null hypothesis will be rejected. The alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. Thus, the result of the test is that there is a significant association between self-awareness and competence.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and workers' orderliness in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt

| | | self awareness' | orderliness |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Rho | Corr. Coeff. | 1.000 | .781** |
| | selfawareness Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .002 |
| | N | 139 | 139 |
| | Corr. Coeff. | .781** | 1.000 |
| | orderliness Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 | . |
| | N | 139 | 139 |

** Corr. is sig. at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The SPSS output above shows that the significant level of correlation (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Based on Mehran et al (2014) decision rule, the null hypothesis will be rejected. The alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. The test resulted that there is a significant association between self-awareness and orderliness.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant relationship between self-regulation and workers' competence in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt.

| Correlations | | | self-regulation | competence |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Rho | | Corr.Coeff. | 1.000 | .822** |
| | selfregulation | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .001 |
| | | N | 44 | 44 |
| | | Corr. Coeff. | .822** | 1.000 |
| | competence | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | . |
| | | N | 44 | 44 |

** Corr. is sig. at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The SPSS output above shows that the significant level of correlation (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Based on Mehran et al (2014) decision rule, the null hypothesis will be rejected. The alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. The test results show that there is a significant association between self-awareness and self-regulation.

Hypothesis four: there is no significant relationship between self-regulation and workers' orderliness in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt

| Correlations | | | selfregulation | orderliness |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Rho | | Corr. Coeff. | 1.000 | .802** |
| | selfregulation | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 139 | 139 |
| | | Corr. Coeff. | .802** | 1.000 |
| | orderliness | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 139 | 139 |

** Corr. is sig. at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The SPSS output above shows that the significant level of correlation (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Based on Mehran et al (2014) decision rule, the null hypothesis will be rejected. The alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. The test therefore result states that there is a significant association between self-regulation and orderliness.

The above SPSS partial correlation coefficient shows that the significant level of correlation (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected. The study therefore states that organizational culture moderates the relationship between emotional intelligence and conscientiousness in the hospitality industry.

Discussions of Findings

The result of the test of hypothesis one, show a significant association between self-awareness and workers' competence in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt. This finding emanated from the responses of respondents. The respondents have a good understanding of their own emotions. Most of them also agreed that they are competent in their respective departments. This finding is in line with the finding of Kyle (2012).

The result of the test of hypothesis two shows a significant association a between self-awareness and workers' orderliness in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt. Majority of the respondents agreed that they are sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others. They also agreed that they like putting hotel materials in orderly manner. The finding of this study corresponds with the fining of Russell, et al (2013).

The result of the test of hypothesis three shows a significant association between self-regulation and workers' competence in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt. This is as a result of the respondent's agreement that they can control their tempers while at work. They also agreed that they can push very hard to succeed. This is in line with Witt et al., (2002) findings. Their finding showed that the positive relationship between conscientiousness and job performance.

The result of the test of hypothesis four shows a significant association between self-regulation and workers' orderliness in hospitality firms in Port Harcourt. Majority of the respondents agreed that they are capable of controlling their own emotions. They further submitted that they keep the hotel belongings in its proper place. The finding of Dudley, Orvis, Lebiecki, & Cortina, (2006) revealed that conscientiousness is one of the most reliable predictors of work outcomes and job performance. It is also the predictor of leadership (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002), it is also the predictor of income (Moffitt et al., 2011), and occupational attainment (Roberts et al., 2007).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion of findings, the following summaries were made. The study found that there is a significant association between emotional intelligence and workers' conscientiousness in the hospitality industry. The study found that self-awareness increases workers' competence, self-awareness promotes workers' orderliness, and self-regulation enhances workers' competence; self-regulation increase workers' orderliness. Based on the summary of findings, the following conclusions were made. The study concluded that emotional intelligence is a strong tool to promote the workers' conscientiousness in the hospitality industry and other service organizations. When managers applied self-awareness and self-regulation into the emotional intelligence knowledge, workers' will exhibit competence and orderliness in the hospitality industry.

Recommendations

From the conclusion above the following recommendations were made.

1. Hotel executives should use their emotional intelligence to elicit workers' conscientiousness.
2. Managers in the service industry should seek to understand and link their emotions to other's to have emotional flow for organisational harmony to thrive.
3. Workers' in the hospitality industry should engage on positive emotional labour to avoid workplace incivility.
4. Hotel managers should encourage orderliness and competence in the workplace as this will promote the reputation of their hotels in the eyes of their customers.

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