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ABSTRACT

*This study examined the relationship between self- awareness and human relations policy implementation of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt**.** The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was 106 employees from 16 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt while the sample size of 84 was determined by the Taro Yamene's formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with a benchmark of 0.70 as a minimum threshold. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. The study findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The study recommended that the managers of the manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt should ensure to create programmes and avenues that would lead to the self-awareness of the employee with respect to their value to their jobs as this would increase productivity.*

Keywords: *Self-Awareness, Human Relations Policy Implementation, Conflict Resolution, Employee Communication, Employee Occupational Health and Safety*

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INTRODUCTION

Human relation involves the body of work concerned with managing and maintaining employment relationship which involves handling the pay –work bargain, dealing with terms and conditions of employment, providing employees with voice, conflict resolution and employee empowerment. Employee relations contribute to satisfactory organizational performance, motivation, and morale thereby preventing and resolving problems involving individuals that arise out of or affect work situations (Armstrong, 2009). Strategic ideas about human relations have no value unless they are implemented and strategy implementation is the most important element of the strategy management process. Thompson and Strickland (2003) observe that successful strategy implementation depends upon the skills of working through others, organizing, and motivating. Implementation practices play a major role in controlling and monitoring of strategy by gauging performance against plan, frequently reviewing strategy into action and building an organization culture which should be aligned to the strategy. It is also important to identify appropriate resources and competences to support strategy, in addition allocate resources appropriately and control performance (Johnson &Scholes, 1997). Therefore the organization needs trained and motivated managers, responsive systems and structure to ensure organization optimal performance (Macmillan &Tampoe, 2000). This can be achieved through self-awareness.

Self-awareness is a crucial competency associated with work place emotional intelligence. According to Yeung (2009) the first step to becoming emotionally intelligent is to become as self-aware as possible. Emotional intelligence is a recent construct and was made popular and brought to the domain of business by Goleman (1998), who argues that it could be more effective for the management of business affairs than our cognitive ideas. Ever since Golemanmade his celebrated publications, many researchers have emerged in the field. For instance, Freedman and Everret (2004) have observed that emotional intelligence is emerging as a critical factor for sustaining high performance.

Self-awareness consists of emotional abilities that enable us to be more effective and form outstanding relationships in the work place. Self -awareness is the ability for one to recognize his or her emotions and their effects. Studies suggest that people who are aware of their emotions are more effective in their jobs. They recognize and understand their moods, emotions and needs and can perceive and anticipate how their actions affect others. People with great certainty about their feelings manage their lives well and are able to direct their positive feelings towards accomplishing tasks. Self -awareness competencies include emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. Emotional self-awareness is the first component of self-awareness. This reflects the importance of recognizing one's own feelings and how they affect one's performance. Accurate self-Assessment involves knowing one's inner resources, abilities and limits. People with this competency are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, reflective, learning from experience, open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning and self-development. Self-confidence involves a strong sense of one's worth and capabilities.

According to Goleman (1998) people with this competence present themselves with self-assurance, have presence, can voice views that are unpopular and go out on a limb for what is right, are decisive, able to make sound decisions under pressures. People with self-confidence typically see themselves as efficacious, able to take on challenges and to master new jobs or skills. They believe themselves to be catalysts, movers and initiators, and feel that their abilities stack up favourably in comparison to others.

This study therefore examined the relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Furthermore, this study was guided by the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between self-awareness and conflict resolution of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt?
- What is the relationship between self-awareness and employee communication of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt?
- What is the relationship between self-awareness and employee occupational health and safety of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt?

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The initial studies on networks in organizational context were based on theoretical perspectives of resource dependence theory. Resource dependence theory (Pfeiffer & Salancik, 1978) proposes that businesses purposely act in response to demands posed by important resource providers. Resource dependence theory also suggests that businesses are competent to attempt managing their dependencies on resource providers through strategies that adapt with the control of the resource providers that have over the businesses. Two methods are possible for managing these dependencies: 1) businesses can acquire control over critical resources, as a result lessening their dependencies upon others, and 2) businesses can acquire control over critical resources that other need, thus increasing others' dependence upon the focal business. The "others" upon whom a business can be resource-dependent include any individual or business they depend on for the required resources. "The resource providers may be: creditors, suppliers, competitors, or any other entity in a business's external environment" (Bluedorn, Johnson, Cartwright, Barringer, 1994). The argument of resource dependence, for why and how networks are capable of helping businesses manage their resource dependencies, is basically that businesses establish network relationships with businesses that control critical resources, and/or other dependent businesses.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness refers to one's awareness of and trusts in one's own personal characteristics, values, motives, feelings, and cognitions. Self-awareness includes knowledge of one's inherent contradictory self-aspects and the role of these contradictions in influencing one's thoughts feelings, actions and behaviors' (Ilies, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2005). Self-awareness has been described as an emerging

process by which leaders come to understand their unique capabilities, knowledge and experience (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and is particularly linked with self-reflection as a key mechanism through which leaders achieve clarity with regard to their core values and mental models (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005).

According to Anthony de Mello, an Indian philosopher had wisdom to give for his posterity which defines the core problem of individuals and organizations even in today's world. He said in his poem that "the most of the people live in dream and never know it. They were born in a dream, livein a dream, get married in a dream, make babies in a dream and die in a dream without ever waking up. They will never be aware of the beauty of human life they only see nightmares." People ought to wake up. That is systematic consciousness development and finding self which requires self-perception is needed in work organizations too (Sydänmaalakka, 2008, cited in Sang, 2016). To get to know ourselves we ought to find the inner observer, which is called consciousness. (Sydänmaalakka, 2008, cited in Sang, 2016). The biggest influencers in individual change are wondering, enthusiasm, self-awareness, self-confidence and self-reflection. Positivity has tremendous power. (Sydänmaalakka. 2008, cited in Sang, 2016).In the recent years humanistic values have started fading. Competition has become part of the communication and aggressive behavior models have emerged. An interaction model was born, which values productiveness over well-being. The interaction is superficial and interpersonal contacts are no longer popular. Hard communication styles are favoured and social contacts are not. E-mails and faceless messages meet the efficiency requirements, but the people behind those are not committed to activities and things at personal level. This model rarely leads to success; instead it takes people to social execution.

Human Relations Policy Implementation

Policies are systems of codified decisions, established by an organization, to support administrative personnel functions, performance management, employee relations and resource planning (Memon, Panhwar & Rohra, 2010). It can also be described as a set of rules, values or guiding principles that define how an organization addresses human resources-related matters (Barbeito, 2004). Each company has a different set of circumstances, and so develops an individual set of policies. Policies should reflect sound practice, be written down, be communicated across the organization and be reviewed and modified periodically to reflect changing circumstances (Kwenin, Muathe & Nzulwa, 2013). The establishment of policies can help an organization demonstrate, both internally and externally, that it meets requirements for diversity, ethics and training as well as its commitments in relation to regulation and corporate governance. Policies can also be very effective at supporting and building the desired organizational culture (Memon, Panhwar & Rohra, 2010).

Human Resources are the set of individuals who make up the workforce of an organization. The term is also used to describe the function within an organization responsible for implementing policies related to the management of employees (Qasim, Cheema & Syed, 2012). Human Resource Management policies relate to how the organization wants to handle key aspects of people management (Armstrong, 2009). They are guides to management thinking and are used by management to achieve organizational human resource objectives (Memon, Panhwar, & Rohra, 2010). The establishment of a human resource policy which sets out obligations, standards of behavior and document procedures, is now the standard approach to meeting these obligations (Barbeito, 2004). Human resource policies covers the recruitment policies, procedures and rules surrounding hiring, including how job descriptions are developed, positions advertised, candidates vetted and offers made and

what the organization's policy is on hiring relatives. The types of employment supported by the organization, such as regular fulltime, regular part-time, consultant, temporary or other, and whether these categories are entitled to full, partial or no benefits. The conditions the organization adheres to in employing staff, including employment at will and equal employment opportunity. Employment conditions may also include policies on outside employment, disability accommodation, overtime, conflicts of interest and termination, among others (Memon, Panhwar & Rohra, 2010). Other employment policies include additional conditions of employment including, but not limited to, introductory/probationary period, personnel data and management of personnel files (Khan, Khan& Khan, 2011).

Organizations' human resource policies clearly define policies on employee compensation and benefits; it states what employees are entitled to in terms of compensation and benefits such as salary administration. Policies which cover information on salary scale or the rationale for determining salaries and conditions for pay increases. The benefits include paid or unpaid time off, including vacation, holiday, sick leave, bereavement leave, leave without pay, maternity and paternity leave and injury duty. Additional kinds of compensation may include benefits such as health insurance or medical compensation, workers compensation insurance, death benefits, pension/retirement plans, professional development benefits, termination pay and bonuses, among others (Terera & Ngirande, 2014).

Measured of Human Relations Policy Implementation

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution refers to one of the employee relations practices used to help employee relations actors to communicate more clearly, negotiate effectively, develop and evaluate solutions, or resolve disputes. Olakunle (2008) identified six different levels of conflict: interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, intrapersonal, intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels. The effective management of these conflicts will go a long way to enhance the performance of the organization in meeting to its overall mandate (Njau, 2012; Rivers, 2005).Conflict resolution offers a private and voluntary option beyond the industrial courts. Where there is employment relationship, one inevitably finds labour conflicts and the need to resolve them efficiently, effectively and equitably for the benefit of all the parties involved and the economy at large (Olakunle, 2008). Productivity, morale, staff retention, quality of service and certainly staff contribution can impede effectiveness of care (Ramsay, 2001). Conflict among the professionals can also create negative interpersonal relationships that reduce the quality of service and hinder the ability to obtain meaningful outcomes (Miles, 2002). A key objective of every organization is to avoid and manage these conflicts. Effective resolution of employment conflicts is an integral component of a successful employee relations system which effectively contributes to organizational performance (Buchele & Christiansen, 1999).

According to Robinson & Judge (2009) conflict may have both positive as well as negative consequences within the organization, the submission above blend with the fact that, conflict can never be totally eliminated within organizations but can be efficiently managed in order to move organizations to greater height and performance level. Darling & Walker (2007) stated that, even when conflict is a natural phenomenon in social relations it can nevertheless be managed within organizations. Negotiation mechanism is the most informal employee relations practice of conflict resolution where parties to the contract and their designated negotiators resolve the dispute on the best terms for the party that he or she

represents. In a successful negotiation, the parties and their negotiators reach a resolution of the dispute based on the parties' interests creating high level of motivation among the parties and impacting on productivity. Mediation is a collaboration problem solving process that assists in managing workplace conflict through a structured process such as a disciplinary process or grievance procedure and results to a win-win outcome (Slauken, 1996). In this process, the parties select a neutral person, the mediator, to help them arrive at a settlement of the conflict. The mediator spends a majority of the time meeting privately with each party and does not have authority to bind the parties, but can only help the parties resolve their conflict by agreement (Beer & Steif, 1997).

Employee Communication

A healthy employee relationship ensures a positive environment at work and also helps the employees to achieve their targets at a much faster rate. People are more focused, can concentrate better in their assignments and hence the output increases. Employees are not engaged in constant fights, are eager to help each other and do not take work as a burden. They enjoy each and every moment at work and do not take leaves often. Communication is not only important in our daily lives but also plays a crucial role at workplace. It is one of the most important factors which either improves or spoils the relationship among employees (Kovach, 1995).The communication has to be transparent and precise for a warm relationship among employees. Clarity in thoughts is important. Do not assume that the other person will come to know on his own what is going on in your mind. The thoughts must be converted sensibly into relevant words such that the other person is able to understand you well. The employees must be very clear about what is being expected from them. Their key responsibility areas, roles and responsibilities must be communicated to them in the desired form for them to perform their level best. Do not play with words. Be straightforward and precise in what you expect from your team members. Do not blame them later. Haphazard thoughts and abstract ideas only lead to confusions and spoil the relationship among the employees (Hood, 1991).

Important information should be passed on in the presence of each and every employee for better clarity. Every employee should have the liberty to express his views and ideas. Do not expect you would clear your doubts later on, ask questions then and there. No one would feel bad, rather appreciate your interest and attentiveness but do not jump in between. Do wait for your turn to speak. Do not meet anyone separately as the other person might feel neglected or left out resulting in major displeasure and conflict among the team members. Do take care of your pitch and tone. It should not be too loud. Depend more on written modes of communication as they are more reliable as compared to verbal communication.

Employee Occupational Health and Safety

The safety literature defines safety climate as a coherent set of perceptions and expectations that workers have regarding safety in their organization. The term occupational health and safety describe all the factors and conditions that affect health and safety in the workplace, or could affect health and safety in the workplace. Organizations that are committed to health and safety have policies that guide both management and employees in ensuring that the working environment is injury free for their workers. The views of Mathis and Jackson (2004), occupational health refers to a general state of physical, mental, and emotional well-being of a worker. This presupposes they all share the same view that a healthy worker is the one who is free from illness, injury, mental and emotional problems that may impair his normal work activity or routine. Others see it as activities, processes, or procedural strategies to protect and promote the health and safety of workers. That is, to eliminate all factors,

behaviors and conditions hazardous to human health and safety at work.

Occupational Health and Safety enhances the physical, mental and social well-being of workers, and supports the development and maintenance of their working capacity, as well as professionalism and social development at work. The explanation for the proposed link between job satisfaction and organizational safety climate relates to the fact that the degree of an employee's job satisfaction derives from meaningful organizational and social organizational values, norms, beliefs, practices and procedures operational at the workplace. In effect, the perceived level of support provided by an organization will turn out to be closely associated with safety climate and other organizational and social factors which are important for safety. If workers perceive that their organizations are supportive and are satisfied with the organizational structures in place, they are more likely to recognize that the organizations value their safety and general well-being as well.

Relationship between Self-Awareness and Human Relations Policy Implementation

A leader in strategy implementation is someone who is responsible for owning up, steering and driving forward the implementation efforts towards achievements of the set objectives. He is responsible for fully supporting strategy implementation efforts by providing the necessary resources, giving directions and creating an enabling environment for the employees to perform without fear or intimidation. Teece (2014) underscored the importance of leadership by stating that a leader must possess superior skills required to effectuate high performance through sensing, seizing and transformation. A strong leadership skill is an important dynamic capability required to drive superior performance in organizations operating in a dynamic environment that characterizes organizations today.

Thompson and Strickland (2007) further stated that strategic leadership keeps organizations innovative and responsive by taking special plans to foster, nourish and support people who are willing to champion new ideas, new products and product applications. Griffins (2011) identified leadership in an organization as one of the main factors influencing strategy implementation by providing a clear direction, up to date communications, motivating staff and setting up culture and values that drives organizations to better performance. Van Der Maas (2008) identified leadership as an important variable affecting organization performance. Consequently, strategy implementation and superior performance requires a leader who drives the implementation effort successfully by motivating employees, by providing the overall direction for the implementation effort, by creating strategic vision and communicating that vision to organizational members, by actively leading the implementation effort as an example or a role model, by radiating and building confidence of the organizational members implementing the strategy, by taking decisive stand when confronted with problems of resistance to change or when they are forced to take tough decisions during implementation effort and by maintaining integrity, honesty and making just decisions during the strategy implementation effort.

From the foregoing discussion the study thus hypothesized:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and conflict resolution, in selected manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and employee communication, in selected manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and employee occupational

health and safety, in selected manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was 106 employees from 16 manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt while the sample size of 84 was determined by the Taro Yamene's formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with a benchmark of 0.70 as a minimum threshold. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics with the aid of statistical package for social sciences version 23.0.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The tests of hypotheses were carried out the 0.05 level of significance as the criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in (p> 0.05) or rejecting the null hypothesis in (p <0.05):

Table 1: Correlations Matrix Between Self-awareness and Human Relation Implementation

			Self Awareness	Conflict Resolution	Employee Communication	Employee Occupational Health and Safety
Spearman's rho	Self Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.839**	.519**	.648**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	77	77	77	77
	Conflict Resolution	Correlation Coefficient	.839**	1.000	.704**	.793**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	77	77	77	77
	Employee Communication	Correlation Coefficient	.519**	.704**	1.000	.886**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	77	77	77	77
	Employee Occupational Health and Safety	Correlation Coefficient	.648**	.793**	.886**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	77	77	77	77

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

Source: Research Data 2019 and SPSS output version 23.0

Table 1: illustrated the test for the first three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements. The results showed that for:

Ho$_{1:}$*There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and conflict resolution of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.*

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between self-awareness and conflict resolution. The *rho* value 0.839 indicated this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the

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null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and conflict resolution of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_2:*There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and employee communication of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.*

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between self-awareness and employee communication. The *rho* value 0.519 indicated this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a moderate 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 self-awareness and employee communication of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

Ho_3: ***There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and employee occupational health and safety of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.***

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between self-awareness and employee occupational health and safety. The *rho* value 0.648 indicated this relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and employee occupational health and safety of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding from data analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation of the manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. This finding was in line with earlier findings of Avolio and Gardner (2005) who stated that self-awareness has been described as an emerging process by which leaders come to understand their unique capabilities, knowledge and experience and is particularly linked with self-reflection as a key mechanism through which leaders achieve clarity with regard to their core values and mental models. This finding agrees with previous findings of Hoffman (2013) who opined that persons with high conscientiousness are more likely to have better performance by improving their personal traits to suit the tasks at hand and choose the right moments for handling them. It is vital to note that job performance is great and improved in the early stages of a job tenure due to the need to concentrate one's focus and energy to achieve a certain level of satisfaction however, the detrimental side is that the more time spent on achieving tasks or at the same place of work, the less and less the effect of proactive personality thus care needs to be taken by employers to ensure that this issue has a solution if they are to maintain staff productivity and curb turnover rate (Hoffman, 2013).

More so, the outcome of this work further aligns with the findings of Victoroff and Boyatzis (2012) who reinstated the fact that Students or people rated highly in self-management are more likely to perform very well in their tasks due to their positive attitudes, self-motivation, willingness to learn and ability to adapt and initiate in times of changes and therefore it's paramount to focus and improve on self-management before thinking of relationships. It is very important to know that possessing the achievement orientation and conscientiousness competences have the limitation of over concentrating or persisting on tasks with the intention of perfecting it which in turn consumes a lot of time for the mastery/perfection process while others simply to it to the adequate level (Victoroff & Boyatzis, 2012).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examined the relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. From the data generated and analysed, it was empirically discovered that there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and human relations policy implementation of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt. The study thus recommends that the managers of the manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt should create programmes and avenues that will sharpen self-awareness competencies of employee with respect to their value to their jobs as this will increase productivity.

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