

MANAGERS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

Dr I. G. Nwabali and Dr George Ordua
Department of Office and Information Management
Faculty of Business Studies, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Email: ordua.george@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of manager emotional intelligence on organisational climate of deposit money banks in Rivers State. The dimensions of emotional intelligence employed in the study are self-awareness, self-management and social awareness, while the measures of organisational climate are trust, employee recognition and perceived organisational support. Results revealed that manager self-awareness, manager self-management, manager social awareness influence trust, employee recognition and perceived organisational support of the deposit money banks in Rivers State. Conclusively, the study affirmed that adoption and development of emotional intelligence by managers of banks will contribute substantially towards enhanced or positive organisational climate. It was recommended, among other things, that bank managers endeavor to improve in their self-awareness and self-management skills to facilitate a positive climate where employees feel valued, receive essential support and get emotionally and psychologically energised to contribute their best towards the attainment of desired organisational outcomes.

Keywords: Manager Emotional Intelligence, Organisational Climate, Self Awareness

INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence is so critical to organisational success, assert Bradberry & Greaves (2009), that it accounts for 58 percent of performance in all types of jobs. They argue that it is the single biggest predictor of performance in the workplace and the strongest driver of leadership and personal excellence. In line with that assertion, the IHHP Research (2019) indicates that 80% of the defining characteristics of what distinguish exceptional and unexceptional leadership is emotional intelligence. According to Goleman (1998), 'when senior managers at one company had a critical mass of EI capabilities, their divisions outperformed yearly earnings goals by 20%.'

Since Likert (1967), Litwin & Stringer (1968), Stringer (2002), Goleman (2002), Ayers (2005), Momeni (2009) and Maamari & Majdalani (2017) are in agreement that influencing organisational climate is believed to be a function of leadership, and that it is the emotional intelligence of the leader that influences employees' perception, morale, emotions, and behaviours (organisational climate), it is important to study the influence of manager's emotional intelligence on organisational climate. This is essentially because, as observed by Drucker (1986:3), 'the manager is the dynamic life-giving element in every business. Without his *leadership* (italics mine) the "resources of production" remain resources and never production' - and the human resource is the most important of the resource of production (UK Essays, 2018). Drucker (1986:3) further argues that 'the quality and performance of managers determine the success of the business, and indeed, determine its survival'. This work, therefore, focuses on the manager emotional intelligence and organisational climate they create in deposit money banks in River State.

Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Management scholars, for decades, have recommended that executives follow Weber's advice to keep emotions out of the work place and to practice what Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) referred to as "administrative rationality" (Humphrey *et al.*, 2008). That is because, even among philosophers, the pursuit of reason had an elevated status to that of emotion, which only lurks at the background, referring to it as a threat to reason (Solomon, 2008). The consideration of the

place of emotion was thus inconsequential and played an inferior role. Solomon (2008: 3) states that 'one of the most enduring metaphors of reason and emotion has been the metaphor of master and slave, with the wisdom of reason firmly in control and the dangerous impulses of emotion safely suppressed, channeled, or (ideally) in harmony with reason.' Stressing on the inferiority of emotions, he further states, 'there is the inferior role of emotion - the idea that emotion is as such more primitive, less intelligent, more bestial, less dependable, and more dangerous than reason, and thus needs to be controlled by reason. Consequently, Küpers and Weibler (2005) observed that emotional dimensions became neglected topics in organisational studies and in economic research in general (Küpers & Weibler, 2008).

In keeping emotions out of the work place at the time, Psychologists and organisational managers gave no considerations to feelings of individuals, even workers in the organisation. In this stance, they missed on the information emotions provide. Clore (1994) argues that the primary function of emotion is to provide information. That is in line with Goleman's (2005) assertion that emotions are impulses to act. Drawing from his argument, Clore (1994:104) posits that 'emotion supply information through distinctive facial and vocal expressions and to oneself through distinctive thoughts and feelings'. He, therefore, contends that whether 'the experience of emotion is functional and dysfunctional depends on what it does to the information value of the accompanying affective experience'. Therefore, whether psychologists and, or, organisational managers paid no attention to emotions did not stop emotional events from occurring, nor did it stop the accompanying 'private affective experience' (Clore, 1994) in the individual worker.

The private affective consequences of an emotional event in the workplace or from the personal life of a worker may be feelings of resignation, conflict, anxiety, sadness, fear and the like. When these feelings become part of his everyday experience, performance will be affected based on his decisions and judgments. As Wagner (1989) expressed, psychologists or organisational managers' explicit refusal to give cognisance to emotion does not keep representations of emotional events from being actuated in the memory and having had affective consequences (Clore, 1994) to organisations. Ashkanasy (2003) nailed this point when he asserted that recognising the existing emotions within organisations is essential. Organisations that are interested in maintaining a "healthy emotional environment" will cause less suffering and will obtain more efficiency and a more productive behaviour (Grama & Boitone, 2009).

However, the subject of emotions became matured, emerging as an explicit and increasingly polished research area during the 1980s, which Barsade & Gibson (2007) referred to as "affective revolution", with earlier findings vivifying the field (Stearns, 2008). Humphrey *et al.* (2008), Goleman (2005), Fisher & Ashkanasy (2000), and Lord & Kanfer (2004) acknowledged the substantial advances that have been made in the last two decades in understanding the structure and role of affect (commonly known as emotion) in human behaviour, with Industrial/Organisational psychologists and other applied researchers recognizing the relevance of such advances for understanding workplace behaviour. More specifically, Barsade *et al.* (2003) affirmed that in the ensuing affective revolution academics and managers alike have begun to appreciate how an organisational lens that integrates employee affect provides a perspective missing from earlier views (Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Self-Awareness

This includes emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. This keystone of emotional intelligence - self-awareness – an on-going attention to one's internal states (Goleman, 1995), is also the foundational and crucial set of competencies needed to excel in the other clusters of emotional intelligence: self-management, social awareness and relationship management domains of EI (Boyatzis, and Mckee, 2002; Goleman, 2005; Goleman, Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Okpara & Edwin, 2015). According to Goleman (2019), self-awareness means having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives. He maintains

that people with strong self-awareness are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful, but honest, both to themselves and to others. In the same vein, those poor at recognizing emotions will be poor at managing them, and will be less able to also recognize emotions in other people. As for Bradberry & Greaves (2009), self-awareness is one's ability to accurately perceive own emotions in the moment and understand his tendencies across situations. Such keen understanding of one's tendencies helps one to make sense of his emotions and enables a person know how he reacts to specific events, challenges, and people. Highlighting the importance of self-awareness, Yeung contends that "if emotional intelligence were a journey, then self-awareness would be the skill of map reading. It tells you where you are at the moment, the current mood or emotion you may be experiencing. And it shows you where you want to get to a goal, or perhaps an emotion or mood that may help you to achieve your goal" (Okpara & Edwin, 2015: 55).

Self-Management

Self-management stems from self-awareness. It is only by being aware of ourselves that we can understand and then manage whatever associated feelings we observe. In this connection, Goleman *et al.* (2004) affirm that without knowing what we're feeling, we're at a loss to manage those feelings. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2015) defines self-management as the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations. This, according to them, includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals. As for Korn Ferry (2017), self-management means effectively managing our own emotions. Bradberry & Greaves (2009) see self-management as one's ability to use awareness of our emotions to actively choose what we say and do. On his part, Goleman (2015) refers to self-management as managing ones' internal states, impulses, and resources. These indicate that self-management is a capability built on the foundation of self-awareness and involves being able to control one's emotions and impulses so that they do not dictate actions for us and, ultimately, being able to manage emotions towards positive outcomes.

It is of necessity to be able to manage our 'emotions', 'impulses' and 'internal states' because they are of biological origin and since we cannot get rid of them, we find a way to manage and control them (Goleman, 2001). He contends that self-management then, which resembles an ongoing inner conversation, is the component of emotional intelligence that frees us from being prisoners of our own feelings. According to him, people engaged in such a conversation feel bad moods and emotional impulses just as everyone else, but they find ways to channel them in useful ways. Goleman *et al.* (2004) see the process of managing feelings and emotions as critically important to emotional intelligence. For one thing, emotions are contagious, especially from a leader to the others in an organisation, therefore, leaders cannot effectively manage emotions in anyone else without handling their own. They hold strongly that a leader's feeling is not just a private matter, that given the reality of emotional leakage, a leader's emotions have public consequences.

Social Awareness

Social awareness is the first of the external dimensions of Emotional Intelligence as proposed by Goleman (2001) and defines it as the ability to sense, understand and react to others emotions while comprehending social networks. In the organisation, it enables one to recognize, understand and respond to the needs of others, while at the same time observant of the organisational networks towards building positive relationships. According to Bradberry & Greaves (2009), social awareness is the ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on with them. They emphasize that it means perceiving what other people are thinking and feeling even if one does not feel the same way, and, as Zimmerman (n.d.) adds, 'even though their perspective and their experiences might be quite different than yours, you are aware of the other person's feelings, needs and concerns'. Again, social awareness involves being aware of how the

organisation one works affects them, including being able to read the emotional environment and power relationship at play (Team FME, 2014)

A socially aware person can accurately read situations and people because he is able to understand and empathize with their emotions. Since management is about getting work done and achieving objectives through other people, a manager with poor or no understanding of others cannot relate with his direct reports or subordinates and will certainly have difficulties being successful in this role. Social awareness enables a manager to stay focused and absorb critical information (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). According to FME (n.d) a manager is incentivized to get results and achieve end goals, 'so anything you can do to attain this effectively and productively is good. So whilst some may view spending time empathizing with others as contradictory to attaining goals, it is central to a manager's role of creating a motivated, cohesive, and effective team'. It really takes good listeners, relationship builders and discernment to be a socially aware manager. The competencies associated with social-awareness are empathy, service orientation and organisational awareness.

Concept of Organisational Climate

Schneider *et al.* (n.d.) and Ashkanasy & Jackson (2001) noted that the study of climate has its historical roots in Gestalt psychology, social anthropology and organisational theory. The Gestalt tradition emphasized that climate is a composite of many perceptions and experiences. According to this paradigm, organisational climate should be viewed as a gestalt, based on patterns of experiences and behaviours of people in an organisation as perceived by its members. Within the gestalt of organisational climate, individual elements of perception are integrated into a whole that represents more than the sum of its parts (Gerber, 2014). Ashkanasy & Jackson (2001) are in agreement with Schneider & Barbera (2014) and Shintri & Bharamanaikar (2017), that the concept and framework of organisational climate have evolved over a long period of time with the earliest available reference on the concept/framework of organisational climate being traced to Lewin (1939), who with his colleagues coined the term 'climate' to describe the attitudes, feelings, and social processes of organisations (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001).

While there have been differences in definitions of the construct, organisational climate research has implicitly or explicitly adhered to the notion that it is a summary perception derived from a body of inter-connected experiences with organisational policies, practices and procedures and observations of what is rewarded, supported and expected in the organisation, with these summary perceptions becoming meaningful and shared based on the natural interactions of people with each other (Schneider, González-Romá, Ostrof, Cheri & West, n.d.).

The climate of an organisation can be analysed validly at three different levels (Field & Abelson in Gerber, 2014), viz: individual level (psychological climate), group level (group climate) and organisational level (organisational climate). These levels of analysis are supported by Schneider *et al.* (2013). However, some researchers like Yammarino and Dansereau (2011 in Gerber, 2014) lump climate and culture research together and add a fourth level of analysis, namely society or country level, which would technically only be used for the analysis of culture, for example, national culture. This work therefore is based on the gestalt of climate generated at the organisational level – organisational climate.

Organisational climates can work to facilitate or impair work relationships. Thus, the climate of an organisation is one of the key influencing forces which affect the individual employee's perceptions, feelings and actions, as well as their interpersonal relationships (Nolan & Küpers, 2009). While there is continued scholarly debate about the exact definition of organisational climate for the purposes of scientific study. DAS (2017), Schneider *et al.* (2013) see organisational climate as the shared perceptions of and the meaning attached to the policies, practices, and procedures employees experience and the behaviours they observe getting rewarded and that are supported and expected. As for Hellriegel & Slocum (2005), organisational climate refers to a set of attributes which can be perceived about a particular organisation and/or its subsystems, and that may be induced from the way that organisation and/or its subsystems deal with their members and environment. Armstrong

(2001) posits that climate refers to those aspects of the environment that are consciously perceived by organisational members. According to him, these perceptions are describable sensations or realisations experienced by an individual, and by extension, the global climate of the organisation. Organisational climate is a set of measurable properties of the work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by people who live and work in this environment and assumed to influence their motivation and behavior (Litwin & Stringer, 1968).

Empirical Review

Great organisational climates have been reported to improve the efficiency of organisations (Momeni, 2009). Emotional intelligence, which involves competencies that can help leaders deal more effectively with organisational members and foster a healthy organisational climate, has become increasingly more popular and debated in recent years. This has led researcher, in several studies, to address the impact of emotional intelligence in creating the environment (climate) that makes possible efficient organisations. Among such researchers are Goleman, 2000; Goleman *et al.*, 2001; Momeni (2009), Abdulkarim (2013), Okpara and Edwin (2015), Hosain (2019). However, no empirical investigation has

Momeni (2009) studied the relation between managers' emotional intelligence and the organisational climate they create. The research aimed at investigating the relationship between the emotional intelligence of managers and the organisational climate they create. The sample for study was thirty managers randomly selected, with the emotional intelligence of each manager and their organisational climates measured by questionnaires using a 360-degree feedback approach. The results for the managers were compared with those from another 140 supervisors, peers. The regression analyses showed that there is a positive correlation between the emotional intelligence of managers and organisational climate they create. The analyses further indicated that among emotional intelligence's factors, social awareness and self awareness have more influence on organisational climate, while among organisational climate factors, credibility, which is an indicator of trust, is most influenced by managers' emotional intelligence. While the variables of Momeni (2009) with the current study are the same, Momeni was interested on Managers and Supervisors, while the focus of the current study is on middle level managers.

Okpara and Edwin (2015) conducted a research on the relationship between self-awareness and organisational performance in the Nigerian banking sector. The study was a survey and the sample for the study consisted of two hundred and ten bank managers in South-South area of Nigeria. Data were collected mainly in the cities with high concentration of the banks through interview and questionnaire instrument found to be reliable with cronbach Alpha values of 0.7 and above. The results of their analysis at .05 level of significance showed that self awareness is positively related to net profit and return on investment, but found no strong relationship between self awareness and market share. Their interview results also supported their findings. Based on the results, they concluded that self awareness positively influenced net profit and return on investment, and therefore recommended that organisations should train their managers/employees to acquire the competencies associated with self awareness. The result of this study strongly support the influence of self awareness on positive orgnsisational bottom line.

In an exploratory study on Leader Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence and Perceived Employee Creativity, Rego *et al.* (2007) suggest that emotionally intelligent leaders promote creativity in their employees. They found leader's self-control as EI dimension with greater predictive value against criticism and empathy. This means that employees feel more motivated to identify and propose creative solutions and strategies *when they feel* (emphasis mine) that their leaders are receptive to ideas different from their own and/or that depart from the status quo.

Hackston (2019) noted that research has shown that when people have more accurate self-perception, they tend to perform better in the workplace, and cited the study HRD Connect carried

out in the Royal Navy. According to him, they found that more self-aware leaders were better able to tailor their [leadership](#) style to the situation at hand. Again, according to Hackston (2019), in another survey HRD Connect carried out in 2017, they asked respondents about the advantages and disadvantages of being self-aware. The participants mentioned advantages than disadvantages; the top five included a greater understanding of your reactions and motivation, better management of oneself and others, the ability to adapt one's behaviour, improved relationships and personal growth. The respondents felt that increased self-awareness was particularly useful when working with others in a team.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study identify manager emotional intelligence as a significant predictor of positive organisational climate. The evidence from the analysis indicate that dimensions such as self-awareness, self-management and social awareness significantly impact and positively contribute towards outcomes of organisational climate such as trust, recognition and perceived organisational support. Furthermore, the findings also demonstrate that the culture of the organisation also significantly impacts on the relationship between manager emotional intelligence and organisational climate. In view of these outcomes, the following conclusions are affirmed:

- (i) The development and advancement of self-awareness in middle level managers will drive the knowledgeableability of their own capacities and emotional dispositions and will facilitate a more positive climate where trust is enhanced and workers are recognised and supported by the organisation
- (ii) The advancement of self-management within the middle level managers offers control and effective coordination of managers feelings and emotional tendencies in a way that fosters trust within the organisation and advances recognition and support systems for the workers within the organisation.
- (iii) The drive for middle level managers social-awareness facilitates an improved level of understanding and consciousness of others and of ones positioning within a wider network of activities within the organisation – thus, enhancing the managers sense of responsibility for others and thereby impacting on the trust, recognition and development of support systems for the workers
- (iv) The emphasis on cultural values that focus on relationships and the imperatives of consciousness and responsibility for others, such as advances emotional intelligence within the workplace – offers significant benefits in terms of climate outcomes such as trust, recognition and perceived organisational support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) Deposit money banks in Nigeria should train their managers to acquire the competencies associated with self-awareness. Bank managers should endeavor to improve in their self-awareness skills to enable them know how to handle issues of self and avoid actions that could make the organisational climate unconducive for optimum performance..
- (ii) Organisational managers and leaders should endeavor to make extra effort and sacrifices in understanding and managing themselves in ways that create or generate an atmosphere devoid of fear, rancor and unhealthy competitions between and among members of staff, as well as customers as the case may be.
- (iii) Executive development programs should be designed to drive the social awareness and cognition of managers so as to improve the consciousness of individuals and an understanding of the implications of their actions within the workplace.
- (iv) The culture of the organisation should be patterned and elaborated in such a way that members of the organisation understand the underlying implications of their actions on

others and the imperatives of behaviour considerations when dealing or working with other members within the network of the organisation.

REFERENCES

- Bradberry, T., & Greaves, J. (2009). *Emotional intelligence 2.0*. (E-book. Talent Smart. PDF Drive.com.
- Adebukola, E. O. (2015). Leaders' emotional intelligence and employees' performance: A case in Nigeria's public healthcare sector. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 5(3), 23-37.
- Adeyemo, D. A., Dzever, L. T, Nyananyo, J. L. (2015). Organisational climate, leadership style and emotional intelligence as predictors of quality of work life among bank workers in Ibadan, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(4), 110-130
- Cook, K. S. & Rice, E. (2014). Social exchange theory. ResearchGate.
- Covey, S. R. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. Franklin Covey Co.
- Findikli, M. A., Gulden, A., & Semercioz, F. (2010). Subordinate trust in supervisor and organisation: Effects on subordinate perceptions of psychological empowerment. *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 2(1), 55 – 67.
- Fisher, C. D. & Ashkanasy, N. M. (2000). The emerging role of emotions in work life: An introduction. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 21(2), 123-129.
- Fitzsimmons, J. A. & Fitzsimmons, M. J. (1994). *Service Management: Operations, strategy, and information technology*, (2nded.). Irwin/McGraw Hill.
- Lumbasi, G. W., K'Aol, G. O. & Ouma, C. A. (2016). The effect of achievement oriented leadership style on the performance of coya senior managers in Kenya. *International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics*, 3(2), 118-125.
- Lytle, R. S. & Timmerman, J. E. (2006). Service orientation and performance: an organisational perspective. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 20(2), 136-47.
- Maamari, B. E. & Messarra, L.C. (2012). An empirical study of the relationship between organisational climate and organisational citizenship behaviour. *European Journal of Management*, 12(3), 165.
- Maamari, B. E., & Majdalani, J. F. (2017). Emotional intelligence, leadership style & organisational climate. *International Journal of Organisational Analysis*, 25(2), 327-345. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-04-2016-1010>
- Özer O. & Zheng, Y. (2017). Trust and trustworthiness. ResearchGate https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311999150_Trust_and_Trustworthiness/link/5ac39a27a6fdcc1a5bcffa4a/download