

**SOCIAL AWARENESS AND EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION OF DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS  
IN RIVERS STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated the influence of manager social awareness on employee recognition of deposit money banks in Rivers State. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. Population of the study was 191 managers of 18 deposit money banks in Rivers State. The study is a census and data collected through the questionnaire instrument structured on a five-point scale validated by the Supervisors and two other experts. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used to measure the reliability of the instrument at the least value of 0.72. The results are presented using both charts and contingency tables which illustrate the distributions and outcomes for the analysis: the demographic analysis addressed the result and distributions for the sample characteristics; Results revealed that 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: Social awareness, Employee Recognition, Trust, Organizational Support**

**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'.

Momeni (2009) affirms that great organisational climate improves the efficiency of an organisation and decreases costs of turnover and problems with staff. Also, Goleman (2000) asserts that a good organisational climate has a positive effect on financial results such as revenue growth, profits and return on sales of the organisation. In this connection, Goleman (2002) further opines that leaders play a key role in driving the organisational climate and that their actions and behaviour, which are a result of their own emotional states, affect how the people they lead feel and perform. Invariably, business performance will be influenced by how well leaders manage their own and their subordinate's moods. This ability of managers to understand and manage their own and others mood is what Goleman (1995) calls emotional intelligence (EI).

This work, therefore, focuses on the manager emotional intelligence and organisational climate they create in deposit money banks in River State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social-awareness and trust of deposit money banks in Rivers State

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social-awareness and recognition of deposit money banks in Rivers State

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social-awareness and perceived organisational support of deposit money banks in Rivers State

### **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.

### Employee Recognition

Recognition is a formal or informal way of giving positive feedback based on results or performance (Robbins, 2019). Andriotis (2017) talks of employee recognition as the acknowledgment of a company's staff for exemplary performance. He argues that essentially, the goal of employee recognition in the workplace is to reinforce particular behaviours, practices, or activities that result in better performance and positive business results. Marciano (2010) sees employee recognition as when employees feel acknowledged and appreciated for their contributions. Recognition is the transfer of positive emotions and feelings from one person to another (Saunders, 2019). This means that recognition should be given with, genuineness and authenticity with the receiver perceiving (feeling) love and concern (positive emotions). For instance, a manager observes great work going-on on the plant floor or witnesses a positive demonstration of company values in the office and feels amazed at heart, reaches out to the employees conceived and express an appreciation for what he observed. The manager in that situation has had an emotional reaction to some outstanding action or behaviour. His communication of those felt positive emotions, of the great work done by the staff, in a way that the staff feels the same positive emotions transferred to him, is what recognition is about. This makes the employees feel that they matter to the organisation and that makes them happier and willing to put in their best effort toward improving organizational bottom-line. Kouzes & Posner (1999) observe that recognition is a very simple principle of human performance: people like to be recognised for doing their best. More important, they maintain, encouragement increases the chance that people will actually achieve higher levels of performance. Such recognition makes the worker feel more invested in the organisation and improves his engagement. According to Adkins (2016), engaged employees are involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work. A Gallup extensive research (Adkins, 2016) shows that employee engagement is strongly connected to business outcomes essential to an organisation's financial success, such as productivity, profitability and customer engagement. When employees are engaged, they willingly support the innovation, growth and revenue that their companies need.

Kouzes & Posner (1999) further contend that there exist a *chemistry* (emphasis theirs) between great leaders and those who follow them. According to them, the fostered cooperative environment, by virtue of the manager's affection and appreciation of work of their subordinates, encourages the hearts of the subordinates. That makes them feel better about themselves and lifts up their self-esteem, because of the awakening of their vitality and enthusiasm. In turn, it stimulates the subordinates to work harder and more effectively towards organisational goal accomplishment, whereas a demotivated environment has been identified to produce low or courage-less employees who hardly practice their skills, lack innovativeness and not fully committed to the extent an organisation needs (Amoatema & Kyeremeh, 2016).

Buckingham (2011) and Robbins (2019) argue that it is recognition, and not money, that is the ultimate trigger for activating an employee's strength. This is because financial incentives can actually backfire when it comes to motivating employees. According to an analysis of [51 experiments](#), (financial) incentives may reduce an employee's natural inclination to complete a task and derive pleasure from doing so (Robbins, 2019). Buckingham (2011) reasons that great managers are not only aware that employees respond well to recognition, they also refine and extend this insight. He advises that to excel as a manager, one must be able to match the employee to the audience he values. One employee's audience might be his peers: the best way to praise him would be to stand him in front of his coworkers and publicly celebrate his achievement. Another's favourite audience might be the manager himself. In that case, the most powerful recognition would be a one-on-one conversation where the manager tells him quietly why he is such a valuable member of the team. Still another employee might define

himself by his expertise. For that employee, the most prized form of recognition would be some type of professional or technical award. Yet another might value feedback only from customers, in which case a picture of the employee with his best customer or a letter to such employee from the customer would be the best form of recognition. This underscores the importance of targeting recognition with the audience the employee values most. In working to attain organisational goals, there must be put in place expected, measurable standards of excellence. Emotionally intelligent managers ensure that their subordinates are not in the dark about what they are expected to achieve. By clearly defining the values and principles for which employees are held accountable and by linking performance to those standards, managers establish a benchmark for achievement (Kouzes & Posner, 1999).

### **Research Design**

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The cross-sectional survey research design, according to Kothari (2004), is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

### **Population for the Study**

The population of the study consists of 191 middle level managers of deposit money banks in Rivers State, given their positions and capacities with regards to the data required (Sources: Banks head offices in Port Harcourt, Rivers State as at 20/01/2020). Besides, these respondents were made up of managers such as Operations Managers, Human Resources Managers, Loan Managers, Credit Managers, Trust Managers, Financial Managers, Public Relations Managers, Records Managers, Marketing Managers and Real Estate. While the total number of banks with operational national license to operate within the geographical region of Rivers State is 19, the field work revealed an absence of any operational office of the Titan Trust Bank in Rivers State at the time – hence the 18 deposit money banks in Rivers State formed the unit of analysis.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A sample is the representative of the population of a study (Ahiauzu & Asawo, 2016), and helps a researcher to have access to a part of the target population that could help him draw conclusions about or make generalisations on the rest of the population. However, this study is a census, as the researcher collected and analysed data from every member of the population, and also because the population is accessible and convenient for the researcher to study. As a census study therefore, there was no need for sampling, hence the sample size of 191 remains the same as the population. This means, the researcher studied 191 managers.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability for the instruments of the study was tested using the Cronbach alpha reliability tool. According to Sekaran (2003) the Cronbach alpha as an intra-rater tool is effective in assessing instrument's clarity and replicability based on data consistency. Presented in table 3.2 are the results:

### **Cronbach Alpha of the Study Instrument**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
Self-Awareness	4	0.81
Self-Management	4	0.74
Social Awareness	4	0.89
Trust	4	0.91

Recognition	4	0.72
Perceived organisational support	4	0.83
Result-oriented culture	4	0.77
People-oriented culture	4	0.79

**Source: SPSS Output based on 2020 field survey data**

### Administration of Instrument

The Researcher visited the Regional head offices of the selected banks in Rivers State and obtained permission and consent note for data collection from the Regional head offices. From the obtained consent, the Researcher, with aid of two Research Assistants, visited the selected banks' branches in Rivers State and administered the questionnaires on the Business Managers, briefly explaining to them the purpose of the questionnaire and how to respond to the items. The data collection (which covers both administration and retrieval of the copies of the questionnaires) lasted for a period of 3 weeks. Only 187 of the 191 copies of the questionnaires distributed were retrieved in good condition and were used for the data analysis. Hence, there was 98% return or retrieval rate for the questionnaire administered.

### Methods of Data Analysis

The bivariate data analysis was carried out using the Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient. The test was conducted using a 0.05 level of significance as the basis for the assessment of significance or insignificance relationships between the dimensions of manager emotional intelligence and measures of organisational climate.

**Table 4.7 Test for social-awareness and measures of organisational climate**

			Social	Trust	Recogni se	Suppor t
Spearman's rho	Social	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.410**	.349**	.650**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	187	187	187	187
	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	.410**	1.000	.402**	.493**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	187	187	187	187
	Recogniz e	Correlation Coefficient	.349**	.402**	1.000	.450**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	187	187	187	187
	Support	Correlation Coefficient	.650**	.493**	.450**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	187	187	187	187

**Source: Researcher, 2020**

The evidence from the analysis identifies social awareness as having a significant relationship with the measures of organisational climate. The result from the analysis indicates that manager actions that in tune with social awareness significantly advance organisational climate outcomes such as trust ( $\rho = 0.410$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ), also social awareness influences recognition ( $\rho = 0.349$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ) and also impacts on the perceptions of support ( $\rho = 0.650$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ). The evidence from the analysis shows that social awareness offers significantly advancement for outcomes such as trust, recognition and perceived

organisational support. Going by this, all previous related null hypothetical statements on the relationship between the variables are considered as false and, on that basis, rejected.

### **The Relationship Between Social Awareness and Organisational Climate**

The findings of the study identify social awareness as a key predictor of organisational climate in deposit money banks in Rivers State. The position builds on the evidence on the significant impact of social awareness on all three measures of organisational climate – trust, recognition and perceived organisational support. Managers who can comprehend an individual or group's unspoken emotions are endowed with the quality of Empathy. They listen well and easily grasp other's perspectives. Empathetic leaders explain their ideas in ways other people understand and work well with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. This strengthens group and organisational corresponds and supports the development of positive climate outcomes.

Managers who understand all aspects of an organisation: where formal and informal power is held, relationships that provide opportunities for networking, conflicts, unspoken norms, and guiding values have the quality of social awareness. A person with high social awareness and intelligence understands subtle etiquette and knows how to listen to people. This person can typically motivate others to cooperate, and people generally enjoy being around her/him. Socially aware managers know how to present themselves well while still being genuine and authentic and as such have a good standing with their subordinates and the various stakeholders of the organisation. In this way, they not only drive collaboration but enhance the perceptions and climate of the organisation.

Managers, who influence, are skilled at appealing to others and developing mutual trust from key players in a situation. They are engaging and persuasive with individuals and groups. As coach and mentor, managers who take interest in assisting others know the individuals with whom they work, including their strengths and goals. They give constructive feedback to coworkers and help others focus on growth opportunities. These managers make an effort to recognize different perspectives and manage conflicting situations. They focus on helping everyone find the common ground upon which they can agree. They allow everyone's opinion and direct efforts toward finding an agreeable resolution and diffuse conflict. A manager who inspires can move people. Their articulation of a shared mission causes others to join them. They show others the purpose behind their day-to-day work. These managers build an atmosphere of cooperation, helpfulness, and respect. They help others commit to the group's effort. They help a team develop an identity, positive relationships, and spirit.

Social awareness comes from the ability to be socially aware and to manage relationships intelligently: the ability to pick up on emotions in other people and to work out what's really going on with them; to appreciate another person's perspective; to understand and appreciate the impact of one's communication on others; to cultivate rapport and be attuned with a broad diversity of people; to manage interactions effectively; to engage with others for mutual benefit. Leaders with this skill remain calm and clearthinking in stressful situations and hold on to their emotional balance. Managers with achievement orientation hold themselves and others to high standards. They work toward challenging and measurable goals. They continuously seek ways to improve the perceptions workers hold of them and of their organisation. These managers see every situation as an opportunity, even those that may look like a setback to others. They see other people positively and expect them to do their best. They expect the changes in the future to be for the better. Managers with adaptability skill handle many demands while staying focused on their goals. Uncertainty is both expected and comfortable for these managers. They flex in response to new challenges and are quick to adjust to sudden changes.

## CONCLUSION

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 uncondusive 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.

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