

MENTORING AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT: THE MODERATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN PAINT MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This work examined mentoring and employee commitment, the moderating role of emotional intelligence in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The objective of the study was to examine the extent to which dimensions of mentoring such as career support, psychological support and knowledge sharing affects measures of employee commitment such as affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. The study adopted the explanatory cross sectional survey research design. A sample size 248 was drawn from a population of 700 staff of 19 paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha. After validation by the supervisor, 248 copies of structured questionnaire were administered while 240 copies were retrieved. Mean and standard deviation were used for the univariate analysis, Spearman Rank Order Correlation was used for the bivariate analysis while Partial Correlation was used for the multivariate analysis. The following findings were made: there is a significant positive relationship between career support and employee commitment It was also found that individual emotional intelligence significantly moderates the relationship between mentoring and employee commitment. The study concluded that mentoring is a major motivational tool that enhances employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study recommended more deliberate effort on the part of managers and senior staff to strengthen mentoring relationships so as to promote employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Human resource is one of the most important assets of paint manufacturing firms. Employees are the ones who man the machines and production processes in order to achieve optimal productivity level. The commitment level of employees in paint manufacturing firms goes a long way in determining the extent to which organizational goals and targets are met. Employees' commitment refers to the willingness and dedication, workers show in remaining productive in an organization. It has to do with strong passion, love, and a sense of bond with the organization. Committed manufacturing workers are known for identifying with organizational goals and making personal sacrifices in order to achieve set goals (Agada, 2019). The success of various departments in paint manufacturing firms is usually a function of the efforts of few committed workers.

Employees' commitment has remained a serious challenge in many paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. Some of the workers show negative attitude to work such as absenteeism, and reluctance to duties. A study conducted by Michael (2018), revealed that there is an increase in employees' resignation and a high level of intention to quit among

workers in the Nigerian manufacturing sector. In his study, Okpara (2004) found that Nigerian Managers reported lower levels of commitment as compared to US managers. Similarly, Okpu and Jaja (2014) had regrettably noted that “there is still a problem of getting the commitment of workers, especially in Nigerian Organizations”. While this scenario is attributable to many factors, Uchendu (2017) identified negligence of mentoring relationships as one of the factors capable of reducing employees’ happiness and bond with their organizations.

Mentoring and employee commitment have been examined by previous researchers from different perspectives: Brian, et al (2008) examined the role of mentoring in promoting organizational commitment among black managers and it was found that mentoring significantly enhanced the organizational commitment among black managers. Ayşe, et al. (2013) examined the impact of mentoring on organizational commitment and job satisfaction of accounting-finance academicians employed in Turkey and the study revealed that mentoring increased the commitment level of academicians in Turkey; impact of coaching and mentoring in the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Company Limited Bonny (Mba & Godday, 2015). The study revealed that coaching and mentoring have significant positive influence on the organizational performance of Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Company Limited. Similarly, Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) studied the effect of mentoring on employees' performance in selected family business in Abuja, Nigeria and they found that mentoring showed significant positive effect on employees’ performance. Akpan, et al (2017) studied the relationship between workplace mentoring strategies and sustainable commitment and a positive relationship was found between mentoring and sustainable commitment of University Teaching Hospital Staff in South-South Region of Nigeria. Another study done by Uchendu (2017) revealed that there is a relative positive relationship mentoring and job satisfaction of bank workers in Nigeria. In the same vein, Michael (2018) theoretically examined mentoring as a tool for enhancing employees’ intention to stay and it was found mentoring is a veritable tool for sustaining employees’ intention to stay. In another research effort, Agada (2019) examined the relationship between workplace social environment and employees’ commitment in road transportation firms in Rivers State. The study found that enabling workplace social environment is positively correlated with employees’ commitment. However, none of these studies showed how mentoring interacts with employees’ commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. This is the knowledge gap which this study seeks to fill. This gives credence to this study.

Concept of Mentoring

Mentoring is one of the greatest tools in developing and empowering individual competence. The term mentoring originated from Greek Mythology in Homer’s Epic Poem titled “The Odyssey”. In this poem, Odysseus, king of Ithaca went to fight in the Trojan War and entrusted his kingdom to mentors, who served as the teacher of Odysseus son Telemachua. Mentor’s task was to educate, train and develop the youngster to fulfil his birth right and become king of Ithaca (Kaye & Jacobson 1995).

To meet the continuity challenge facing business world, strategies are put in place by organizations to mentor their information managers to be best of themselves and for the organization. Paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State Rivers State are not left out. Adeyemi, (2013) postulates that mentoring is among the few tools used/needed for preparing tomorrows’ skilled employees and is also used to strengthen organizational capabilities, intelligence, build organization knowledge, and sustain the organization

competitive advantage. The term mentoring has been used to describe many different types of relationships in the research training context. This includes academic advising, research or laboratory supervision, evaluation, informal support, and career coaching (Jacobi, 1991). Mentoring promotes diversity by providing equal opportunity for every employee to grow professionally and by eliminating barriers to equity in opportunities for development. Schelee (2000) posit that tends in equipping, developing, shaping and preparing mentee (information managers) on how to accomplish task with minimum or no supervision. Mentoring is use as a technique of attaching the higher skilled or experienced person with the goal of making lesser skilled person grows and develops specific competencies. Mentoring does not only support in polishing the abilities and competencies of the individuals and groups but also provides positive alteration of employees' skills to their improved performance and organizational outcomes (Ahmad & Shahzad 2014).

Organizations especially paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State considers mentoring as a cost saving activity as its managing is less expensive. It provides high return in the form of delivery and transferring of knowledge and educating each other about how to achieve the organizational goals. Seniors and professionals in the form of mentors share their knowledge and information and experience with mentees which creates and develop in them a deeper sense of loyalty to the organization and increases their commitment to their tasks (Hutcheson, 2006; Ofobruko & Nwakoby, 2013). Thus, mentoring nourishes and relaxes the employees' behaviour as it guides them to develop and adjust themselves in their working environment. Consequently, it enables them to provide positive feedback. Planned mentoring ask for reduction in cost as in these programs mentors and responsibility perform in their workplace and, mentor with high competencies and position in hierarchy behaves as a model of changing attitudes and learning (Benabou, 2000; Indermun, et al 2014).

Concept of Employee Commitment

Employee commitment has been described by scholars in several heights. This is a concept that tries to establish the sense on how employees are emotionally attached and dedicated to their respective jobs. However, as asserted by Dixit and Bhati (2012), the concept of employee commitment is derived from an article titled "The Organization Man" written by Whyte in 1956. It refers to the willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations, which are seen as self-expressive. Salancik (1977) described commitment as that state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his action and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities of his own involvement. Dixit and Bhati (2012) defined commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Committed employees actually show high level of consistency in their participation and dedication to organizational activities. They do not give flimsy excuses why a task or goal cannot be accomplished. Employees who are usually absent from meetings, and ongoing projects cannot be said to be committed.

To Brown (1969) commitment has to do with something of the notion of membership; it reflects the current position of the individual; it equally has a special predictive potential, providing predictions concerning certain aspects of job performance, motivation to work, spontaneous contribution, and other related outcomes of organizational workers called "employees".

Okpu and Jaja (2014) outlined the following definitions of employee commitment given by various authors:

Daan (2013) described employee's commitment in the following ways:

- (i) The extent to which an employee is being bound to a goal or the determination in respect of a goal, regardless of the origin of the goal in his/her organization.
- (ii) The extent to which a staff believes in a goal and wants to achieve as long as it has to do with the organization
- (iii) A psychological state that binds an individual to the organization.
- (iv) Connection to a job: the probability that someone continues to work in that job and feels psychologically bound to it. This is regardless of whether it is fulfilling or not.
- (v) Someone's attitude towards their work.

Wiener and Vardi (1980) describe organizational commitment as: "behavioural intention or reaction, determined by the individual's perception of the normative pressure".

While O'Reilly (1989) sees it as: "an individual's psychological bond to the organization, including a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organization".

Porter et al (1974) defined organizational commitment as: "an attachment to the organization, characterized by an intention to remain in it; identification with the values and goals of the organization; and a willingness to exert extra effort on its behalf". Becker (1960) posits that: "commitment comes into being when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activities."

Mowday (1979) define commitment as: "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization characterized by strong acceptance or a belief in an organization's goals and values; willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization."

Allen and Mayer (1990) claimed that commitment is "a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization". Committed employees have a sense of binding or link to the organization; an obligation to remain and contribute unsparingly to the success of the group they belong. Employee's commitment in the view of Meyer and Allen (1997), is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and has implication for the decision to continue membership in the organization." A committed employee is perceived to be one who stays with the organization even in turbulent times, attends work regularly, protects company's assets and expends his time and energy willing to help achieve group goal.

Individual Emotional Intelligence

The psychologist Edward Thorndike was the first to explore the concept of emotional intelligence in 1920. He defined emotional intelligence as the ability to think, understand, manage and act appropriately in social human relationships. It was not until years later that Daniel Goleman and Karl Albrecht further explored and popularized this concept. Goleman (2006) asserts that emotional intelligence is concerned with the best interests of others; hence it goes beyond sheer self-interest. Emotional intelligence is basically understanding

and getting along with people, above and beyond the skills to interact and cooperate successfully with them (Albrecht, 2009).

Hence, emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to interact effectively with others in any social situation (Crowne, 2009). Hopkins and Bilimoria (2008) imply that to be considered socially intelligent one has to be adept at human relationships not just about them. Emmerling and Boyatzis (2012) describe emotional intelligence competency as the ability to be aware of, understand and act on emotional information about others that leads to effective performance.

Albrecht (2009) elaborates the five major element of emotional intelligence as situational radar, presence/ bearing, authenticity, clarity and empathy. Nonetheless, the consistent aspects of emotional intelligence among all researches in this field include: knowledge of the social situations, accurate interpretation of the social situation and the skills to behave appropriately in that social situation. Emotional intelligence requires skills that allow employees to get along with one another (Riggio & Reichard, 2008). Albrecht (2009) also terms people with low emotional intelligence as 'toxic' people. They make others feel angry, inadequate, frustrated and devalued through their toxic behaviours that directly contribute to conflict, alienation and worse, animosity in the workplace (Wawra, 2009). On the other hand, people with high emotional intelligence have a 'nourishing' personality and presumably possess magnetic powers that attract others to them (Albrecht, 2009).

Joseph and Lakshmi (2010) elaborate that an individual's emotional intelligence depends on a lifelong learning process. Socially intelligent employees exhibit confidence in social situations, demonstrate a genuine interest in their fellow workmates, are assertive and appropriate in expressing their feelings and emotions, are capable of adapting, understanding and responding effectively, and show a great level of self-awareness (Joseph & Lakshmi, 2010).

Daniel Goleman is credited to popularizing the concept of emotional intelligence to the academia and general public in 1995 through his book "Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ". Emotional intelligence as defined by Goleman (2006) is the ability to identify, understand, use and manage one's and other's emotional states effectively. This involves an intellectual process that leads to the use of those feelings to motivate, plan and achieve. Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the ability to recognize, manage and influence one's and other's emotions (Keating & Harper, 2013). Therefore, emotional intelligence can basically be described as an interconnection between feelings and thinking; Chopra and Kanji (2010) put emotional intelligence in simple terms as an individual's self-perceived skills of their emotional abilities.

There are four major clusters of emotional behaviours as outlined by Goleman and Boyatzis (2008); self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Even so, Emmerling and Boyatzis (2012) felt that emotional intelligence is best understood as a competency. They went further to describe emotional intelligence competency as an individual's ability to perceive, understand and use their own emotional status leading to effective performance.

In the view of trait-based model (Petrides et al., 2007) emotional intelligence can be used to refer to an individual's perception of their own emotional abilities, and encompasses behavioural dispositions and self-perceived emotional capabilities.

Goleman (1995) claimed in the book that emotional intelligence could be a better success predictor of job performance and leadership ability than IQ. These claim led to more academic studies and researches exploring the concept in later years (Petrides et al., 2007;

Antonakis et al., 2009; and O'boyle, et al, 2010). Further studies show that emotional intelligence plays an important role in the organization, direction and motivation of human activity (Chopra & Kanji, 2010). Individuals who are emotionally intelligent exhibit better skills in people-oriented services such as recruiting, sales, management and customer service (Antonakis & Ashkanasy 2009). Current studies suggest that emotional People from different generations and different cultures are transforming office life. The popular notion is that generational differences in the work place lead to differences in personality and motivation. Most personality differences observed are better explained by age. Job security and immersion to work are among motivational drivers that cut across all generations in the modern workplace.

Moderating Role of Individual Emotional Intelligence in the Relationship between Mentoring and Employee Commitment

The hypothesized moderating role of individual emotional intelligence in the relationship between mentoring and employee commitment is predicated on the fact that without individual's ability in ensuring that they manage and understands their emotions/feelings and that of other, the relationship that exist between the mentor and mentee will terminate. For instance, a committed employee (mentee) will be unable work effectively if his or her own feelings is not considered by his or her own mentor. Thus, the state or extent to which employee (mentees) discharges their duties is anchored on how their mentor manger and understands their psychological or emotional state of mind. Supporting the above view, Goleman (2006) averred that emotional intelligence involves an intellectual process that leads to the use of one's feelings to motivate, plan and achieve commitment in workplace. From the above discussion, the following null hypotheses are formulated:

Ho₁: There is no moderating relationship of individual emotional intelligence on mentoring and employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the Social Exchange Theory. The Social Exchange Theory was propounded by George Casper Homans in the year 1958 (Olannye, 2014). Social exchange theory postulates that "give and take" forms the basis of almost all relationships though their proportions might vary as per the intensity of the relationships. The main assumptions of the theory are as follows:

- i. In a relationship, every individual has expectations from his/her partners. The extent to which such expectations are satisfied determines the strength and survival of the relationship;
- ii. Good relationships are mutually beneficial and not suppose to be one sided. An individual invests his time and energy in relationship only when he gets something out of corresponding or higher value from it (Olannye, 2014).

Young or less experienced employees have the social expectation of being guided and encouraged by superior and more experienced managers (Neil, 2018). Going by the assumptions of the Social Exchange Theory, the extent to which experienced managers and superior officers share their wisdom, exchange, advice, and career support to less experienced subordinates, the happier and more committed mentees become. On the other hand, dearth of meaning mentoring relationship is capable of making workers feel alienated and deprived thereby leading to dwindling commitment level (Ayşe, et al., 2013; Mba &

Godday, 2015; Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2015; Akpan, et al., 2017). Thus, the Social Exchange Theory predicts employee commitment as a reciprocal response to satisfying mentoring efforts in paint manufacturing firms.

METHODOLOGY

The explanatory cross sectional survey research design was adopted for the study.

Research The population of the study consisted of nineteen (19) registered paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The above information were obtained from Paint Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (PMAN), Rivers State Branch. The sample size of this study was Two Hundred and Forty-Eight (248) employees of the Paint Manufacturing Firms. The above sample size is obtainable using the Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determination Table of 1970. Considering the disparity in the staff strength of the organizations, Bowley's (1960) Population Appropriation Formula was applied to determine the sample unit for each of the organizations. Structured questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire will be titled

Cronbach Alpha via SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. In line with Nunally's (1970) reliability criterion of 0.70, the instrument was deemed reliable since the questionnaire item with the least cronbach alpha coefficient shows a reliability coefficient of 0.745 which is above 0.70. Table 1 below shows the cronbach alpha reliability result.

Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test Results

Variables	Dimensions/Measures	Items	Alpha
Mentoring	Career Support	5	.827
	Psychological Support	5	.761
	Knowledge Sharing	5	.782
Employee Commitment	Affective Commitment	5	.706
	Normative Commitment	5	.745
	Continuance Commitment	5	.814

Source: SPSS Output, 2020.

The data presentation and analysis of the work were done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0. Descriptive statistical tools such as arithmetic mean and frequency tables were used to conduct univariate analysis (analysis of each of the sub-variables). The bivariate analyses were carried out using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. While the partial Correlation was used to run the multivariate analysis.

Results

Multivariate Analysis

Individual Emotional Intelligence, Mentoring and Employee Commitment

Ho₁: There is no moderating relationship of individual emotional intelligence on mentoring and employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Correlations of Individual Emotional Intelligence as a moderator to between Mentoring and Employee Commitment

Control Variables			Mentoring	Employee
Individual				Commitment
Emotional Intelligence				
-none- a				
Mentoring	Correlation	1.000	0.686**	0.617**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	0	240	240
Employee Commitment	Correlation	0.686**	1.000	0.636**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	240	0	240
Individual Emotional Intelligence	Correlation	0.617**	0.636**	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	240	240	0
Mentoring	Correlation	1.000	0.537	
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	Df	0	240	
Employee Commitment	Correlation	0.537**	1.000	
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	Df	240	0	

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

Source: SPSS Output

Table above reveals r value of 0.686 at a significant level of 0.00 showing a correlation between mentoring and employee commitment. This for sure, is a positive relationship and it is accurately significant. The partial relationship controlling for individual emotional intelligence, in any case is a strong positive association (0.537) and quantifiably huge. Therefore, the significant value of 0.00 which is less than the alpha level of 0.05 implies that the increase between mentoring and employee commitment is significantly attributable to individual emotional intelligence as a moderating variable. This implies that the extent to which mentoring positively influences employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt Rivers State is moderated by individual emotional intelligence as an advantage.

Individual Emotional Intelligence on the relationship between Mentoring and Employee Commitment

The test of hypotheses ten on moderating variable individual emotional intelligence revealed that there is a significant strong relationship between mentoring (career support, psychological support & knowledge sharing) and employee commitment in terms of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. This implies that individual emotional intelligence influence level of employee commitment. The state or extent to which employee (mentees) discharges their duties is anchored on how their mentor manager and understands their psychological or emotional state of mind. Supporting the above view, Goleman, (2006) which averred that emotional intelligence involves an intellectual process that leads to the use of one's feelings to motivate, plan and achieve commitment in workplace. So to say, good mentorship is anchored on how the mentor manages or controls his or her feelings to enable them cope with others (mentee) so as to achieve their organizational goals and set objectives.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analyses of data and discussion of findings, the study concluded mentoring is a major motivational tool that influences employee commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria. It was also concluded that individual emotional intelligence moderate between mentoring and employee commitment in terms of affective, normative and continuance commitment in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Emotional state of the mentee should be considered, because an emotional imbalance employee is likely to be less committed.
2. Managers should adopt and encourage mentoring strategy such career support and endeavor exposing less experience employee to relevant contacts in line with their career pursue.
3. There should be a form of informal relationship that organizations should encourage to allow the less experience employee interacts with the high experience employees on issues outside work setting.
4. Paint manufacturing firms should encourage discussion of previous happenings of the organization among employees this could make them solve similar problems when necessary.

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