

**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND ITS IMPACT ON
ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE (A STUDY OF
ECOBANK PLC YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA)**

**Nicholas Ihentuge Achilike^{1*}, Johnson Onyereibe Nwokeiwu² & Isaac
Emeka Enujioke**

^{1,2}Department of Business Administration, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike
Ikwo, Ebony State, Nigeria

³Department of Business Administration, Coal City University, Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria

*achnico@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This study focused on employee relationships and organisational performance: a case study of Ecobank Nig Plc. The study sought to investigate the relationship between employee relations and its effects on organisational performance. This study adopted a survey method using questionnaires as the instrument for data collection. Data were analysed using Pearson's Moment correlations with the help of SPSS Social Science package version 21. Findings showed that healthy relationships have significant positive correlation with employee relationships ($r = 1.00, p < .05$). The promotion of effective communication among employees has a positive correlation with employee relationships ($r = .396, p < .05$). The application of emotional intelligence has a significant positive correlation with employee relationships ($r = .686, p < .05$). The ability to maintain harmonious relationships is very important for the survival, prosperity and growth of any business and creating good and healthy employee relationships lead to better performance. Focusing on building an effective and sustainable employee relationship is critical for the growth and realization of organizational objectives, creation of a convivial work environment and constant connection with employees enhances employees' work performance. Furthermore, the creation of recreational activities for employees occasionally promotes serious bonds among employees. Finally, maintaining a positive attitude towards employees and maintaining effective communication channels encourage understanding and learning among employees.

Keywords: Employee Relation, Organizational Performance, Healthy Relationship, Effective Communication and Emotional Intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

The achievement of organizational objectives will be elusive if there are poor and unhealthy relationships among employees. Therefore, it is critically important for organizational managers to create and maintain a conducive environment that will result in a harmonious relationship among employees and employers. This is because good employer-employee relations are essential to the organizational success and achievement of its objectives. After all, they inspire employees to work better and produce more results (Burns, 2012). Maintaining healthy employee relations in an organization is a prerequisite for organizational success. Strong employee relations are required for high productivity and human satisfaction. Employee relations generally address avoiding and resolving issues concerning individuals that might arise from or influence the work scenario. Strong employee relations depend on a healthy

and safe work environment, the involvement and commitment of all employees, incentives for employee motivation, and an effective communication system in the organization. Healthy employee relations lead to more efficient, motivated and productive employees which further leads to an increase in the production level. While it is possible that employees enjoy working at these organizations because they are successful, it is also evident that effective human relations practices lead to positive financial outcomes more often than positive outcomes lead to good practices.

Furthermore, with the growth in technology over the last decade there has been an increase in the number of banks in the country as well as the number of institutions offering financial services. This has increased the level of competition for the few customers in need of financial services. To survive and thrive in a globally competitive marketplace, organizations must adopt a broad strategy that gives them a sustainable competitive advantage. Rapid technological growth and increased competition have forced Ecobank Plc to aggressively compete for employees to remain competitive. This trend has increased interest in the effect of employer/employee relationship on enhanced performance.

The increasing significance of people for organizational success has been observed to correspond with the rise of strategic human relation management (SHRM) as a field of study on a global scale. Research has shown that employee relations practices have the ability to create firms that are more intelligent, flexible, and competent than their rivals through the application of policies and practices that concentrate on recruiting, selecting, training skilled employees and directing their best efforts to cooperate within the resource bundle of the organization. (Rawashdeh & Aldwan, 2012).

There is an ongoing debate on how employee/employer relations affect the performance of banks. Despite these research findings, the emerging field of employee relation practices suffers from lack of unity in theory and inconsistency in research methodology hence has led to many opposing findings and rich competing theoretical perspectives especially among the different sectors of the economy. Very little has been reported on its effect and corporate performance in the banking industry. According to Cook (2000) and Som (2008), most of the work on HRM and performance has been undertaken in the manufacturing sector mainly in the US and recently in the last decade in the UK, as such this work may not be suitable for explaining the relationship in a developing economy (Adegoroye & Moruf, 2012). Thus, it is very difficult to generalize findings from one country to another or even from one sector to other sectors. There is need for a theoretical link on exactly how specific human relation strategies and performance are interrelated.

Statement of the Problem

Employees in any organization play a critical and important role in achieving its goals and objectives. Many scholars have argued and postulated that making employees happier and healthier re-enforces their propensity to work towards the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives, which will eventually lead to increases in productivity and profitability (Fisher, 2003; Harter et al, 2006; Judge, 2002), and that improving their motivation requires that workers perceive a match between their own goals and those of the organization (Kanfer, 1999).

Among the vital determinants of workplace performance is the employee relationship which has been given little or no priority in most organizations. The aspect of employee-employer relations and how it relates to performance has not been given the attention it deserves by management because employees in any organization are the most valuable assets in that organization. Hence, their workplace environment greatly impacts whether the organization achieves its goals. Happy employees are productive employees. Happy employees are a result of good relationship among themselves. An employee with a positive attitude usually enjoys the work that they do and feels empowered and recognized for their contributions.

When employees are not happy, there will be noticeable complacency in the discharge of their responsibilities which will automatically result in their clients being unhappy, greatly affecting the performance of the organization. For this reason, management should take care of relationships with employees or among employees seriously. Furthermore, when employees develop bad attitudes towards each other, team spirits are definitely and generally dragged down; resulting in a decline in employees' performance which automatically possess an enormous challenge to the organization. Thus, healthy interpersonal relationships at work are absolutely essential as they help employees develop a mutual understanding among themselves which ultimately plays a large role in ensuring that the objectives of the organizations are equally achieved (Bratton & Gold, (2003). To achieve strong and healthy relationships between the organization and the workforce, a comprehensive employee relations program should be put in place, and strategies for enhancing and sustaining healthy relationships between employees and employers should be put in place. Therefore, this research endeavours to determine specifically those factors that enhance cordial relationships among employees, factors affecting employee relationships and ways of mitigating such challenges in Ecobank Plc Yola Metropolis Borno State.

Objective of the study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the impact of employee relations on organizational performance in Ecobank Plc Yola, Borno State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees.
2. To determine the extent to which the promotion of effective communication enhances employee relationships.
3. To determine the extent to which the role and application of emotional intelligence among employees affects organizational performance

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What are the various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees?
2. To what extent does the promotion of effective communication among employees enhance employee relationships?

3. To what extent does the role application of emotional intelligence among employees affect organizational performance?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated for the study

1. The various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationship among employees have no significant positive impact on employee relationships.
2. The extent to which effective communication among employees is promoted does not have a significant positive effect on employee relationships.
3. The role and application of emotional intelligence among employees has no significant positive effect on organizational performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Employee Relations

Many scholarly definitions have been adduced to the concept of employee relations since it came to limelight in the 20th century as a replacement for the concept of industrial relations. Some authors view employee relations from the angle of creating an enabling and conducive work environment for a pleasant and good interpersonal relationship in the organization for the strategic purpose of promoting work harmony, all of which are geared towards the achievement of the organizational objectives. Donohoe (2015) defines employee relations as relationship that exists among employees or between employees and employers. Axiomatically, an effective employee relationship places more emphasis on the human element in the organization, which results in greater employee enrolment, greater employee satisfaction and improved organizational productivity. In view of the significant role played by employee relations in organizations, Yongcai (2010) asserts that employee relations should be seen and classified as a distinct and specialized discipline in human resource development and management. In line with that assertion, Jing (2013) further stated that employee relations is the organization's critical and thought-out effort in adopting several methods and mechanisms to regulate relationships among employees in the organization for the purpose of achieving organization's goals and objectives.

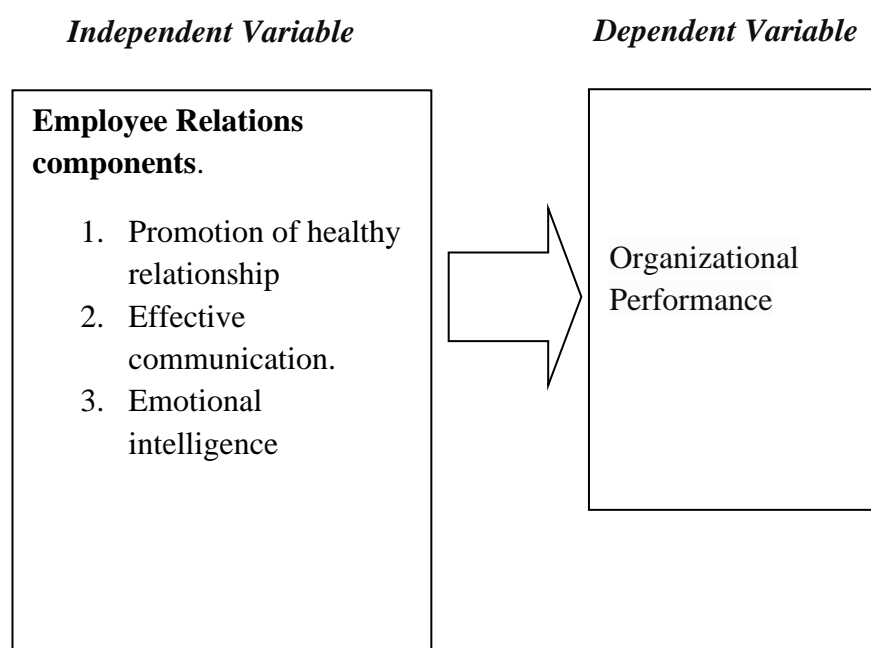
Employee Relationship Management

Employee relationship management refers to managing the relationships among various employees in an organization (Achilike, 2020). The relationship can be between an employee and a fellow employee or between an employee and the employer as well as between employees at the same level. For the organization to perform better it is important that the employees are comfortable with each other, share a good rapport and work in close coordination with a common goal and objectives. People feel responsible, dedicated and motivated to do good work and enjoy their work rather than taking it as a burden. Importantly, management promotes healthy employee relations in the workplace to extract the best out of each individual. Competition among organizational employees is essential because it should not promote negativity or any kind of enmity among the employees in the organization. To achieve a healthy

employee relationship in an organization, the organization can choose to adopt the following steps as employee management mechanisms, as postulated by Achilike (2020):

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of employee relations and its impact on organizational performance.



The model indicates the components of employee relations that affect organizational performance.

Promotion of Healthy Employee Relationships

Organizations whether business or no business organizations may perform extremely better and achieve their cardinal goals and objectives, if the organization prioritizes the promotion of a healthy and awful relationship among employees and equally between employees and employers. Therefore, it is highly germane and necessary for organizational managers to ensure and create a conducive atmosphere toward the promotion of healthy relationships among employees. This is because the success of every organization relies on its employees which has been adjudged by many scholars as the engine of organizational growth and productivity. Healthy work relationships with employees not only create a positive work environment but also help in the growth of an organization (Armstrong, 2015). According to him, good relationships are more about employees' mutual understanding and admiration of each other. However, it is a process that requires genuine and sincere effort, understanding ability, time and empathy. Ozor (2013), asserts that a healthy employer-employee relationship begins when an employer recognizes the employees' strong points and gives him/her the necessary wherewithal and support to utilize his/her strengths. By doing so, you are not only creating awareness but also an appreciable recognition of the stuff the person is made of. Conversely, knowing what your own strengths are, and discovering the commonalities and

differences between you can create moments where both parties begin understanding each other's natural reflexes.

Effective Communication

Communication in the workplace is critical to establishing and maintaining quality working relationships in organizations. It is fundamental and vital to all administrative functions and is the means of transmitting information and making oneself be understood by another or others (Sanchez & Guo, 2005). Communicating effectively is an art and must be practised effectively at the workplace for better output and successful achievement of the goals of the organization. Communication is a major challenge for administrators because they are responsible for providing information, which results in efficient and effective performance in organizations. The study of communication is important because every administrative function and activity involves some form of direct or indirect communication. These include: planning, organizing, leading, monitoring, administering and/or communicating with and through other people. This implies that all person's communication skills affect both personal and organizational effectiveness (Brun, 2010). It seems reasonable to conclude that one of the most inhibiting forces to organizational effectiveness is a lack of effective communication (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010). Good communication skills are very important to one's success as an administrator. It is therefore essential for administrators to endeavour to become effective communicators.

At the centre of any successful employee relationship is the important aspect of keeping employees informed about general matters affecting their work role. Communication and consultation within the organization contribute to an increased understanding of management actions and inactions. Misunderstandings arising from day-to-day activities and improved trust between employers and employees can be resolved through communication. Communication is a two-way process that needs to be performed for upwards as well as for downwards communication. Formal communication channels are those that are officially acknowledged and approved, such as circulars, meetings and posters. According to Cole (1997), organizations should acknowledge the supreme importance of formal communication channels in the organization, and ensure that adequate mechanisms exist to stimulate and channel the exchange of information, suggestions, feelings and opinions between management, the environment and employees.

Emotional Intelligence

Importantly, emotional intelligence plays a crucial and significant role in enhancing and achieving effective employee relationships in an organization. Emotional intelligence (EI), according to Fuge (2014), is the way in which employees can manage and control their emotions to better understand each other in the workplace. This implies that the ability and capacity of employees to understand the emotions of each other in the workplace will enhance stress management and enable employers and employees to handle their relationships in a cordial and professional manner. According to Hassan et al. (2014), being emotionally intelligent is the ability to effectively understand each other, ensure and cultivate the habit of having a positive relationship with others, and successfully cope with daily work demands, challenges and pressures arising from the workplace. Fuge (2014), observed that in the workplace, there are constant interactions that occur among the people working in the same environment, with both positive and negative attitudes or behaviours that impact the overall operations of the organization. Therefore, possessing and exhibiting the right emotional

intelligence (EI) and engaging in intentional efforts to increase one's emotional quotient will make the employee more efficient, productive and successful in the workplace.

Mayer et al. (2000) view emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thoughts and in words, and regulate emotion in oneself and others. Therefore, employees in an organization should be able to exhibit emotional intelligence when they accurately perceive the emotional reactions of others in the same organization, possibly in a state of conflict, and obviously comprehend the danger that those negative reactions will pose for them. He then tries as much as possible to control and positively regulate his own emotions, and by expressing those emotions effectively, he is able to control, guide and regulate the emotions of others.

Cherniss (2001) posited that emotional intelligence is very important and crucial in the workplace because of its contagious nature. According to him, emotional intelligence is contagious because a single person can negatively influence the emotional tone of a group of people working in the same organization. He went on to say, that the emotional intelligence of a boss can influence the relationship with his employees resulting in the development and use of the employee's talent that is crucial for organizational effectiveness.

In view of the above statements, emotional intelligence can be regarded or said to involve a combination of competencies that allow a person or employee to be aware, understand, regulate and in control of their own emotions, and able to recognize and understand the emotions of others, and to use this knowledge and understand their success and the success of others. According to Mcpheat (2018), employees or people who have high levels of emotional intelligence easily understand the physical, mental and social impact that negative emotions have on their body systems, minds, and relationships with others and equally have the ability or understand how to pursue and achieve goals. By implication, they are able to moderate their own emotions so that their emotions support their activities and enhance their quality of life. Therefore, people with highly developed emotional intelligence are proven to be more successful in the workplace because they can control and understand their emotions and behave that way and, in this way, a harmonious workplace environment is achieved and organizational performance enhanced.

Organizational Performance

According to Meek (2009), organizational performance is the ability of an organization to achieve its goals more effectively and efficiently, it refers to how well an organization performs in different aspects. To achieve high organizational performance, the organizational managers should ensure that they discuss with their employees about what makes the organization great, how it brings value to customers, and how employees make that possible. Otley (1999), opines that the performance and success of every organization are dependent upon the performance of employees and other factors such as the environment in which the organization operate. According to Achilike (2020), performance is a set of financial and nonfinancial indicators that offer information on the degree of achievement of objectives and results. Performance may be understood differently depending on the person involved in the assessment of the organizational performance (e.g. performance can be understood differently from a person within the organization compared with one from outside).

Indicators of Organizational Performance: The indicators of organizational performance are as follows:

- Profitability
- Market Share
- Customer Satisfaction

Organizational Profitability

Profit is the difference between a firm's revenue and the cost. Profitability is one of the indicators of a firm's performance, the greater the profitability, the better the performance is, in addition to nongovernmental organizations, no firm whose aim is not to earn a profit exist. The essence of the grand strategies designed by the firm is to see a way through which they can increase their profit. Income, margins and earnings are all similar to profit. Lord Keynes remarked that 'Profit is the engine that drives the business enterprise'. The survival of a firm depends on its ability to make adequate profit to take care of its financial obligations. Firms are faced with various financial obligations, they are responsible to their owners, creditors and even to the host community, therefore, they must look for means to generate profit, and such profit should be able to stand the taste of time. Every business should earn sufficient profits to survive and grow over a long period of time. Profit maximization is the sole objective of most firms, and profit maximization is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to say that a firm performs very well because it has other objectives; social objectives and shareholder interest maximization.

Market Share

The market share is the proportion of the market that a firm possesses in the industry, in this sense; the market refers to the consumers of a firm's product in a particular industry. A higher market share is one of the key indicators of better performance. When a firm's market share is growing the firm must be up and doing because the competitors will likely copy the firm's technology, which requires the firm to work on their product. Differentiation is a generic strategy identified by Michael Porter which the firm can use to maintain or increase its market share.

Increased market share is one of the objectives of a firm; Michael Porter identifies five forces that influence the competitiveness of firms. An industry that has too many competitors competes more for market share, for example, in the micro preoperative industry, there are fewer competitors, in fact the market share of the few firms in this industry is very high, as is their profitability. Market share is used to measure the performance of the firm irrespective of the state of the economy; in strategic management, when the market share of a firm is stable after the occurrence of these events, it indicates that the firm's performance is buoyant. Special alert control is one of the strategic control measures put in place to assess the position of a firm after the occurrence of an event in the environment. Strategic management is one of the ways through which a company can increase its market share in a competitive industry.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the level of utility derived from the consumption of a firm's product. The ability of a firm to keep its customers satisfied determines its performance. There is an

adage that “customers are kings”. The business exists first to create value that satisfies customers’ needs and want at the same time to make a profit. The strategic marketing process begins with situation analysis to develop marketing programs to satisfy customers’ needs. The best way to succeed as a business in satisfying your customers is to first identify the customer’s need and then be able to create goods and services to satisfy those needs. To ensure effective satisfaction of customers, first, they must understand the target market and the differences in the tastes and preferences of individual consumers. Strategic environmental scanning enables the firm to monitor the environment to understand the changes in customers’ tastes. The change in technology changes the product design which changes the taste of customers. An advanced technology improves product or service quality, which leads to better satisfaction of customers’ needs and wants. Applying the strategic management model in a competitive banking industry is important because it fosters customer satisfaction and increases sales. In such a system, organizational knowledge and learning are successfully preserved and advanced. There is global competition in banking services and the ever-dynamic business environment requires the production of goods and services that are capable of satisfying customers. The firm must constantly monitor the environment to observe changes in customers’ tastes and preferences to manufacture goods and services that are able to satisfy the consumer’s tastes. According to Oki (2014), customer satisfaction exists in five forms; contentment, pleasure, relief, novelty, and surprise.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study looked at the following theories:

Elton Mayo’s Theory Human of Relations

The human relations movement began the Hawthorne experiments which were conducted from 1924-1933 at the Hawthorne plant of the western Electric Company in Cicero, Elton mayo, known as the father of the Hawthorne studies, identified the effect or the bias that occurs when people know that they are being studied. It was discovered that informal work groups, the social environment of employees, friendless association with co-workers, and flexible interactions between bosses and employees, worked together to increase people’s productivity. Hence, a concept of the social man motivated by social needs, wanting rewards, and the job relationship and responding more to work group pressures than to management control was adopted by Mayo and his group.

Herzberg Motivation Theory (Two Factor Theory)

He reported that job satisfaction is related to employees’ achievement, recognition and taking responsibility for their job. In other words, job satisfaction was related to fulfilling higher level needs. He called the factors that satisfy the high needs of employees’ motivators. Herzberg theory has become very influential and many organizations have adopted it to improve their workplace. Herzberg’s Motivation Theory model, or Two Factor Theory, maintains that there are two factors that an organization can adjust to influence motivation in the workplace. These factors are: Motivators: Herzberg’s Motivation posited the following as regards to the motivators:

Achievement: A job must give an employee a sense of achievement. This will provide a proud feeling of having done something difficult but worthwhile.

Which can encourage employees to work harder? They are found within the job itself. *Hygiene factors*: The absence of hygiene factors will cause employees to work less hard. Hygiene factors are not present in the actual job itself but surround the job. Frederick Herzberg developed this model in 1959. He did this by interviewing more than 200 professionals. The interviews delved into when the interviewees were at their most and least content with their jobs. However, his critics noted that there is no evidence of a relationship between employee satisfaction and productivity and that his theory was too simple to address complex situations. Nevertheless,

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Azuka (2008) studied the relationship between employee relations strategies and performance in Awka Metropolis Anambra State, Nigeria. The study examined the relationship between employee relations strategies and the performance of commercial banks in Awka Nigeria. The study indicated that the current technological advancements and more friendly regulations in the banking sector have made banking activities interesting and very attractive for many institutions to offer financial services which in turn have led to increased competition. Owing to increased competition among commercial banks as the result of the technological advancement of banking activities, commercial banks need to develop strategies that will further improve their performance for them to have an edge over their competitors. The study adopted a mixed methods approach. The data were analysed via tables, graphs and percentages. The hypotheses formulated were tested via correlation and regression analysis with the aid of statistical computer software (SPSS and Ms Excel). The findings of the study indicated that employee relations strategies have a significant positive effect on the performance of commercial banks in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. Therefore, the proposed direct relationships between a set of employee relation practices and employee performance were empirically validated. It is recommended that commercial banks develop and document strategies that are linked with the overall bank strategy.

Egwuatu and Adeniyi (2012) carried out a study on assessing employee relations and organizational performance among selected small and medium Business in Oyo State Nigeria. The study seeks to find out how well employers can create a positive work environment which satisfies the emotional needs of the employees and at the same time influence to a great extent the level of organizational performance. The study went further to explore the relationship between effective employee relations and organizational performance. The study as a means of achieving this objective used secondary data from journals and other relevant literature. The findings revealed that because of the inability of some small and medium scale industries to take care of the psychological needs of the employees, the employees' attitude towards their responsibilities have been on the negative down turn and that have resulted to low level of commitment on the side of the employees. This has equally led to some staff exhibiting, what he called oscillation work attitude (employees pretending to be working, while in the actual fact, they are not working). The study to mitigate these negative attitudes of employees recommended among others that employers should create a good enabling environment for workers to work effectively, by paying living wage to workers to provide for their psychological needs. This will propel the propensity of the employees to work harder in the realization of the organizational goals and objectives.

Ikoku and Olisaemeka (2016) had a study on the effect of effective communication on employee relationship in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. The success of

any organization is not only determined by the quality of personnel available, but how adequate these employees relate and communicate with one another in realization of the organizational objectives. Over time, many organizations have not taken the issue of communication among employees serious in their organization. This is due to the negative notion that allowing employee communications all the time may bring about laziness among employees and hamper the level of work rate. Consequently, this study investigated the effect of communication on employees' productivity, using Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri as a case study. The study applied structured questionnaires to a sample size of 450 drawn by proportional stratified random sampling. The data generated was analyzed using mean score, standard deviation and grand mean. The findings of the study show that majority of the respondents believe that effective communications among employees enhances efficiency and productivity.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used was cross sectional, explanatory and descriptive research design. The population of the study was 120 employees of Ecobank Plc comprising of five branches of the bank in Yola Metropolis. The whole 120 were studied and administered with the questionnaires. Both primary and secondary data were used. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guide, survey and observation. Data was analysed using Pearson's Moment Correlations with the help of SPSS Social Science package version 21.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Research question one: What are the various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees.

Table 1: Perceived various ways and management practices that will enhance and promote positive employees' relations

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	DA	SD	FREQ	MEAN	DECISION
1	Ensuring employees freedom of association	60 (50%)	30 (25%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	120	4.0	Accepted
2	Encouraging Teams work among employees	30 (25%)	60 (50%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	120	3.8	Accepted
3	Ensuring good working conditions and attractive work incentive	40 (33%)	40 (33%)	5 (4%)	15 (13%)	20 (16%)	120	3.5	Accepted
4	Ensuring effective communication between management and employees	35 (29%)	45 (38%)	5 (4%)	15 (13%)	20 (16%)	120	3.5	Accepted
5	Ensuring discipline among employees	50 (42%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	20 (16%)	20 (16%)	120	3.5	Accepted
6	Fair treatment of employee	50 (42%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	20 (16%)	20 (16%)	120	3.5	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on Perceived various ways and management practices that will enhance and promote positive employees' relations. With regards to item one, the data shows that 60 (50%) of respondents strongly agreed, 30 (25%) of the respondents Agreed, 10 (8%) of the respondents were undecided, 10 (8%) of the respondents Disagreed and 10 (8%) of the respondents strongly agreed. The mean score is 4.0 is a strong indication that majority of the respondents accepted that to ensure employee relations in an organization, employees should allow freedom of association.

On item two, 30 (25%) respondents strongly agreed, 60 (50%) of the respondents agreed, 10 (8%) of the respondents were undecided, 10 (8%) of the respondents disagreed and 10 (8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The high mean of 3.8 is an indication that majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the proposition that encouragement of team work in an organization was one of the panaceas to good positive employee relations.

With reference to item three, 40 (33%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 40 (33%) of the respondents agreed, 5 (4%) of the respondents were undecided, 15 (13%) of the respondents disagreed while 20 (16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a low mean score of 3.5 which directly implies that majority of respondents agreed that ensuring good working conditions and attractive work incentives promotes harmonious employee relation. The results indicate that when employees are positively motivated, they will be happy.

For item number four, 35 (29%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 45 (38%) of the respondents agreed, 5 (4%) of the respondents were undecided, 15 (13%) of the respondents asserted disagreed while 20 (16%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a high mean score of 3.5 which directly implies that majority of respondents agreed that ensuring effective communication between employees and employers contributes to good employee relations.

As regard to item five, 50 (42%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 20 (16%) of the respondents agreed, 10 (8%) of the respondents were undecided, 20 (16%) of the respondents asserted disagreed while 20 (16%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a high mean score of 3.5 which directly implies ensuring discipline among employees by management promotes employees' relations.

Finally, with reference to item six, 50 (42%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 20 (16%) of the respondents agreed, 10 (8%) of the respondents were undecided, 20 (16%) of the respondents disagreed while 20 (16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 3.5 which directly implies that majority of respondents agreed that ensuring fair and equal treatment of employees is one of the factors that promote employee relations.

Research question two: To what extent does the promotion of effective communication among employees affects organizational performance.

Table 2: Effect of promotion of effective communication among employees on organizational performance.

S/N	Item	SA	A	UD	DA	SD	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Promotion of effective communication enhances free communication between employees and employer on organizational matters	35 (29%)	50 (42%)	5 (4%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	120	4.0	Accepted
2	Effective communication makes management understands employees needs	50 (42%)	40 (33%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	120	4.1	Accepted
3	It enhances transparency on management activities and promotes warm relationship among employees, thereby contributing to organizational growth	60 (50%)	30 (25%)	5 (4%)	15 (13%)	5 (4%)	120	4.0	accepted
4	It makes the delivery information process to employees quick and clear, which enhances prompt treatment of organizational matters	30 (25%)	50 (42%)	10 (8%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	120	4.2	Accepted
5	Promotion of effective communication between employees and employers ensures that critical and important employee's suggestions and opinions are considered in decision making that will ensure organizational growth.	40 (33%)	40 (33%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	120	4.0	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on Effect the effect of promotion of effective communication among employee on organizational performance in Ecobank plc. With regards to item one, the data shows that 35 (29%) respondents strongly agreed, 50 (42%) agreed, 5 (4%) were undecided, 20 (16%) agreed and 10 (8%) strongly agreed. The mean score of 4.0 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that promotion of effective communication enhances free communication between the employee and the employer on organization matters. That such free communication enables the employee to understand the activities of the organization better towards the achievement of the organizational goals.

On item two, 50 (42%) respondents strongly agreed, 40(33%) agreed, 10(8%) were undecided, 10(8%) disagreed and 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.1 was an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that effective communication in the work place makes management to understands employee needs with the view of addressing them. This implies

that when employee needs are identified and well address, such employee will definitely be a happy employee and will do everything possible to see to the realization of the organizational objectives.

With reference to item three, 60(50%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 30(25%) agreed, 5(4%) undecided, 15(13%) disagreed while 5(4%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 4.1 which implies that majority of respondents accepted that effective communication among employees enhances transparency on management activities and promotes warm relationship among employees, thereby contributing to organizational growth

For item number four, 30(25%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 50(45%) agreed, 10(8%) undecided, 10(8%) disagreed while 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 4.1 which implies that majority of respondents accepted that the high mean of 4.2 depicts that the respondents accepted that effective communication in an organization makes the delivery information process to employees quick and clear, which enhances prompt treatment of organizational matters.

Finally, for item number five in this table 4:2, 40(33%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 40(33%) agreed, 10(8%) undecided, 10(8%) disagreed while 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 4.0 which implies that majority of respondents accepted that Promotion of effective communication between employees and employers ensures that critical and important employee's suggestions and opinions are considered in decision making that will ensure organizational growth.

Research question three: To what extent does the application of emotional intelligence among employees affect organizational performance?

Table 3: Effect of application of emotional intelligence on organizational performance

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	UD	DA	SD	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	Development of a positive work culture through emotional intelligence instigates growth	40 (39%)	40 (39%)	10 (6%)	10 (8%)	10 (8%)	120	4.0	Accepted
2	Enhances organizational creativity among team leaders and that leads to innovation	50 (42%)	40 (39%)	10 (3%)	10 (11%)	10 (6%)	120	4.1	Accepted
3	The application of emotional intelligence enables team members to put in their best.	40 (33%)	45 (38%)	5 (4%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	120	4.1	Accepted
4	Emotional intelligence helps managers and leaders make right decisions in difficult time.	30 (25%)	40 (33%)	10 (8%)	20 (16%)	20 (16%)	120	4.0	Accepted

5	Application of emotional intelligence leads to development of strong bonds between a leader and their team and such reduces organizational conflict.	20 (16%)	60 (50%)	10 (8%)	20 (16%)	10 (8%)	120	4.0	Accepted
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Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on how the application of emotional intelligence among employees helps in development of positive work culture of employees. . With regards to item one, the data shows that 40 (39%) respondents strongly agreed, 40(39%) agreed, 10 (8%) were undecided, 10 (8%) disagreed and 10 (8%) strongly disagreed. The mean score is 4.0 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that the application of emotional intelligence among employees helps the development of employees’ positive work culture. This implies that when a positive work culture is developed by employees in the organization, it will result to an increase in productivity.

On item two, shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on how emotional intelligence enhances organizational creativity among team leaders that leads to innovation. 50 (42%) respondents strongly agreed, 40 (39%) agreed, 10 (8%) were undecided, 10 (8%) disagreed and 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The high mean of 4.1 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that with reference to item three, 40(42%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 45(38%) agreed, 5(4%) undecided, 20(16%) disagreed while 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The result shows a high mean score of 4.1 implies that majority of respondents accepted that emotional intelligence enhances organizational creativity among team leaders and such creativity leads to innovation that will impact positively on the organization.

With reference to item three, shows the mean distribution of the opinion of the respondents on how the application of emotional intelligence enables members put in their best. 40 (33%) respondents strongly agreed, 45 (38%) agreed, 5 (4%) were undecided, 20 (16%) disagreed and 10(8%) strongly disagreed. The high mean of 4.1 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that the application of emotional intelligence in the work place enables the team members put in their best.

Item number four, shows the mean distribution of the opinions of the respondents on how the application of emotional intelligence helps managers and leaders make right decisions in difficult time. 30 (25%) respondents strongly agreed, 40 (33%) agreed, 10 (8%) were undecided, 20 (16%) disagreed and 20(16%) strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 4.0 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that the application of emotional intelligence helps managers and leaders make right decisions in difficult time.

Item number five, shows the mean distribution of the opinions of the respondents on how the application of emotional intelligence leads to development of strong bonds between a leader and their team and how such bonds reduce organizational conflict. 20 (16%) respondents strongly agreed, 60 (50%) agreed, 10 (8%) were undecided, 20 (16%) disagreed and 20(16%) strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 4.0 is an indication that majority of the respondents

accepted that the application of emotional intelligence leads to development of strong bonds between a leader and their team and such bonds reduces organizational conflict.

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One

Restatement of Hypothesis One

Ho: The various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees has no significant impact on employee's relations in Ecobank Plc.

Hi: The various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees has significant impact on employee's relations in Ecobank Plc.

Table 4: Showing Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Coefficient between promotion of healthy relationship and employee relations

	Healthy relationship	Employees relations
Healthy relationship Pearson Correlation	1	1.000(**)
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	120	120
Employees relations Pearson Correlation	1.000(**)	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	120	120

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); Source: Author's Compilation SPSS Output 2021

From the correlation table (table 4), the correlation value of 1% is a relationship that is very weak. The p-value of the variable is less than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 < 0.00$). This shows that there is positive and weak correlation between healthy relationships and employee relations, which is also significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This means that we uphold the alternate hypothesis which states that the various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees has significant positive impact on employees' relations.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Restatement of Hypothesis Two

Ho: The extent at which the promotion of effective communication among employees does not have a significant positive effect on employee relations

Hi: The extent at which the promotion of effective communication among employees has significant positive effect on employee relations

Table 5: Showing Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Coefficient between effective communication and employee relations

		Effective communication	Employee Relations
Effective Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.396
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.050
	N	120	120
Employees relations	Pearson Correlation	.396	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.050	
	N	120	120

Source: Author's Compilation SPSS Output 2021

From the correlation table (table 5), the correlation value of ($r=.396$) is a relationship that is strong. The p-value of the variable is greater than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 > 0.50$). This shows that there is positive and strong correlation between effective communication and employee relations, which is also insignificant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This means that we uphold the alternate hypothesis. This implies that the extent at which the promotion of effective communication among employees has significant positive effect on employee relations

Test of Hypothesis Three

Statement of Hypothesis Three

Ho: The role and application of emotional intelligence among employees has no significant positive effect on organizational performance.

Hi: The role and application of emotional intelligence among employees has significant positive effect on organizational performance.

Table 6: Showing Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Coefficient between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Performance

		Emotional Intelligence	Organizational performance
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.686(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Organizational performance	Pearson Correlation	.686(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); Source: Author's Compilation SPSS Output 2021

From the correlation table (table 4), the correlation value of ($r=.686$) is a relationship that is strong. The p-value of the variable is less than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 < 0.00$). This shows that there is positive and strong correlation between emotional intelligence and organizational performance, which is also significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This means that we uphold the alternate hypothesis. This implies that the application of emotional intelligence has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in Ecobank plc.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of hypothesis one revealed that the various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees has significant positive impact on employee's relations.

A correlation value of 1% is a relationship that is very weak. The p-value of the variable is less than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 < 0.00$). This result is in agreement with Nebolisa (2021) who found out that pleasant co-worker's relationship was a very important and critical factor to organizational performance. The study was also in tandem with the findings and recommendations of Ajie (2018) who found out that good employee relations was critical instrument of achieving organizational objectives and in realization of that, organizations should employ all the necessary strategies in ensuring a healthier relationship between employees to promote organizational goals.

The result of hypothesis two revealed that the extent at which the promotion of effective communication among employees has significant positive effect on employee relations. From the correlation table (table 5), the correlation value of ($r=.396$) is a relationship that is strong. The p-value of the variable is greater than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 > 0.50$). This result agrees with David (2011) who concluded that communication in the work place plays a very important role in achieving employees' relations. According to him, communication has to be transparent and precise for warm relationship to develop among employees. The employees must be very clear about what is being expected of them, that the roles and responsibilities of employees must be dully communicated to them effectively for an organization to succeed.

Result of hypothesis three indicated that the role and application of emotional intelligence on employees has significant positive effect on organizational performance. From the correlation table (table 6), the correlation value of ($r=.686$) is a relationship that is strong. The p-value of the variable is less than the level of significance of 1% ($1.000 < 0.01$). The result equally is in line with the findings of Arimie (2020) who found out that possessing emotional intelligence and engaging in internal efforts to raise one's emotional quotient will make employee more efficient, productive and successful in the work place. The result is also in line with the conclusion of Adama (2017) who stated that emotional intelligence plays a very important role in enhancing effective employee relations in an organization. He went further to say that the inability of managers to recognize the emotional intelligence components of employees will result in treating employees in a disdainful manner and such will affect organizational performance.

Findings

1. The various ways of enhancing and promoting healthy relationships among employees has significant impact on employee's relations in Ecobank Plc. The results indicate that such

ways of promoting healthy relationship among others include: ensuring freedom of association, encouragement of team work etc.

2. The extent at which the promotion of effective communication among employees has significant positive effect on employee relations. The role and application of emotional intelligence among employees has significant positive effect on organizational performance.
3. Finally, the findings also indicate that the application of emotional intelligence in the work place helps in the development of positive work culture which will lead to growth instigation and equally, enhancement of organizational creativity among team leaders that will eventually, translate to innovation

Conclusion

This study focused on determining the impact of employee relations on organizational performance. Since all the sub independent variables (Healthy relationship, effective communication and application of emotional intelligence had significant positive relationship on the dependent variable (organizational performance), it implies that employee relation has positive correlation with organizational performance. Therefore, it is imperative to note that the need or the importance for employee relation in an organization cannot be overemphasized or over estimated. This is because maintaining harmonious relations is very important for the survival, prosperity and growth of any business.

Recommendations

1. Organizations should put more efforts and seriously focus more on building an effective and sustainable employee relationship that will ensure the growth and realization of the organizational objectives.
2. Organizational Managers should try as much as possible to always connect with their employees by creating an enabling and convivial environment where employees will feel free to carry out their responsibilities.
3. Employers should from time to time put up or organize recreational activities for employees to promote bond among them. This equally will improve and promote the relationship between the employer and the employees.
4. Organizations should develop and maintain a positive attitude to employers and should maintain an effective communication channel that will encourage understanding and learning.

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