EVALUATION OF HUMAN RELATION SKILLS OF PERSONNEL MANAGERS OF BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract
Business organizations that have personnel managers with good human relation skills are more likely to survive than those that do not have. Accordingly, this study evaluated human relation skills among personnel managers in Anambra State. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. The descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 161 personnel managers in the 161 industries in Anambra State. The whole population was studied. A researcher developed instrument duly validated by experts was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administrating twenty (20) copies of the instrument on 20 personnel managers in Imo State. Using the Chronbach Alpha, the reliability index of the instrument was found to be 0.86. The researcher and three assistants’ distributed copies of the instrument. Mean ratings were used to answer the research question while ANOVA was used in testing the hypothesis. The results indicated that the personnel managers of business organizations in Anambra state are less efficient in some human relation skills. Among others, it was recommended that the personnel managers in business organizations operators in Anambra State should attend in-service training programmes on human relation skills to enable them perform efficiently in their business.

Keywords: Management; Business; Personnel Managers; Human Relations; and Skills.

Introduction
Human Relations (HR) is the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization (such as a business, government agency, or a nonprofit organization) and the public. Human relations may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment (US Bureau, 2015). This differentiates it from advertising as a form of marketing communications. Human relation is the idea of creating coverage for clients for free, rather than marketing or advertising (Zhao, 2016). An example of good human relations would be generating an article featuring a client, rather than paying for the client to be advertised next to the article. The aim of human relations is to inform the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees and other stakeholders and ultimately persuade them to maintain a certain view about the organization, its leadership, products, or political decisions. In business activities, human relations professionals typically work for marketing firms, businesses and companies, government, government agencies and public officials as HRO (human relation officers) and nongovernmental organizations and nonprofit organizations. Jobs central to HRO include account
coordinator, account executive, account supervisor and media relations manage (Elliot, 2012).

HR specialists establish and maintain relationships with an organization's target audience, the media and other opinion leaders. Common responsibilities include designing communications campaigns, writing news releases and other content for news, working with the press, arranging interviews for company spokespeople, writing speeches for company leaders, acting as an organization's spokesperson, preparing clients for press conferences, media interviews and speeches, writing website and social media content, managing company reputation (crisis management), managing internal communications, and marketing activities like brand awareness and event management (Mark, 2014).

Success in the field of human relations requires a deep understanding of the interests and concerns of each of the client's many publics. The human relations professional must know how to effectively address those concerns using the most powerful tool of the public relations trade, which is publicity.

A fundamental technique used in human relations is to identify the target audience and to tailor messages to be relevant to each audience (Rubel, 2007). Sometimes the interests of differing audiences and stakeholders common to a public relations effort necessitate the creation of several distinct but complementary messages. These messages however should be relevant to each other, thus creating a consistency to the overall message and theme. Audience targeting tactics are important for the human relations practitioners because they face all kinds of problems: low visibility, lack of public understanding, opposition from critics and insufficient support from funding sources (Elliot, 2012). Human relations experts possess deep skills in media relations, market positioning and branding. They are powerful agents that help clients deliver clear, unambiguous information to a target audience that matters to them.

As a result of the tasks involved in effective human relations in business organizations, some skills are therefore required from the people involved, which in the case of this study, are the personnel managers.

The human relation skills approach drew much of its inspiration from the Hawthorne investigations. This approach places much emphasis on the importance of morale and informal social relationship as determinants of organizational effectiveness.

The human relation skills focus on the ability of the personnel manager to work with, understand, and motivate those around him. Before a personnel manager can influence somebody to work better and more happily, he need to understand the person; why he behaves the way he does; his feelings; his likes and his dislikes. Each person requiring the services of a personnel manager thinks differently and reacts differently from others in different situations. These differences make him a distinct individual with an unlimited range of traits like kindness, dishonesty, gentleness, arrogance etc. These traits are affected by family characteristics and ties, colleagues, hobbies, religion, politics etc.

Each personnel manager also has experiences and pressures that confuse or trouble him leading to some distortions in thought and a tendency to keep other people at a distance. As a result, he therefore wears a mask that covers up or conceals his actual feelings. At the same time, people are sensitive to what other people do to them or think about them. They perceive injustice, love, fairness, bullying, careless treatment, abuse etc. It is therefore
necessary for a personnel manager who is a public servant to establish and maintain a good relationship so that he can influence others.

In view of the above, Robbins and DeCenzo (2004) describe human relation skills as “people skills”. They include coaching, facilitating and supporting others. They also involve the honesty of the personnel manager in dealing with other and the values he or she lives by. The human relation skills of a personnel manager imply the understanding of the manager that by helping others to succeed and letting them get the credit, he or she is doing the right thing for them, the organization and him or herself (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2004). In the light of the above, it is necessary to evaluate the human relation skills of personnel managers in business organizations in Anambra State.

**Research Question**
How efficient are the personnel managers in human relation skills in business organizations in Anambra State?

**Hypothesis**
Male and female personnel managers of business organizations in urban and rural centres do not differ significantly in the mean ratings of their efficiency in human relations skills.

**Research Method**
The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study comprised 161 respondents made up of the 161 personnel managers in the 161 industries in Anambra State. Data collected from Ministry of Commerce and Industry in September 2015 revealed that there are 161 industries operating in Anambra State. The whole population was studied. A researcher developed instrument duly validated by two experts from business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka was used for data collection. The instrument was made of two parts “A” and “B”. Part “A” was on the background of the respondents while part “B” contained the items on human relation skills. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administrating 20 copies of the instrument on 20 personnel managers in business organizations in Imo State. Using the Chronbach Alpha, the reliability index of the instrument was found to be 0.86. The researcher together with three assistants’ distributed copies of the instruments. A total of 161 copies were printed, distributed, correctly filled and returned. Mean ratings were used to answer the research question while ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance.

**Results**
**Research Question**
How efficient are the personnel managers in human relation skills in business organizations in Anambra State?

The demographic information on the respondents is presented in the table 1.
Table 1: Demographic Information on the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>URBAN CENTRE</th>
<th>RURAL CENTRE</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anambra State Ministry of Commerce and Industry, September, 2015.

Table 1 shows demographic information on the respondents. According to the table, there are 50 male and 57 female personnel managers in urban centre and 24 male and 30 female personnel managers in business organizations in Anambra State.

Table 2: Mean (X) Scores of the Respondents on Personnel Managers in Human Relation Skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/ N</th>
<th>Aspects of Human Relation Skills</th>
<th>VHE (4)</th>
<th>HE (3)</th>
<th>E (2)</th>
<th>NE (1)</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>RMK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Getting along with other workers in the office</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintaining confidentiality in office</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Receiving visitors to the ministry /department</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>HE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Delegation of responsibilities in the office;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Motivating others to work hard in the office</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Accepting responsibilities for works done in the office.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average mean (x) 2.55 E

Statistical Information for table 2: Rating scales = 4, 3, 2 and 1 for HE, E, LE and NE = Responses for each item.

\[ \bar{X} = \frac{4 \times V + 3 \times W + 2 \times B + 1 \times VB}{V + W + B + VB} \]

Average \( \bar{X} = \frac{\sum X \times N}{N} \)

Where N = Number of items.

The results presented in table 6 indicate that the personnel managers do well in receiving visitors to the ministry or department (3.39); in maintaining confidentiality in office (2.82); in delegating responsibilities in office (2.31) and in accepting responsibilities for works done in the office (2.95). The personnel managers are however bad in getting along with workers in office (1.90) and in motivating others to work hard in office (1.91). On the average, the personnel managers do well in human relations (2.55).
Hypothesis
Male and female personnel managers of business organizations in urban and rural centres do not differ significantly in the mean ratings of their efficiency in human relations skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>z-cal.</th>
<th>z-crit.</th>
<th>Sig. Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>P&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>159</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decision: P. <.05; accept.
The results in table 2 show that the calculated z-value of 0.25 is less than the critical value of 1.960 at 159 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Summary of Findings
Based on the results of data analysis, the summary of major findings are as follows:

1. Personnel manager in the Anambra State business organizations perform well in human and public relation skills except in getting along with co-workers and motivating one another in office.
2. Male and female personnel managers differ significantly in the mean ratings of efficiency in human relations skills.

Discussion of Results
The presentation and analysis of data relating to the research question and hypothesis as shown in tables 2 and 3 respectively indicate that the personnel managers do well in some human relations skills and do bad in few others. Results in table 2 indicate that the personnel managers do well in receiving visitors to the ministry or department (3.39); in maintaining confidentiality in office (2.82); in delegating responsibilities in office (2.31) and in accepting responsibilities for works done in the office (2.95). These findings are in agreement with the earlier report by Anyaduba (1991) where the respondents were found to be courteous, helpful and thoughtful in dealing with their executives business associates, visitors, clients and customers.

It was also found in this study that personnel managers are bad in getting along with co-workers and in motivating each other to work hard in office. The findings agree with those of Mach (1976) that most personnel managers are discourteous, rude and cannot get along with co-workers. The above findings also confirm an earlier report by Robbins and DeCenzo (2004) that most personnel managers fail to understand that, by helping others to succeed, they are doing the right thing for themselves and for their organization. Lastly, the results in table 8 indicate that male and female personnel managers rated their performance in human relations in the same direction.
Conclusion
From these findings, the researcher concludes that the personnel mangers lacked some human relation skills necessary for high performance in office. Since there are areas where the personnel managers perform well and there some other areas where they need improvement, it is therefore concluded that the personnel managers should continue to improve on the areas of strength while engaging in in-service training to overcome areas of deficiencies.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Personnel managers in business organizations in Anambra State should attend in-service training programmes on human relation skills to enable them perform efficiently in their positions.
2. Personnel managers in business organizations in Anambra State should motivate one another and maintain a healthy working relationship with one another in office in order to perform better in office and as well, improve on their human relation skills.
3. The Personnel managers in business organizations in Anambra State should assist one another grow professionally through proper guidance in office and in-service training programmes.

REFERENCES
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