AN EVALUATION OF THE VALUE OF RELATIONSHIP IN A WORKPLACE

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Abstract
This Paper titled An Evaluation of Relationship in a Work Place believed that relationship in a work place is a powerful Instrument that will enhance harmony amongst staff, increase productivity and profit margin of every organization. The paper examined the concept of work relationship, values and Ethics that can keep relationship going, the necessity for interpersonal skills, human relation as well as the value of relationship in a work place. The paper concluded that collaboration and team work amongst workers would act as a catalyst for increasing productivity. It recommends amongst others that managers should esteem relationship very high in every organization because relationship is rooted in values.

Introduction
No human being lives in a vacuum of isolation. Even an insane has to interact or relate in one way or another with other members of the society to survive. A society is as good or bad as the type of relationship that exists among its members. Relationship is rooted in values and values are ideals that are characterized and respected by members of the society. Values do not only keep the society together but form the fulcrum, of its development and happiness. Workplaces or organizations are established to provide goods and services to people, the ultimate aim which is to establish themselves on the lane of prosperity and fame. To accomplish this aim, workplaces must internally and
externally demonstrate such values as integrity, humour, care, hard work, honesty, promptness etc in their relationship. According to the Advanced Learner's Dictionary, relationship is the way in which two people, groups or countries behave towards each other or deal with each other. Relationship in the work place should be likened to a life-wire which would enable individuals to interact, display interpersonal skills and human relations that would enhance achievement of goals. The value of relationship in a work place is the moving force for the survival of any organization. Okoji and Adegbenjo (2010) posit that no firm or organization can thrive and succeed if relationships amongst workers are unhealthy and bedeviled with rancorous intrigues. On the contrary, an organization that witnesses cordial and healthy interactions or healthy relationships amongst its workers is bound to be prosperous and at the end of the day achieve its goals and objectives.

There is no way in which organisation could function properly without normal interactions amongst the workers. This interaction amongst workers could rightly be expressed through relationships that exist between them in a particular department. It could be enhanced between workers in a department and workers in other departments. It could also be enhanced between one department and another department; a unit and other units; and a section and other sections in the organisation.

**Concept of Work Place Relationship**

Relationship is a word that is commonly used in every day activity. Okoji and Adegbenjo (2010) said that relationship refers to connection; the way one feels, behaves, or interacts. Work relationship is the interaction of workers amongst themselves; that is the connections existing amongst workers; the feelings of workers for one another; the behaviours of workers towards one another. No organization can function at all without the human beings relating with one another on daily basis. It is the daily interaction of workers in their work place that brings about life to that organization. This life is sustained by the relationships existing amongst the various workers in that organization. A work place relationship is the ability to work with colleagues, boss or employees. If people have a good working relationship, they are on good terms, and can work effectively together. To have a good working relationship with people that means that you are on good terms with them and can work effectively with them. You can submarine your career and work relationships by the actions you take and the behaviors you exhibit at work.

One of the greatest losses to an organization is having no real, satisfying relationships in the workplace. Successful organizations are the ones that create an environment that encourages people to create relationships that encourage people to be their creative, whole selves.

**Values and Ethics that can Keep Relationship Going**

Ethics is a vital part of the theory of value which directs our conducts and moral judgments in all issues affecting the next person you meet in the home, school, or at work. Ethics is derived from a latin word “ethos” which means conduct, custom or
character. Oxford Dictionary defines ethics as sets of moral principles especially ones relating to or affirming a specified group, field, or form of conduct. According to Osisioma (2001) in Umoru (2011) Ethics are moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conduct or an activity such as work ethics, business ethics, medical ethics, etc. Ethics therefore, is a system of moral principles and rules. It is the study of what is good and bad, right and wrong, just and unjust. It is the study of how decisions affect other people's right and duty, the moral rules that people apply in making decisions and the nature of the relationship among people. Beauchamp and Bowie (1979) said that they are beliefs that guide individuals in their dealings with other individuals and groups, stakeholders and provide a basis for deciding which behavior is right and proper. Jones and George (2003) posit that ethics help people determine moral responses to situations in which the best course of action is unclear. Ossai (2009) posit that ethics is a code of conduct governing human behavior. He further state that business ethics is a written or an unwritten set of rules and regulations concerning proper behavior by firms and other industrialists in the pursuit of a business objective. Business ethics deal with what is right or wrong in business. A business organization is an open social system. All social systems are concerned with ethics which are good and acceptable moral values and norms of behavior.

Values and ethics are important in the workplace to help keep order, ensuring that an organization runs smoothly and remains profitable. Each individual organization makes its values and ethics known almost immediately after hiring an employee, or many times, during the interview process. And in many businesses, no matter how well an employee performs, if he doesn't follow workplace values and ethics, it can result in termination. Ohakwe (2012) posit that ethics are socially accepted codes of behavior applicable in immediate surroundings. For example, there are dos and don'ts in an organization that makes up its ethics and when you are inside the premises of an organization, you behave accordingly while you are much more relaxed when you are in your family where there might be another set of ethics. They are rules for deciding proper conduct.

Some common values of an organization are as follows:

- **Dedication:** How hard an employee works, or how much effort she puts forth, can go a long way. Obviously, companies want results, but most employers prefer a worker who gives an honest effort to one who might be considered a “natural” at the job, but is otherwise disruptive. Either way, when an employee signs on with a business, she is agreeing to perform her best to help the company flourish.

- **Integrity:** An important aspect of workplace values and ethics is integrity, or displaying honest behavior at all times. For instance, an employee who works at a cash register is expected to balance the drawer and deposit the correct amount of money at the end of the night. Integrity in the business world also
might mean being honest when turning in an expense report or not attempting to steal a sales account from a co-worker.

- **Accountability**: Employees in all industries are expected to be accountable for their actions. That means showing up when they are scheduled and on time, and not taking advantage of time allotted for breaks. It also means accepting responsibility for when things go wrong gathering yourself and willingly working toward a resolution. And sometimes it might mean working longer than planned to see a project through to completion.

- **Collaboration**: In almost every industry, workplace values and ethics consist teamwork. That is because most companies believe that when morale is high and everyone is working together, success will follow. So it is important for employees to be team players—whether assisting co-workers on a project, teaching new hires new tasks, or following the instructions of a supervisor.

- **Conduct**: Employee conduct is an integral aspect of workplace values and ethics. Employees must not only treat others with respect, but exhibit appropriate behavior in all facets of the job. That includes wearing proper attire, using language that is considered suitable around the office and conducting themselves with professionalism. Every company enforces its own specific rules on conduct, and typically makes them extremely clear in employee handbooks and training manuals. According to Ohakwe (2012) in addition to relevant skills, employers seek employees who have the personal values, characteristics, and personality traits that spell success. Good personal values are what make the foundation for a good employee.

Some of the values that employers look for in employees are:

1. **Possessing Strong Work Ethics**: Employers value employees who understand and possess a willingness to work hard. In addition to working hard, it is also important to work smart. This means learning the most efficient way to complete tasks and finding ways to save time while completing daily assignments. It is also important to care about your job and complete all projects while maintaining a positive attitude. Doing more than is expected on the job is a good way to show management that you utilize good time management skills and do not waste valuable company time attending to personal issues not related to the job.

2. **Possessing Dependability and Responsibility**: Employers value workers who come to work on time, are there when they are supposed to be, and are responsible for their actions and behavior. It is important to keep supervisors abreast of changes in your schedule or if you are going to be late for any reason. This also means keeping your supervisors informed on where you are on all projects you have been assigned. Being dependable and responsible shows the employer that you value your job and that you are responsible in keeping up with projects and keeping them informed of the things that they should know.
3. **Possessing a Positive Attitude:** Employers seek employees who take the initiative and have the motivation to do their work in a reasonable period of time. A positive attitude gets the work done and motivates others to follow suit without dwelling on the challenges that inevitably come up in any job. It is the enthusiastic employee who creates an environment of goodwill and who provides a positive role model for others. A positive attitude is something that is most valued by supervisors and co-workers and that also makes the job more pleasant and fun to go each day.

4. **Being Adaptable:** Employers seek workers who are adaptable and maintain flexibility in completing tasks in an ever-changing workplace. Being open to change and improvements provides an opportunity to complete work assignments in a more efficient manner while offering additional benefits to the corporation, the customer, and the employee.

5. **Showing Honesty and Integrity:** Employers value employees who maintain a sense of honesty and integrity above all else. Good relationships are built on trust. When working for an employer they want to know that they can trust what you say and what you do.

### Characteristics that Make Up Good and Healthy Working Relationship:

1. **Trust** – This is the foundation of every good relationship. When you trust your team and colleagues, you form a powerful bond that helps you work and communicate more effectively. If you trust the people you work with, you can be open and honest in your thoughts and actions, and you don't have to waste time and energy “watching your back.”

2. **Mutual Respect** – When you respect the people that you work with, you value the input and ideas, and they value yours. Working together, you can develop solutions based on your collective insight, wisdom, and creativity.

3. **Mindfulness** – This means taking responsibility for your words and actions. Those who are mindful are careful and attend to what they say, and they don't let their own negative emotions impact the people around them.

4. **Welcome Diversity** – People with good relationships not only accept diverse people and opinions, but they welcome them, for instance, when your friends and colleagues offer different insights into your decision-making.

5. **Open Communication** – With communication all day whether we are sending emails and IMs, or meeting face-to-face. The better and more effectively you communicate with those around you, the richer your relationships will be. All good relationships depend on open, honest communication.

### The Necessity for Interpersonal Skills in Workplace

Interpersonal skill is virtue that is necessary in a workplace. Interpersonal relationship is the measure of a person's ability to operate within business organizations through social communication and interactions. It also refers to how office workers relate to one another. Communicating with respect to other people within the workplace is necessary to reduce conflict and this in turn increases
participation and cooperation in completing tasks.

People with good interpersonal skill can control their feelings in difficult situation and respond appropriately instead of being overwhelmed with emotion. You can improve your interpersonal relations. Everyone has moments when they feel less than capable. What good interpersonal skills communication have done in such cases was to identify which feelings get in the way of connecting with others and practice new ways of behaving when they find one of those feelings coming on (Umoru2011). In office, you meet people, work with them, and socialize with them. These co-workers are of different age-brackets, they differ in their abilities, background and interests. The way and manner you relate with these people determines how successful you are as an office worker. You will agree with me that no two people behave exactly alike. Just as you may not like how A or B behaves, the same may not necessarily be warm or pleasant but the work you are hired and paid to do must be done. The best way to measure the role of interpersonal relations in any organization according to Luke and Stiegler (1982) is through workers interaction when:

- Meeting people and developing friendship
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Handling criticism
- Dealing with customers

**Benefits of Interpersonal Communication Skills**

There are so many benefits of interpersonal communication skills which include the following:

i) The Interpersonal skills help the office workers to work with others as members of a team. Interpersonal skill enables an office worker to work with diverse people having different colours, gender, or ethnic groups.

ii) It enables the office worker to be cognitively active. The cognitive skills lie on his ability to communicate effectively with everyone. Once an office worker communicates effectively it enhances his personality and instills a lot of confidence in him.

iii) It enables the office worker to appreciate the fact that individual differences exist in work organization and helps him/her to use those differences to his/her best.

iii). Interpersonal skill helps the office workers in negotiation. Negotiation is resolving differences to move forward.

**Principles of Effective Interpersonal Communication**

1. **Treat each other with Respect:** It means we can put the energy we spend 'demoralizing' others and complaining about them to better use, like enjoying ourselves and being present for loved ones instead of continuously distracted by our difficulties with others.

2. **Do not interrupt one Another:** It means we find out that, by not interrupting others and focusing our attention on what they say, we become listened to ourselves a lot
more! Our conversations become more interesting, useful, worthwhile and sometimes even joyful, instead of difficult, tiring, boring or anxious.

3. Be Yourself: It means that we can choose not to do something instead of feel we have to or that we 'should' when we do not want to. It means acknowledging that trying to change others is not very love but is also impossible. It means acknowledging that when others try to change us, it can feel very uncomfortable. It means taking responsibility for our choices and actions – because no-one else can.

4. Do not choose for others: It means recognizing the importance of valuing others' right to choose and not to use our language in a way that assumes we can for them.

5. Speak only for ourselves: It means making more accurate statements with our communication instead of assuming we can speak for others, only speak for yourself. This saves a lot of unnecessary resentment and resistance towards us.

6. Challenge the behavior and not the person: It means that difficult situations can be 'de-personalized' and therefore become an opportunity for learning and creativity rather than a personal 'battle'. It means using a more effective approach to communicating, removing the unnecessary personal labels and destructive comments. It means keeping a focus on the issue, allowing for a more creative response to any difficult situation.

8. Respect confidentiality: It means generating a feeling of trust, safety and in some situations, intimacy through valuing that which is important to another, and acknowledging and respecting their vulnerability in relation to an issue. (Ohakwe 2012)

Human Relation

Human Relation is a necessity in every human endeavor, it is the brain behind the successes achieved in any organization. According to Ezeani and Ewulonu (2011) human relation applies broadly to the interaction of people in all types of endeavour in business, government, social clubs, schools and homes. Much of the interaction is in work organization where people are bounded together in some sort of formal structure to achieve an objective. The employer may be government, cooperative, or private employer, where there is a work related relationship, a formal structure consisting of managers and employees should exist.

According to a manager's understanding, human relation is the integration of people in work situation which motivates them to work together productively, cooperatively and with economic, psychological and social interaction. The three goals of human relations are to get people to produce, to cooperate through mutual interest and to gain satisfaction from their relationships.

Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933) in Ossai (2009) said that managers were responsible for motivating employees to pursue organizational goals enthusiastically, not simply to obey orders. She rejected the notion that managers should be trained to issue orders, instead, they should be trained to work with employees towards the achievement of organizational goals.
Objective of Human Relations
The following are the objectives of human relation;
(a) To assist the manager to develop a keener sensitivity towards other people.
(b) To help the manager realize how attitudes and behavior play a great part in everyday affairs.
(c) To help the manager develop an improved understanding of the problems of reconciling his interest and capabilities with the needs and goals of the organization.

The Role of Communication in Enhancing Good Human Relations
According to a lecture delivered by a representative of the Walton Solomon and Associates of Nigeria, one of the major causes of human relation problems in Nigeria offices is lack of effective communication. Other causes include misunderstanding between the manager and his subordinates, and lack of communication skills among office employees. A good communication system enhances human relations in the office. Workers are afforded the opportunity to interact effectively with the office manager in a free flow communication system, communicating their problems without fear of retribution. Effective communication minimizes the rate of grievances among workers.

Human Relations Personnel
Human relation in Nigeria offices will greatly improve if managers, supervisors, workers and union organizations work together to achieve the objectives. According to Ezeani and Ewulonu (2009) Human Relation Personnel includes:
1. The Office Manager: It is the responsibility of the office manager to develop good human relation climates in his office. Only a few Nigerian office managers make deliberate attempts to promote good human relations in their offices. (Ugwuand Dike, 1980) in Ezeani and Ewulonu (2009). It is found that the behavior of some managers actually caused the poor working atmosphere prevalent in their offices. Other factors that were responsible for poor human relations include favoritism and discrimination shown by office managers, low payment of workers, lack of team spirit and non-participation by workers, and lack of sympathy among managers. It was also found that a poor communication method as well as excessive bureaucracy contributes to the poor human relations experienced in Nigerian offices. Most managers show lack of interest in the personal needs of their workers. They feel that their responsibility for workers is purely confined to the work which the worker does and not to the personal well-being.
2. The Workers: Some Nigerian office workers especially in the public sector fail to relate well with the public. The office worker tends to attend to the public cheerlessly. A cashier at the bank, for example, may attend to a customer with such a frowning countenance that he/she is reluctantly doing the customer a favour. Basic courtesy seems to be lacking. One tends to think that the average Nigerian worker is dissatisfied
with his/her job or with something else. This is because he/she appears to be poorly motivated; he lacks a sense of mission and cares very little about how well he/she serves the public. On the job itself, many workers tend to lack manners, always meddling in the personal affairs of other workers. Eye service and laziness at workplaces is a common practice in many offices. A typical trait of some office workers is to seek favours by affiliating themselves with the manager or boss and telling tales about other workers.

3. The Supervisor: Supervisors must possess human relation skills in giving leadership to individuals and groups. The attitude of a worker towards the organization is largely governed by his reactions to his/her immediate supervisor. For this reason, it is particularly significant for supervisors to possess good human relation skills. A good supervisor helps to reduce employees dissatisfaction. To maintain good human relations in the office, the supervisor should apply the following:

1. Assign work properly and without favour.
2. Review work carefully and suggest ways by which further mistakes can be avoided.
3. Have prestige in the organization and have good morale to serve as an example to subordinates.
4. Be friendly and humorous and be fair in his dealing with employees.
5. Keep his subordinates well informed.
6. Liaise with his manager to encourage upward flow of information.
7. Detect and process any grievances before situation deteriorates beyond conciliation.
8. Secure the cooperation of workers in devising work methods and setting work goals.
9. Select and develop working group whose members like each other.
10. Obtain fair share of privileges and income for his workers.

Maintaining Human Relation
Effective human relations on the job can be achieved by observing the following rules:

i. Do not make others feel unimportant by your actions and use tact in dealing with your fellow workers.

ii. Do not make sarcastic remarks, speak clearly and distinctly.

iii. Do not pry into other people's affairs

iv. Do not monopolize conversations and also avoid pointing out other workers little mistakes

v. Try to listen to your fellow workers, avoid interrupting your co-workers conversation

vi. Avoid getting into arguments with your co-workers

vii. Admit your mistakes and avoid getting angry and blowing up at work.

viii. Accept establishing standards in the organization and do not gloat over other people's failures

ix. Do not fail to praise or commend people for tasks well performed

x. Always be your natural self, regardless of the situation.
**Value of Relationship in a Work place**

No matter your education, your experience, or your title, if you can't play well with others, you will never accomplish your work mission. Relationship is required in every single business that exists. Without other people, you are not an organization but an individual. Building and maintaining good work relationships will not only make you more engaged and committed to your organization; it can also open doors to key projects, career advancement, and raises. Effective work relationships form the cornerstone for success and satisfaction with your job and your career. How important are effective work relationships? They form the basis for promotion, pay increases, goal accomplishment, and job satisfaction.

Strong relationship leads to better work. Not only will creating relationships with customers and colleagues lead to more sales, it can also create more business through word of mouth. Strong relationships also improve internal organization. Strengthening relationships at work place also improves morale, increases engagement and leads to greater satisfaction at work. The staff should devote time in laying foundation of good relationships. Even five minutes a day, if it is genuine, can help to build a bond between you and a colleague. Be honest, avoid gossip, and try to compliment people on a job well done.

Human beings are naturally social creatures – who crave for friendship and positive interactions, just as they do for food and water. So it makes sense that the better our relationships are at work, the happier and more productive people are going to be.

Good working relationships give us several other benefits: our work is more enjoyable when we have good relationships with those around us. Also, people are more likely to go along with changes that the managers want to implement, and they are more innovative and creative.

What is more, good relationships give us freedom: instead of spending time and energy overcoming the problems associated with negative relationship, we can, instead, focus on opportunities.

Good relationships are also often necessary if we hope to develop our careers. After all, if your boss doesn't trust you, it is unlikely that he or she will consider you when a new position opens up. Overall, we all want to work with people we are on good terms with. People also need good relationships with others in our professional circle. Customers, suppliers, and key stakeholders are all essential to our success. So, it is important to build and maintain good relations with these people.

**Conclusion**

The paper concluded that relationship in the workplace is the key to a healthy organizational achievement of goals. The workplace should be about working together, about partnership therefore, collaboration and team work amongst workers would act as a catalyst for increasing productivity.
Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Managers should esteem relationship very high in every organization because relationship is rooted in values.
2. Managers as well as the staff should assume that maintaining a good working relationship is as important as, if not more important than, anything happening at work.
3. Quality relationships are what produce quality products and services. Real productivity begins with employees who are nourished by caring, encouraging coworkers and supervisors. It is an atmosphere where personal creativity can really flourish.
4. Managers should realize that employee's emotional well-being and the healthiness of his or her relationships may not be part of anyone's “official” job description, it is a genuine key to creating quality products and services.
5. Maintain a positive relationship that does not impose on you, the other person, or the work to be done.

References


