Leaders' Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Harmony in Manufacturing Companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Ozoekwe, Christiana

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers, State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Dr. K.T. Konya

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers, State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract: This study investigated the relationship between leader's emotional intelligence and workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted a cross sectional research design. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 253 managers and supervisors from 25 manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers. A Sample size of 155 respondents was calculated using Taro Yamane's formula. Spearman's rank order (rho) correlation coefficient was utilized in testing the stated hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23.0). The finding of the study revealed a significant relationship between of leader's emotional intelligence and each of the measures (collaboration, teamwork and goal-attainment) of workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that managers in the manufacturing companies and other business organizations ought to be self-aware in dealing with their subordinates to attain effectiveness and efficiency.

Keywords: Leaders' Emotional Intelligence, Workplace Harmony, Self-Awareness, Collaboration, Teamwork and Goal Attainment

INTRODUCTION

Manufacturing companies in Nigeria especially in Rivers State are beset with quite a few challenges which include power supply, regulatory issues, a multiplicity of taxes, and trade facilitation issues, country's infrastructural deficiencies, among others. Another challenge of modern-day business is the increased awareness on the part of employees about their rights and privileges. The rise in this awareness has become a pain in the neck of growing management to such concerns that it attempts to diminish the glory of capitalistic mindedness that once bestride the pathway to managing like a colossus (Nwinyokpugi, 2015). Workplace harmony seems to be affected by this development that the frequency of management-workforce conflicts is fast raising in many sectors of world economies.

The major challenge management faces in this scenario is principally how to secure employees' satisfaction, loyalty, productivity and harmonizing same in the organization, especially in the event of escalating industrial and economic crisis without undermining workplace harmony. This is pertinent because the employer's greatest concern is to ensure that workplace harmony exists in the organization, since there is a positive correlation between conflict and failed operational target, delayed projects and profits; thus, impeding the profit making and growth of the organization (Jinyemiena, 2008). A harmonious workplace that guarantees satisfaction of workers and employers' aspirations is essential for enhanced organizational productivity and growth (Osabuohien & Ogunrinola, 2007).

A dynamic business environment requires diverse strategic approaches to be adopted in order to manage workers effectively. The roles of leaders in enhancing workplace harmony in manufacturing companies in Nigeria have received wide attention in the literature of industrial relations. This is because many organizations in Nigeria are bedevilled with a myriad of industrial challenges caused by inefficient and ineffective leadership style or strained relationship between employer and employee, leaders and followers (Osamwonyi & Ugiagbe, 2013). Consequently, productivity in most organizations has comparatively been hampered due to frequent workplace disharmony. Workplace harmony implies a healthy and cooperative working relationship between employers and employees. The essence of the leaders involved in the running of an organization includes an understanding of the purpose of each other and the ability to effectively communicate with one another and interact freely so that the set objectives of the organization can be achieved (Jinyemiema, 2008). Akpoyovwaire (2013) stated that workplace harmony requires that all leaders and management personnel should understand their responsibilities and what is required of them, and have authority, training and possess traits (including emotional intelligence) necessary to discharge such duties and responsibilities efficiently.

Emotion has an impact on everything that people do. Emotions can lead to an increased morale amongst employees, but on the other hand, emotions can also prove to be destructive. Negative emotions, such as fear; anxiety; anger and hostility, use up much of the individual's energy, and lower morale, which in turn leads to absenteeism and apathy (Bagshaw, 2000 cited in Hayward (2005). According to Klausner (2007) an individual's emotional intelligence can be seen to dictate interpersonal relationships. Despite this, many managers in the workplace would rather steer away from dealing with emotional issues. Study carried out by Cooper (2007) shows that emotions that are properly managed can, and do have successful outcomes. Carefully managed emotions can drive trust, loyalty and commitment as well as increase productivity, innovation and accomplishment in the individual, team and organizational sphere (Cooper, 2007). Emotional intelligence first ever coined by Salovey & Mayer (1990) was not probably a unique one. Emotional Intelligence refers to the capability of organizing the sentiments intelligently. It further refers to frame of acquired expertise and skills that foresee positive result at dwelling, in school, and in the working environment (Smith, Heaven & Ciarroch, 2008).

Many studies have shown that emotional intelligence is the barometer to find out excellence and performance of one's job (Lanser, 2000). Human resource is the bottleneck of any establishment and to effectively understand and maintain relationships, emotional intelligence is significant. Unfortunately, this concept has not yet been targeted in Nigeria organizations but due to globalization, competitive pressures, changes in the work environment, frequent mergers and acquisitions, workforce diversity and increased dispute, it has become imperative to understand the phenomenon. As key individuals are leaving organizations due to emotionless behavior of leaders and there is also diversity in task force that requires emotional intelligence prevailing in our organizations to cope with this situation (Scarnati, 2001). Emotional intelligence is not only important for the organizations but also for personal life of individuals. It is important to not only understand our skills and abilities and then manage ourselves according to the situation but also, we can understand and manage emotions of other employees (Barsade, 2002).

From the studies conducted above, it is interesting to note that emotional intelligence has the tendency of enhancing workplace harmony, yet a number of extant researches have not remarkably examined the interactions of these variables. Also evidenced is the fact that none of the highlighted works was carried out in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, Nigeria hence the identified gap in literature. It is in attempt to bridge this gap that this study was embarked upon to ascertain the relationship between leaders' emotional intelligence and workplace harmony of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Furthermore**,** this study was guided by the following research questions:

   i.   What is the relationship between self-awareness and collaboration in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?

  ii.   What is the relationship between self-awareness and teamwork in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?

 iii.   What is the relationship between self-awareness and goal attainment in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?
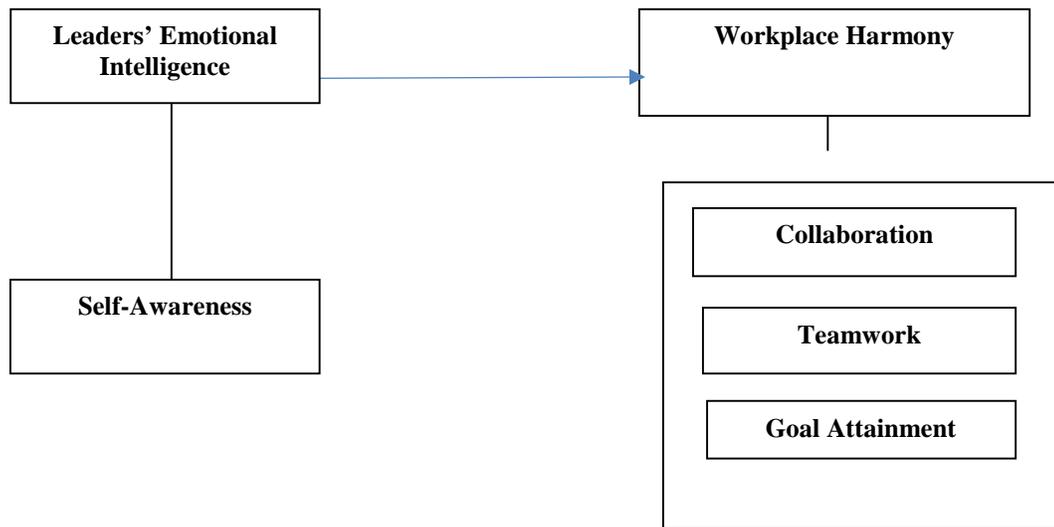
Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the relationship between leadership emotional intelligence and work place harmony.

Source: Desk Research (2020)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Positive Psychology Theory

Seligman (2012) described positive psychology theory as focusing on ''the study of positive emotion, of engagement, of meaning, of positive accomplishment, and of good relationships''. An aim of the positive psychology approach is to promote harmony or optimal functioning in individuals and institutions (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman, 2012). The positive psychology approach to understanding workplace related harmony shows promise (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008) and is one of the newest theories to be applied to work (Ashleigh & Mansi, 2012). This approach encompasses both a management focused emphasis on enhanced employee engagement and productivity as resulting from optimal conditions as well as an employee focused emphasis on personal well-being resulting from optimal conditions (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). The positive psychology approach focuses on recognizing and fostering positive organizational behaviour and individual strengths and the reciprocal nature of workplace conditions and individual strengths. Practical applications in the workplace are increasingly building on theoretical frameworks and research findings generated by the positive psychology approach (Ashleigh & Mansi, 2012).The individual difference characteristic of emotional intelligence, which has become a central concept in the positive psychology approach to the workplace, may be a platform for the development of intra-personal and interpersonal workplace characteristics such as collaboration, teamwork and goal attainment. Emotional intelligence is embedded in environmental and social contexts and thus falls into the positive

psychology conceptualization of the individual in the context of institutions and groups (Diener, 2009).

Self-awareness, empathy and self-regulation are core components of emotional intelligence, and may facilitate employees' mastery of workplace events and reactions to events, encouraging greater sense of power. The competencies comprising emotional intelligence may directly facilitate workplace harmony and may also indirectly impact workplace harmony through encouraging development of other qualities such as collaboration, teamwork and goal attainment.

Concept of Leaders Emotional Intelligence

The study of emotional intelligence evolved from the works of scholars such as Williams and Sternberg (1988), who stipulated broader approaches to understanding intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990) coined the term "emotional intelligence" and included Gardner's intrapersonal and interpersonal components in the construct. Goleman (2008) popularized emotional intelligence in the business realm by describing its significance as an ingredient for successful- business careers and as a crucial component for effective group performance. According to Mayer and Salovey (2007), Emotional Intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist in understanding emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

In an early conceptualization, Gardner (1983) described emotional intelligence as consisting of adaptive skills, whereby an emotionally intelligent person has a deep awareness of his/her emotions and the ability to label and draw upon those emotions as a resource to guide behaviour. Subsequently, Salovey and Mayer (2000) provided a more comprehensive framework for expressing emotional intelligence. They stipulated that emotional intelligence is the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion both in the self and in others. Emotional self-appraisal includes the ability to identify and categorize one's own feelings through words or facial expressions (Caruso & Salovey, 2004). In relation to others, empathy forms the cornerstone of emotional appraisal through gauging of feelings in others, re-experiencing those feelings, and as a result, choosing socially adaptive responses. Mayer and Gaschke (2008) proposed that emotional intelligence is the adaptive regulation of emotion. In the self, regulation is the product of a regulatory system that monitors, evaluates, and, if necessary, changes moods. People engage in mood self- maintenance in which they try to maintain positive moods and suppress negative moods. Leaders who can arouse desired emotions in their followers have been termed charismatic (Wasielewski, 2005). Goffman (2009) underscored the significance of presenting oneself in such a manner as to control the impression formed in the minds of others.

Self-Awareness

Victoroff and Boyatzis (2012) mentioned that self-awareness knows one's internal state, preference, resources and intuition. It is not automatic to have the ability to recognize our personal moods and reactions when in the spot light, privately and still be able to remain conscious afterward whether in teams or individually (Goleman *et al,* 2002). Self -awareness also involves having a realistic assessment of one's abilities. People who have this strength are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, open to candid feedback from others, and willing to learn from past experiences. This courage comes from certainty, through self -awareness, about our capabilities, values and goals as cited by (Fatt, 2002). Self-aware people have the ability to accurately perceive own emotions and stay aware of them as they happen. This includes keeping on top of how one tends to respond to specific situations and people (Cheok & O'Higgins, 2011). Self-awareness is way beyond simply having adequate knowledge about ourselves but rather extends to being in position to interpret this knowledge for the purpose of learning more about ourselves (Dirette, 2010).

Concept of Workplace Harmony

Workplace harmony according to Ladan (2012) is a healthy and cooperative working relationship between employers and employees. The environment where a person carries out his job is very vital to the overall performance of such individual. This can go a long way to ascertain at the end of the day, the level of workers productiveness. It is such that, if the workplace environment is conducive, employees naturally work with less stress of what become of their wellbeing but if contrary, the expected output of the employee can easily be jeopardized. Nevertheless, it is no gainsaying the fact that internal conflict between departmental functions, co-workers, and even top management are becoming a normal happening in most organizations today. This has led to the collapse of several once viable organizations in the world today, particularly in this part of the world. Ensuring a conducive workplace environment that is harmonious in nature is one of the most difficult things to do, but with effective team work and collaboration between co-workers, employees and management, there is the tendency of achieving it. It is worthy to note that, the workplace of today is characterized by two opposing trends. On the one hand, employees are given leeway in the way they act and dress while on the other hand, the management's tendency to micromanage the employee way of life has significantly increased. Though the two are different aspects they are certainly related. The possible reason for the increased trend to micromanage is because, adjusting to the culture of the workplace, whether in a new organisation or not, can be very stressful and sometimes difficult. To make an individual adapt to the various aspects of the organization culture such as communication patterns, hierarchy, dress code if any, workspace and most importantly working and behavioural patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be a lesson of life.

Measures of Workplace Harmony

Collaboration

According to Echaaobari, Adim and Ihunda (2018), collaboration is a "you win I win" strategy where one cooperates with the other party to find a resolution with mutually satisfying outcome. Collaboration aims at finding same solution that can satisfy both parties. It is based on a willingness to accept a valid interest of the other party whilst protecting one's own interest. Collaborating aims to find a solution to the conflict through cooperating with other parties involved (Echaaobari, Adim & Ihunda, 2018). Hence, communication is an important part of this strategy. In this mechanism, effort is exerted in digging into the issue to identify the needs of the individuals concerned without removing their respective interests from the picture. Collaborating individuals aim to come up with a successful resolution creatively, without compromising their own satisfactions (Walker *et al*., 2004). Collaboration plays a major role within conflict resolution and requires great courage and much consideration. Collaborating with the other party involves listening to their side, discussing areas of agreement and goals, and ensuring that all parties understand each other. Collaboration requires thinking creatively to resolve the problem without concessions (Jordan & Troth, 2004). Collaborators are usually admired and well-respected. Collaboration or Joint or mutual problem solving is a process of collaborating with others to resolve difficulties that are being experienced. The collaboration rule works when people are willing to collaborate, when there is enough time for discussion, when the issue lends itself to collaboration, where resources are limited and negotiation would be better, and when conflict and trust levels are not too high. The concern is to satisfy both sides. It is highly assertive and highly cooperative, the goal is to find a win/win solution.

Team Work

A team is a group of people working together to obtain a common objective. Teamwork involves the process of enabling the group of people to achieve their goals. It deals with steps such as clarifying team goals; identifying obstacles to achieving the goals; addressing the challenges identified and consenting to the achievement of the goals. Fajana (2002) states that teamwork is an integration of resources and input that work in harmony to achieve the goals of the organization, where roles are prescribed for each member of the organization, challenges faced in the same mode and close continuous incremental improvements. Katzenbach and Smith (2003) are of the view a team can be seen as a small number of persons, with a set of defined goals that are committed to a common purpose in which they hold themselves mutually accountable. The suggestion is that teams must be of a manageable dimension and that all members of the team should commit themselves to achieving the goals of the team. In addition, members of the team must be jointly responsible for their actions and the aftermath of these actions. The sum of the efforts made by each member of the team to achieve the goal of the team is called teamwork. In other words, teamwork is the backbone of any team.

Goal Attainment

Goal is the target the workplace wants to achieve. The concept of the workplace goal has evolved over time, but most theoretical discussions of workplace goals have emphasized their "normative" and "evaluative" function. Workplace goals have most commonly been employed as criteria for assessing effectiveness. Conceptualized in this way, workplace goals are in essence benchmarks used to evaluate the effectiveness of organizational behaviors and attained outcomes. Other conceptualizations such as the work motif (Blau & McKinley, 1999) or work objective (Krouse, 1972) also accentuate the normative function of workplace goals as the intellectual ethos or prevailing set of ideas concerning what architecture is and what it should accomplish (Blau & McKinley, 2009). Simon (1964) took the normative conceptualization of workplace goals one step further by representing them as "constraints" of organizational structure and behaviors. The challenge with a normative conceptualization of workplace goals lies in defining effectiveness criteria in a way that is not context-dependent. If workplace goals are unique to their context, then comparing goals across organizations would be like comparing the volume of one building with the architectural style of another. To facilitate our empirical analysis, we therefore articulate an alternative although still normative conceptualization of goals. We define workplace goal types as an evoked set of satisfying or policy constraints, where particular satisfying levels or targets are continually updated through compromise and achievement. Goal types are effectiveness criteria whose attainment requires performance of related actions. Our concept of workplace goal types includes such effectiveness criteria as increasing sales, improving profit, and speeding cash flow. As criteria for evaluating workplace performance and guides for workplace behaviors, workplace goal types must balance the conflicting interests of different types of stakeholders (Bourgeois, 1985). Short-term and long-term goals need to be balanced (Blau& McKinley 1999).

Leaders Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Harmony

In an era where speed is the key feature, enterprises as living organisms are forced through reorganization to constantly adapt to global business scene. The need for a new, different intelligence that will help managers perform better and leaders to guide and lead the Corporation/organization on new successful paths is more than ever necessary. The expanded emotional intelligence of a person's in the workplace is reflected through its ability to remain calm and focused in crisis situations, to choose the altruistic behavior towards the atomistic. Persons with high emotional intelligence pervaded by an optimistic approach to life in general (Brinia, 2008). The ability to recognize, understand and respond to the feelings of others might say that it requires a level of emotional "education", which grows only through one's ability to recognize his own emotions and determines the cause. The way we think and act is influenced by our emotions, e.g. having positive mood we become more creative, open-minded, find solutions to problems rather than create more.

On the contrary, while we are experiencing negative emotions trying more to identify the mistakes of others, we are more focused in details and apply sterile criticism. In the literature it

is suggested that people with high emotional intelligence can better communicate their ideas, intentions and goals, which are crisp, positive, sensitive, features that are proved to be very important in the workplace. Emotional intelligence can contribute much in the workplace as more and more researches connect it with the creation of strong bonds and interpersonal relationships among employees in the workplace and scientifically documented the positive correlation of emotional intelligence with the successful results of an organization (Clarke, 2010; Rozell &Scroggins, 2010). According to Tarricone and Luca (2002) creating a progressive and supportive working environment requires a combination of technical skills and developed emotional intelligence. Specifically, they link the motivation with the organization's objectives achievement and argue that people, who work with passion and perseverance, take initiatives, show dedication, set common goals above personal, make decisions, and their interest in workplace achievements is sincere.

The study postulates the following hypotheses to be tested:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and collaboration in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship exists between self-awareness and teamwork in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and goal attainment in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was sourced through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 253 managers and supervisors from 25 manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers. Samples of 155 respondents were selected out of the population using Taro Yamane's formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring coefficients above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis
The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 21.0 version to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix for Self-Awareness and Measures of Workplace Harmony

			Self-Awareness	Collab.	Team Work	Goal Attain
Spearman's rho	Self-Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.765**	.791**	.811**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	1	180	180	180
	Collab.	Correlation Coefficient	.765**	1.000	.802**	.792**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	143	143	143	143
	Team Work	Correlation Coefficient	.791**	.802**	1.000	.752**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	143	143	143	143
	Goal Attain	Correlation Coefficient	.811**	.792**	.752**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	143	143	143	143
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Source*: Research Data, 2020 (SPSS Output, Version 23.0)*

Table 1 presents Spearman's rank order correlation matrix to ascertain the relationship between self-awareness and measures (collaboration, team work and goal attainment) of workplace harmony of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study reported a positive correlation coefficient value of rho = .765**, p = .000 < 0.05 (alpha value) between self-awareness and collaboration in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study also reported a positive correlation coefficient value of rho = .791**, p = .000 < 0.05 (alpha value) between self-awareness and teamwork in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. In the same way, the study also reported a positive correlation coefficient value of rho = .811**, p = .000 < 0.05 (alpha value) between self-awareness and goal attainment in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Decision: The null hypotheses (H0$_{1,2and3}$) were all rejected since the p-values obtained are less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, we state that there is significant relationship between self-awareness and measures (collaboration, team work and goal attainment) of workplace harmony of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results from the test of hypotheses revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between leaders' emotional indigence and workplace harmony of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings of this study is in agreement with recent studies such as that by Dulewicz, Young and Dulewicz (2005), which shows that Emotional intelligence is closely associated with job performance, and that EI may be a more reliable

predictor of job performance compared to cognitive ability. These researchers investigated among other variables, the contributions of emotional Intelligence and Intelligent Quotient, on leadership and job performance within the British Royal Navy. They found that emotional Intelligence made a greater contribution to overall performance and leadership compared to Intelligent Quotient.

Similar findings were obtained in a study by Coté and Miners (2006) which examined the relationship between EI, Cognitive Intelligence (CI), and job performance among 175 managerial, administrative, and professional full-time employees of a large public university. EI was measured using the Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), while job performance was assessed using supervisory ratings based on a 5-item scale. Results found that CI moderated the association between EI and job performance. EI became a stronger predictor of job performance and organizational citizenship behavior directed at the organization (OCBO) as CI decreased. Results suggest that using CI tests alone to predict job performance entails risk, because employees with low CI can perform effectively if they have high EI. Similar support for the use of EI in predicting workplace performance across a variety of settings is found in the results of a study by Rozell, Pettijohn and Parker (2006) who examined among other variables, the effects of EI on sales performance. They found sales performance to be significantly related to EI. This finding empirically supports the notion that EI is directly related to performance on a variety of tasks. They concluded that EI is valuable for human resource development and a useful selection tool for salespeople. Such findings suggest that there is an increased likelihood for emotional intelligence to be equally important for the performance of service providers in rehabilitation schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Self-awareness of leaders significantly influences collaboration, teamwork and goal attainment in manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

With the strong positive significant influence self-awareness has on each of the measures of workplace harmony, managers in the manufacturing companies the study recommends that manufacturing companies need train their managers in getting the competency of emotional self- awareness. This is because when managers are conscious of their emotions, they will be more efficient in handling employees and clients/ customers' of the organization.

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