Implications of Emerging Occupational Values in Employer-Employee Relations in Business Organizations in Nigeria.

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Abstract: *This paper examines the concept of organisational behaviour and effectiveness, ethical value system in organisation's healthy economic environment, unethical value system in organisation's harsh economic environment among others. The objective of the paper is to examine the implications of employee's work ethics and behaviour in a developing economy such as ours and particularly at a period of unhealthy economic climate and to determine ways of increasing employees disciplinary actions against their unethical value system. The findings of this paper revealed that the employees work ethics and behaviours in organization under harsh economic climate is not quite encouraging as they tend not to be honest, fair and transparent; lack respect and responsibility, indulge in lateness to work; absenteeism, among others which would result to disharmony or industrial crisis. The paper recommends the application of goal setting theory using management by objective (MBO) tool, immediacy in administering discipline, advance warning, among others in striving to achieve situations that will satisfy the collective needs of employees and employers in business organisation.*
Keywords*: Organizational Behaviour, Ethical Value System, Economic Environment, Unethical Value System*

I. Background Of The Study

A business organisation is primarily oriented towards economic production and efficient economic performance. It is a system of a society and the means through which society satisfies its needs and wants. The more organisations emerge in a society, the more goods and services are produced and the more needs and wants are satisfied (Tukamushaba, 2008). Actually, one of the characteristics of developed societies is that they have numerous organisations with more productive activities whereas developing societies have few organisations with less productive activities (Ezigbo, 2007).

By allocating the proper resources and support, human resources managers can ensure the development of effective work teams that increase productivity and help an organisation thrive in the most competitive markets. As companies expand and tasks become more complex, more and more specialists are needed within organisation. These specialists must learn to work together so that colleagues have an understanding of the role and responsibility of those whose skill differ from their own (Ovadje and Anibaka, 2008). In addition, the convergence of products, services and technology from around the world has forced companies to work in a cross functional environment for which the best organizational design is often working in teams (Gbadamosi, 2008).

The concept of employer-employee relations can be meaningfully discussed within an organisational setting. An organisation exists in order to get work done, and to get work done, the top hierarchy of the organization, i.e. the owners/employers must merge the services of other people with various skills. The latter are employees (Flippo, 1980). There are differences in the way this is achieved; and the two major differences are:
i. The way the organisation divides its work into different tasks
ii. How it coordinates these tasks.

Division of work into different tasks and coordination of tasks involve services provided by employees of the organisation. In the process of giving services by employees, some definite relationships emerge between employers and employees. The emergence of this relationship leads to the formation of a body, normally a union of association of employees to protect their collective interests (Mavondo, 2008). Employers in turn, usually resist being held to ransom by employees through the tyranny of unionization and they equally adopt a strategy of harmonious relationship with the employees to ensure continued growth of the organization in the interest of both parties (Onah, Ndolo and Allison, 2006).

All these relationships function properly in a healthy economic environment. But when the economy is unstable and the economic condition harsh as in our case, each party adopts survival strategies. It follows therefore that the value system in a healthy economic environment differs from the value system in a harsh economic environment (Miles, 2003). It is in the light of this that emerging values in employer – employee relations will be focused. What type of relationship and work ethics will one expect in an organisation where workers personal emoluments are irregular or even not paid for? What type of value system will exist in a work environment where employer's positions are continuously threatened by lack of industrial raw materials, tools, all of which lead to low productivity? A related question may be why are organisations the way they are? The answer, of course, is because people choose with more or less awareness to make them that way. But it is men and women in them who determine their nature (Mullin, 2005). For instance, banks fail in this country because men and women who superintend the affairs of the bank are responsible for their failure. The roles of directors and chief executives of failed banks were responsible for the demise of many banks. Role means the activities and patterns of behaviour that should be performed by an occupant of an office. It is noteworthy that individuals in organisations are not only concerned with meeting the organization's needs or targets, but are also more concerned with meeting their own personal and private needs.

Objective of the Study
The main objectives of this paper are:
i. To examine the implications of employees' work ethics and behaviour in a developing economy such as Nigeria and particularly at a period of harsh economic climate.
ii. To determine if employees are disciplined against their unethical value system in business.

Hypotheses
i. The implication of employee's work ethics and behaviours in a developing economy with harsh economic climate is not encouraging.
ii. Employees are not disciplined against their unethical value system in business.

Review of Literature
The review of literature examined the following: concept of business organization, organizational behaviour, ethical value system in a healthy economic environment, unethical value system in a harsh economic environment among others.

Concept of Business Organization
A business organisation is an organisation that is primarily oriented towards economic production, which aims towards long survival through effective structural development and efficient economic performance (Ezigbo, 2007). It involves itself in four major flows of interdependent activities:
i. Input activities, which involve the procurement of primary raw materials for productive activities.
ii. Technological transformation process, which help the conversion of primary raw materials into products
iii. Output activities, through which the products produced are stored safely.
iv. Marketing activities, through which the products produced are exchanged with the customers and monetary resources are procured through which the conditions of flow of activities are maintained.
Bartels (1968) opines that organisations both formal and non-business have five basic elements. These elements are:
i. Social structure
This is the partnered and regularized relationships among the people in the organisation. According to the views of Gomes (2008), there are the normative and behavioural structures. In the real-world situation, the behavioural structure is the actual structural grouping of the organisational workers. The normative structure is oriented towards their beliefs and role expectations, norms, ethics etc. The normative structure, however, constraints the actions of the behavioural structure.
ii. Technology
Technology is viewed as the state of the arts in a society or the cause/effects beliefs in the transformation process. Technology exerts influence on the organisational structure and can constrain the activities of organisational participants.
iii. Participants
Organisational participants are those workers in the organisation. It is their partnered and regularised relationships that form the social structure of organisations. Understanding the beliefs and orientations of the participants is essential for directing their actions towards organisational goals.

iv. Goals
Formal organisations have common goals which they pursue and this becomes a measure of organisational effectiveness and performance. Organisational goals are the diverse functions which organisations as sub-systems perform for the society.

v. Environment
Those entities, customers, institutions, organisations, competitors, etc, which a formal organisation deal with but has no control over them are the environment. Also, environments are those factors which are constantly changing but lie outside the control of organisations.

Structure of Business Decisions

Decision making in a business organisation is influenced by the nature or characteristics of a business and the types of objectives pursued by a firm. Traditionally, the measure of success in a business firm has been profit; the excess of returns to the firm over the cost incurred and it is this measure that has distinguished the business firm from other form of social organisations such as the government, the church, the armed forces (Nansubuga, 2008). The resources available to organisations include physical (plant), materials (inventory), financial (money, credit), human and information resources. These are used up in the conversion process. Plant becomes obsolete, money gets spent and executive gets old. In this respect, survival of the firm depends on profits, and unless profits are generated and used for replacement of resources, the firm will eventually run down (Kennedy, 1994).From a decision view point, the overall problems of the business of the firm are to configure and direct the resource conversion process in such a way to optimize the attainment of the objectives. Harvey (1980) contended that there are strategic, administrative, and operating decisions of a business, each related to a different aspect of the resource conversion process.

i. Strategic Decision
Strategic decision is made at the top management level and deals with the overall concept of a firm's business especially its product/market relationship. Specific questions addressed in the strategic problem are what are the firm's objective and goals? Should the firm seek to diversify? In what area? How vigorously and how should the firm develop and exploit its present product-market position?

ii. Administrative Decision
Administrative decision is made at the middle management level and deals with structuring the firm's resource in a way which creates a maximum performance potential. In administrative decision, one part of the administrative problem include: structuring of authority and responsibility relationships, work flows, information flows, distribution channels, and location of facilities. The other part is concerned with acquisition and development of resources, development of raw materials source, personnel training and development, financing and acquisition of facilities and equipment.

iii. Operating Decisions
Operating decision concerns the technical activities of the organisation as they concern input, output, and exchange (marketing) activities. These decisions are made at the first level managerial and supervisory activities. Hence, the people who work at this level are called operatives. Operating decision usually absorbs the bulk of the firm's energy and attention. The objective is to maximize the efficiency of the firm's resource conversion process or, in more conventional language, to maximize the profitability of current operations. The major decision area is resource allocation (budgeting) among functional areas and product lines, scheduling of operations, supervisions of performance, and applying control actions. The key decision involve pricing, establishing marketing strategy, setting production schedules and inventory levels, and deciding on relative expenditure in support of research and development, marketing and operations.

Organisational Behaviour

Organisational behaviour is concerned with how people within organisations act, individually or as a group, and how organisations function, in terms of their structure, processes and culture. To manage people effectively, it is necessary to understand the factors that affect how people behave at work (Masoud, 2008).
i.   Attitudes – causes and manifestations
ii. Influence on behaviour – personality and attitudes
iii. Attribution theory – how we make judgement about people
iv. Orientation - the approaches people adopt to work
v.   Roles - the parts people play in carrying out their work

Individual Differences

The management of people would be much easier if everyone were the same, but they are of course, different because of their abilities, intelligence, personality, background and culture, gender, race and disability. Significantly, the needs and wants of individuals will also differ and this affects their motivation.

Personality

Personality refers to relatively stable pattern of behaviours and consistent internal states that explain a person's behavioural tendencies. Personality has both internal and external elements. The external traits are the observable behaviours that we rely on to identify someone's personality. For example, we can observe someone's sociability by how often he interacts with other people and how comfortable he acts in those social settings. The internal states represent the thought, values, and genetic characteristics that we infer from the observable behaviours. An individual's personality is both inherited and shaped from the environment. However, the genetic personality characteristics are altered somehow by life experiences (MC shan and Gilnow, 2004).
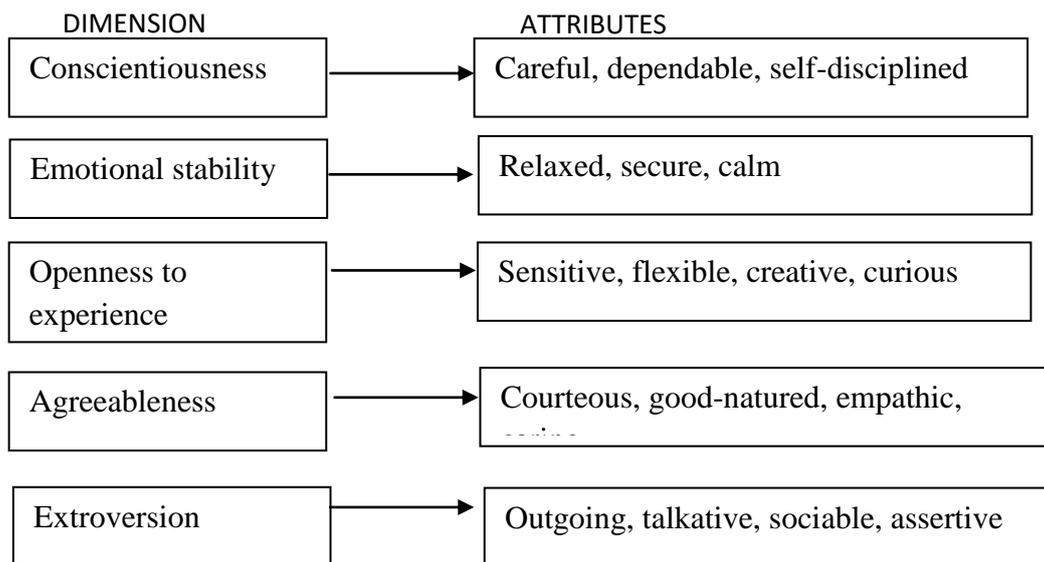
DIMENSION	ATTRIBUTES
Conscientiousness	Careful, dependable, self-disciplined
Emotional stability	Relaxed, secure, calm
Openness to experience	Sensitive, flexible, creative, curious
Agreeableness	Courteous, good-natured, empathic, caring
Extroversion	Outgoing, talkative, sociable, assertive

Figure I: Personality Dimensions
Source: Adapted from Mcshane and Glinow (2004). Organisational Behaviour.
New York: McGraw-Hill Co. Inc.

Several studies have found that the personality dimensions affect work-related behaviour and job performance. Champions of organisational change seem to have high level of the five personality dimensions. People with high emotional stability tend to work better than others in high stressor situations. Those with high agreeableness tend to handle customer relations and conflict-based situations more effectively. Conscientiousness has taken centre stage as the most valuable personality trait for predicting job performance is almost every job group. Conscientious employees set higher personal goals for themselves and have higher performance expectations than employees with low levels of conscientiousness. Employees with high conscientiousness tend to engage in more organisational citizenship behaviours. They are necessary for emerging organisational structures that rely on empowerment rather than the traditional "command and control" system. This personality trait plays an important role in customer service, along with agreeableness and emotional stability (MS shane and Glinow, 2004).

The work environment undoubtedly influences feelings and behaviour for each of gender, race or disability categories. Armstrong (2009) established that working women as a whole experiences more daily stress, marital dissatisfaction, and ageing worries and were less likely to show overt anger than either house wives or men. Ethnic minorities may find that the selection process is biased against them, promotion prospects are low and that they are subject to other overt or subtle forms of discrimination. The behaviour of people with disability can also be affected by the fact that they are not given equal opportunities.

Attitudes

Attitudes are seen as a settled mode of thinking. Attitudes are evaluative. It is developed through experience and contains an assessment of whether the object to which it refers is liked or disliked. Within organisations, attitudes are affected by cultural forces (values and norms), the behaviour of management, policies concerned with pay, recognition, promotion and quality of work, and the influence of the reference group (the group with whom people identify).

Orientation to Work

Orientation theory examines the factors that are instrumental in directing people's choices about work. An orientation is a persisting tendency to seek certain goals and rewards from work which exists independently of the nature of the work and the work content.

Roles

At work, the term role describes the part played by individuals in fulfilling their job requirements. Roles therefore, indicate the specific forms of behaviour required in carrying out a particular task or the group of tasks contained in a position or job. Work role profiles primarily define the requirements in terms of the ways tasks are carried out rather than the tasks themselves.

Role Ambiguity –when individuals are unclear about what their roles are, what are expected of them or how they are getting on, they may became insecure or lose confidence in themselves.

Role incompatibility – Stress and poor performance may be caused by roles having incompatible elements, as when there is a clash between what other people expect from the role and what individuals believe are expected of them.

Role Conflict – Role conflict results when, even if roles are clearly defined and there is no incompatibility between expectations, individuals, has to carry out two antagonistic roles. For example, conflict can exist between the roles of individuals at work and their roles at home. Ethical value system in a stable (healthy) economic environment values are beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is important in life. There are social values, religious values among others. Social values would include fairness, justice, health and safety in relation to our interactions with other people. Religious values include belief in God, belief in Jesus Christ, belief in Mohammed by the Islams, belief in the love of neighbour and work of charity and belief in the afterlife. Generally, all ethics groups subscribe to these values namely-respect for another's property, truthfulness and hospitality (Anyanwu, 2013). The ethical values as specified by American Marketing Association (1960) for marketers in organisation under healthy economic environment include:

A. Honesty - to be forth right in dealings with customers and stakeholders. To this end, we will:
i.   Strive to be truthful in all situations and at all times.
ii. Offer products of value that do what we claim in our communications.
iii. Stand behind our products if they fail to deliver their claimed benefits
iv. Honour our explicit and implicit commitment and promises
B. Responsibility - to accept the consequences of our marketing decisions and strategies. To achieve this;
i.   Strive to serve the needs of customers.
ii. Avoid using coercion with all stakeholders
iii. Acknowledge the social obligations to stakeholders that come with increased marketing and economic power
iv. Consider environment stewardship in our decision –making
C. Fairness - to balance justly the needs of the buyer with interests of the seller by:
i.   Representing products in a clear way in selling, advertising and other forms of communication; this includes the avoidance of false, misleading and deceptive promotion
ii. Rejecting manipulations and sales tactics that harm customers trust.
iii. Refusing to engage in price fixing, predatory pricing or price gouging.
iv. Avoiding participation in conflicts of interest. Seek to protect the private information of customers, employees and partners.
D. Respect - to acknowledge the basic human dignity of all stakeholders. This will:
i.   Value individual differences and avoid stereotyping customers or depicting demographic groups (e.g. gender, race, sexual orientation) in a negative or dehumanizing way.
ii. Listen to the needs of customers and make all reasonable efforts to monitor and improve their satisfaction on an ongoing basis.
iii. Make every effort to understand and respectfully treat buyers, suppliers, intermediaries and distributors from all cultures.
iv. Treat everyone, including our competitors, as we would wish to be treated.
v.   Acknowledge the contribution of others, such as consultants, employees and co-workers, to marketing endeavours.

E.   Transparency – to create a spirit of openness in marketing operations. To this end, we will:
i.   Strive to communicate clearly with all constituencies.
ii.   Accept constructive criticism from customers and other stakeholders.
iii.   Explain and take appropriate action regarding significant good or service risk that could affect customers or their perception of the purchase decision.
iv.   Disclose list prices and terms of financing as well as available price deal and adjustments.
F.   Citizenship – to fulfil the economic legal, philanthropic and social responsibilities that serve stakeholder. To this end, marketers will:
i.   Strive to protect the ecological environment in the execution of marketing campaigns.
ii.   Give back to the community through volunteerism and charitable donations. Contribute to the overall betterment of marketing and its reputation.
iii.   Urge supply chain members to ensure that trade is fair for all participants, including producers in developing countries.

Onah, Ndolo and Allison (2006) contended that government needs to create both enabling and sustainable business environments to sustain these ethical values and enhance high quality employer- employee relations that lead to low incidence of industrial actions.

Unethical Value System in Organisation's Harsh (Unhealthy) Economic Environment

In a developing economy such as ours and particularly at a period of unhealthy economic climate, the employee's work ethics and behaviour are visible manifest in the following: (Onah et al, 2006).
i.   **Lateness to work**

In a work situation where wages are not paid as due, and sometimes owned for months, workers are usually late to work. They are usually late because it makes no difference to them whether they are punctual or late. If the situation is normal, lateness to work is an act of indiscipline and can be sanctioned in several ways. Managers in organisations prevent lateness by employees by ensuring that they too report early for work. For instance, if your subordinates know that you report to work daily at 8.30am, they will endeavour to be there at 8.00am or thereabout. But if one is in office at 7.45am daily certainly the subordinates will in any case try to be there earlier to avoid sanctions.
ii.   **Absenteeism**

The cause of absenteeism is related to lateness. Employees hide under the relevant section of the regulation which authorizes absence from duty with permission to get cover to abstain from duty. Such include medical certificates, approved causal leave etc. The way to arrest this is motivation. According to Maslow's (1954), men and women are motivated to act in order to satisfy their needs, and the needs are arranged in a hierarchy of pre-potency in ascending order (physical, security, social, ego, autonomy, self-actualisation).

Physical needs refer to food, water, shelter and reproductive needs. Once this is satisfied the individual seeks safety or protection against threat, danger and deprivation with a feeling of a measure of security, one then seeks a sense of belonging or friendship. From safety, one is energised to seek to be valued, liked or esteemed and once this is satisfied the individual suddenly realizes that he is not quite happy and he begins to develop his own standards and values which lead to autonomy needs and from there he develops and utilizes his talents to actualize himself. All these can take place in a suitable environment. A second theory was proposed by Scoth in 1966 and is called **activation theory** and it deals on how people are energised generally. This theory simply states that moderate levels of arousal are the most preferred. To little we experience freedom and too much we experience anxiety and fears.

iii.   Industrial Crisis/Disharmony
The main cause of this is inability by employer to satisfy employee needs as enumerated in Maslow's theory and organisational discipline. The later is action taken against an employee for violation of organisational rule(s) where employees performance or behaviour has deteriorated to a point where corrective action is needed.

Generally, disciplinary actions are taken against employees for two types of conduct:
i.   Poor job performance or conduct that negatively affects an employee's job performance. Absenteeism, insubordination and negligence are examples of behaviours that can lead to discipline.
ii.   Action that indicate poor citizenship such as fighting on the job or theft of property belonging to one's employer. When a group of people are disciplined, it might bring employees under the umbrella of the nation into a collision course with management.

Discipline and Unions

While management usually reserves the right to make reasonable rules for employees performance and conduct, the union can question management's application and the reasonableness of the rules through grievance procedure. Unionized and non-unionized organisations have grievance procedures. These are systematic means of resolving disagreements over the terms and conditions agreed to in negotiations are properly implemented.

In general, the grievance process is initiated by an employee who has a complaint regarding some action perceived to be inconsistent with the terms of his contact (Woodward, 1971): In organisations without grievance procedures, attempts at conflict resolution leads to open confrontation which is hardly in the interest of good labour relations. It is to be observed that employees now know their rights and terms of their employment and any infringement of either their rights or terms of their employment is stoutly resisted. The most effective positive method of settling labour crisis is the use of grievance procedures (Kotler, 2004).

II. Methodology

Research method: The descriptive research method (research survey) was used in carrying out the study. The method was chosen because it is the method that best interprets employees work ethics and behaviour in business organisation without less of facts.

Source of Data: The study relied heavily and both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were those got through personal interview and questionnaire administered to the respondents. The secondary data were gathered from pamphlets, journals, books and also records available at first publishing company resource centre.

Target population/sample size: The population of this study constituted of all the workers of first publishing company Enugu State totalling 58 (company's nominal roll, 2014), as shown in tabular form below:

Table 1: Organizational profile of first publishing company

Departments	Number of Employees
Marketing	25
Accts/Admin.	5
Stock control and warehousing	10
Editorial	18
Total	58

Source: survey Data, 2015

To draw a sample from the population, the Yamani (1964) formula was adopted:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where n = sample size

N = population

e = Error limit (population)

I = Constant

$$n = \frac{58}{1 + 58(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{58}{1 + 58(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{58}{1 + 0.145}$$

$$= \frac{58}{1.145} = 50$$

Data Analytical Tool:

Data were presented in frequency tables, mean scores and percentage were used in the analysis.

Analyses of Hypothesis

Hypothesis one:

Ho: The employees work ethics and behaviours in a developing economy with harsh economic climate is not quite encouraging

Ho: The employees work ethics and behaviours in a developing economy with harsh economic climate is not encouraging.

Table 2: Employee work ethics and behaviours under harsh economic climate in first publishing company.

S/N	Item	Positive	%	Negative	%	Total
1	Serving the needs of customers (Responsibility)	2	4.0	10	20.0	12
2	Lateness to work	3	6.0	8	16.0	11
3	Acknowledging the basic human dignity of all stakeholders (Respect)	2	4.0	5	10.0	7
4	Abstinence from duty (Absenteeism)	4	8.0	6	12.0	10
5	Industrial crisis/Disharmony	1	2.0	5	10.0	6
6	Poor job performance	1	2.0	3	6.0	4
	Total	13	26.0	37	74.0	50
		$\bar{x} = 2.2$		$\bar{x} = 6.85.2$		

Source: field survey (2015)

The above table revealed that the work ethics and behaviours of employees under harsh economic climate is such that employees perform below expectation, indulge in absenteeism, lack respect and responsibility which culminate to disharmony or industrial crisis. Thus, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis.

Hypothesis Two:
Ho: Employees are not disciplined against their unethical value system in business.

Table 3: Disciplinary measures of Employees in their work environment

S/N	Item	Positive	%	Negative	%	Total
1	Management by objective (MBO) tool is usually applied in orgs.	8	16.0	2	4.0	10
2	Immediacy in discipline applications is encouraged by employers	9	18.0	4	8.0	13
3	Advance warning is a healthy practice	4	8.0	3	6.0	7
4	Written warning is a disciplinary measure in org.	7	14.0	5	10.0	12
5	Adoption of appropriate leadership style	6	12.0	2	4.0	8
	Total	34	68.0	16	32.0	50
		$\bar{X} = 6.8$	$\bar{X} = 3.2$			

Source: field survey (2015

The table above revealed that employees of first publishing company do have disciplinary measures against their unethical value system in their work environment. Item 2 took the rear – 18.0%. This indicates that the employees believe that the management of first publishing company have easy feedback system which creates a free environment for them to work. Application of management by object we tool (item 1) in decision making ranked second with 16.0%. Generally, disciplinary actions are taken against employees for two types of conduct:
i. Poor job performance or conduct that negatively affects an employee's job performance. Absenteeism, insubordination and negligence are examples of behaviours that can lead to discipline.
ii. Action that indicate poor citizenship such as fighting on the job or theft of property belonging to one's employer. When a group of people are disciplined, it might bring employees under the umbrella of the nation into a collision course with management.

Summary
From this discourse, the following are the salient points to be noted:
-   Employees should be aware of how their behaviours may influence or impact on the behaviour of employers in organisational relationships, and should not demand, encourage or apply coercion to obtain unethical behaviour in their relationships with others such as suppliers or customers.
-   Both parties (employers/employees) should discharge their obligations, financially and otherwise, in good faith.
-   Appropriate internal methods should exist for equitable adjustment and/or redress of grievances concerning employers and employees in an organisation.
-   Application of confidentiality and anonymity in professional relationships with regard to privileged information.
-   Obligations and responsibilities of both parties in contracts and mutual agreements should be met in a timely manner.

- Avoid manipulation to take advantage of situations to maximize personal welfare in a way that unfairly deprives or damages the organisation or others.
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III. Conclusion

Since the leader in an organisation is expected to influence his subordinates to follow, studies of leadership behaviour have shown a striking consensus about the major and most frequently used styles, namely:
i. Concern for people (Democratic) and
ii. Concern for ensuring the task is done and done properly (Autocratic).

These two basic leadership styles are frequently used but many scholars are of the view that the best leadership style is termed eclectic style of leadership. This leadership style involves the combination of two or more styles of leadership and it is mostly used when the situational tasks emerge.

Impliedly, the leader must be employee centred, democratic, and always consult with people. Above all, the leader's personality and the task to be performed will enhance his leadership and industrial peace.

a. Recommendations

i. In striving to achieve situations that will satisfy our needs, one management theory is relevant. It is **goal-setting theory** developed by Locke (1976). The major thrust of this theory is that individuals strive to attain that which satisfies them. A major management tool in the application of this theory is Management By Objective (MBO) developed by Humble (1970). This is a systematic technique whereby boss and subordinate agree on the objectives for the job, agree on the indices of successful achievement of the objectives and meet periodically to assess if the objectives have been achieved.

ii. The quality of leadership of an organisation matters a lot. Experience has shown that one of the factors that have acted restrictively in many ways in delaying development in Nigeria is **manpower that offers leadership.** When the leader's work attitude is not inspiring, it will affect the whole organisation. The leader sets the pace and the standard.

iii. Administering discipline should be compared to the burn received when touching a hot stove. It is often referred to as the **hot-stove rule.** This approach emphasises that discipline should be directed against the act rather than the person. Other aspects of this rule are **immediacy** which refers to the length of time between misconduct and discipline. For discipline to be effective it must be given as soon as possible but without involving an emotional or irrational decision.

iv. Advance warming in encouraged. Issuing a warning about an infraction and having the employee sign acknowledging the warning is healthy practices. Failure to warn an employee of the consequences of repeated violations of a rule is a reason often cited for overturning a disciplinary action.

v. Another key element in discipline is **consistency.** Inconsistency is interpreted as double standard in application of rules, and it lowers morale. Management should use corrective discipline i.e., the normal sequence of actions taken in disciplining an employee will be oral warning.

vi. Written warning is also encouraged and this should be followed by suspension and finally discharge of the employees for their misconduct.

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