

## **Principals' Emotional Intelligence and their Administrative Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State**

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted all the 6,382 teachers in the six education zones of Anambra State. A sample size of 672 teachers was drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. Two sets of researchers'-developed instrument titled "Principals' Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire" (PEIQ) and "Principals' Performance Questionnaire" (PPQ)) were utilized for data collection. The instruments were face validated by three experts and subjected to internal consistency test using Cronbach alpha method which yielded 0.89 for PEIQ and 0.84 for PPQ. Mean score and Pearson' Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient were used to analyze data for the study. The findings of the study indicated that principals of public secondary schools in Anambra state have moderate level of emotional intelligence and moderate level of administrative performance. There is a medium positive and significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that for principals' high administrative performance, Anambra State Ministry of Education should work together with other relevant authorities to make provision for regular in-service professional development programmes for principals on how to effectively improve and apply emotional intelligence in school administration. This will help improve principals' administrative performance and effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** *Emotion, Emotional Intelligence, Performance, Administrative Performance.*

### **Introduction**

In many nations of the world, education has been universally acknowledged as an instrument for effecting national development. Educators and economists alike have for long held a consensus that education is a prerequisite for economic growth and the key to all forms of change. Nigeria has adopted education as instrument per excellence for national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013). Consequently, Nigeria has for decades invested in education to enable her generate qualified and skilled manpower in order to compete and maintain and edge in the international community. A well administered education would equip individuals with the capacity to understand and adapt to new problems and changing situations, awaken intellectual curiosity, encourage their spirit of inquiry and make them inventive, self-reliant and resourceful (Nwaka, 2010).

The educational system in Nigeria is delineated into different levels mainly pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary levels (FRN, 2014). Secondary education is the form of education children receive after primary school and before the tertiary stage. The

importance of secondary education lies in its position both as the bridge between primary and tertiary education and the agent for preparing individuals for useful living in the society. As indicated by FRN (2014) in the National Policy on Education, the broad goals of secondary education include preparing people for useful living in the society and for higher education.

In secondary school organization, the principal is the chief executive who gives the necessary leadership functions for the achievement of school goals. He is the leader and is responsible for all the happenings in the school. The principal is expected to perform several administrative roles in order to achieve the goals of secondary education. These roles are summed up by Ogbonnaya cited in Mgbodile (2004) into five areas, which are: development and implementation of educational programmes, Development of teaching staff, Student relation function, Community relation function and financial function. Similarly, Ocho and Okeke (1997) had categorized these functions into five namely: management of instructional programme, staff personnel administration, student personnel administration, financial and physical resource management. Stoner (2002) noted that supervision of the teaching and learning process, decision making, conflict resolution, communication, record keeping, fund management, plant management, public relations and compliance to legal stipulations are the critical aspects of school management. In this study, the following aspects, namely: instructional supervision, communication and decision making were considered. These areas are perceived to be some of the critical areas of principals' administrative performance.

Instructional supervision is mainly concerned with improving schools by helping teachers to reflect on their practices, to learn more about what they do and why, and to develop professionally (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Various authors stated that instructional supervision has clear connection with professional development (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Zepeda, 2007). Instructional supervision is that phase of school administration which focuses primarily upon the achievement of the appropriate expectations of educational system. Nakpodia (2006) pointed out that instructional supervision in the modern era centers on the improvement of the teaching-learning situation for the benefits of both the teachers and learners, helps in the identification of areas of strength and weaknesses of teachers, follow-up activities that should be directed at the improvement of identified areas of teachers' weaknesses and give recognition to the teachers as well as create a cordial working atmosphere based on good human relations.

Moreover, instructional supervision helps teachers in terms of self-discovery particularly in the areas of improvisation and use of modern teaching aids as a basis for improving teaching strategies The Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2013) makes it clear that one of the cardinal objectives of administration in education is to ensure quality control through regular and continuous supervision of instruction and other educational services.

Communication on the other hand is vital to every organization. Where there is organization, there is communication. Communication is the social process in which two or more parties exchange information and share meaning. It can also be seen as the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions or information by speech, writing, or signs. Peretemode (2001) defined communication as the transfer of information, feelings or messages from a source to a receiver. Hence, it is a process of transmitting meaning from sender to receiver. Harper (2008) described communication as a process by which people assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. Communication pervades the school organizations because most school processes require communication to solve, coordinate, staff, plan and control the organizations. The general purpose of organization is to achieve coordinated action and without communication the school would be merely a collection of

individual workers doing separate tasks. School activities would lack coordination and be oriented toward individual rather than organizational goals.

In the school system, like any other organization, decisions are made towards solving immediate and remote problems aimed at achieving set goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. According to Okumbe (2008) decision making is the process of specifying the nature of a particular problem and selecting among available alternatives in order to solve the problem. Duze (2011) defined decision making as a choice made from among alternative courses of action that are available, either towards the solution of a problem or the achievement of an objective. In school organizations, administrators such as the principals are saddled with the task of making decision concerning different areas of school administration such as: curriculum and instruction, school and community relations, students and staff personnel administration, staffing, students and staff discipline, school plant management, accommodation and health services, school finances, budgeting among others. The way and manner they carry out this responsibility may be determined by their level of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence could be seen as a person's capacity to understand his personal feelings and that of others and to manage emotions within themselves and in their relationships with others. Emotional intelligence according to Mayer (2002) is one's ability to understand and regulate one's own emotional responses as well as adapt and respond to others. Salovey (2002) viewed emotional intelligence more specifically as the ability to perceive emotions, access knowledge, reflectively regulate emotions and promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Emotional intelligent principal according to Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014) is one who is able to perceive one's emotions and remains aware of them as they happen. The ability to manage emotional reactions in every situation and with all staff. This implies that the principal should understand what his staff are thinking and feeling even though he does not feel the same way, and provide clear communication as well as effectively handle conflict that may arise. Because of this, Caruso, Salovey and Mayer (2003) noted that principals of secondary schools need emotional intelligence to be successful in their schools. It implies that a principal needs to be emotionally intelligent so as to excel in his administration. Researchers such as Cherniss and Goleman (2001) established a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the performance of a leader. Further, Cherniss and Goleman explained that an emotionally intelligent principal will have a greater effect in his school than a principal with a low level of emotional intelligence.

Principals who have low emotional intelligence hardly understand staff and students' emotions and find it difficult to facilitate their learning, achievement and motivation towards goal attainment. This implies that the level of emotional intelligence of a principal may influence how he can understand and communicate with his staff, students and their environment as well as carry out other administrative tasks. Without doubt, emotional intelligence is an integral part of school management process; and, if a principal expects to excel in his administrative mandate, he needs to be able to deal effectively with emotions. This is in line with Goleman, (1998) that emotional intelligence has the potential to contribute to more positive attitudes, behaviours and outcomes and has been related to improved career performance and success.

Observable situation in secondary schools in Anambra state appears to show that most principals seem to lack emotional intelligence. This may be why most principals in the state fail in their administrative mandate. For instance Ekeh (2011) noted that frictions do exist at

times in schools between principals, staff and students; hindering healthy interpersonal relationships and co-operation among staff towards attainment of the goals of the institution. Peretemode in Ogbo (2010) stated that most principals of Nigerian secondary schools, Anambra state inclusive are poor decision makers. Poor decision leads to conflicts, poor administrative performance, indiscipline, discrepancies, and disagreements as well as lack of cooperation. Abonyi (2020) lamented that most principals in Anambra state display poor instructional supervision as a result, teachers' performance in instructional delivery appears questionable as there are cases of inability of teachers to deliver lessons with appropriate methods, manage classroom during lessons, maintain discipline and provide detailed feedback on students' performance and achievement. In addition, Ikediugwu (2008) and Ogbo (2010) described that most principals do not have the necessary communication skills for proper coordination and integration of the various components of the school system, thereby creating communication gaps which undermine principals' performance. The researchers are therefore worried whether these problems are linked to principals' emotional intelligence.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Schools need administrators who can manage the daily stressors of the job as well as effectively carry out their administrative mandate. Principals are saddled with many administrative responsibility to ensure the achievement of educational goals. The researchers observed that most principals in secondary schools in Anambra state appear to fail in their administrative mandate. This is evident in the persistent frictions between principals, staff and students; hindering healthy interpersonal relationships and co-existence among staff.

Most principals of Nigeria secondary schools, Anambra state inclusive, appear to be poor decision makers. Poor decision leads to conflicts, poor administrative performance, indiscipline, discrepancies, and disagreements as well as lack of cooperation. There are also question marks regarding principals' instructional supervision and communication skills as there are cases of teachers' inability to deliver lessons with appropriate methods, manage classroom during lessons, maintain discipline and provide detailed feedback on students' performance and achievement. Most principals also seem not to have the necessary communication skills for proper coordination and integration of the various components of the school system, thereby creating communication gaps which seem to affect principals' performance. These administrative problems may not be unconnected to principals' emotional intelligence. This study therefore determined principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Purpose of Study**

The general purpose of this study is to determine principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance. Specifically the study determined:

1. The emotional intelligence level of secondary school principals in Anambra State.
2. The administrative performance level of secondary school principals in Anambra State.
3. The relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are posed to guide the study:

1. What is the emotional intelligence level of secondary school principals in Anambra State?
2. What is the administrative performance level of secondary school principals in

Anambra State?

3. What is the relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?

### Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?

### Method

A correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was guided by three research questions and a null hypotheses was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study was carried out in Anambra State on a population of 6,382 teachers in the six education zones of Anambra State. A sample of 672 teachers was drawn using multi state sampling technique. Questionnaire instrument titled "Principals Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire" (PEIQ) and "Principals' Performance Questionnaire" (PPQ) were used to collect data for the study. The questionnaires were validated by three experts and internal consistency reliability coefficients of 0.89 for the PEIQ and 0.84 for PPQ were obtained using Cronbach's alpha method. Data obtained for the study were analyzed using mean and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation.

### Results

**Table 1: Mean score on teachers rating of principals' emotional intelligence level**

	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Emotional Intelligence	520	2.75	.76	Moderate

Table 1 shows the mean score of 2.75 indicating that the principals of secondary schools in Anambra have a moderate level of emotional intelligence.

**Table 2: Mean score on teachers rating of principals' administrative performance level**

	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Administrative Performance	520	3.01	.86	Moderate

The mean score of 3.01 in Table 2 shows that the administrative performance level of principals of secondary schools in Anambra is moderate.

**Table 3: Pearson r on principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance**

Source of Variation	N	R	Remark
Emotional Intelligence	520	0.57	Medium Positive Relationship
Administrative Performance			

Table 3 shows that there is a medium positive relationship of 0.57 existing between principals' emotional intelligence and their performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Table 4: Test of Significance of Pearson r on principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance**

Source of Variation	N	R	<i>p-value</i>	Remark
Emotional Intelligence	520	0.57	0.00	Significant
Administrative Performance				

Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.  $r=0.57$  and  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ .

### Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study indicates that principals of secondary schools in Anambra State have a moderate level of emotional intelligence. This finding is different from the findings of scholars such as Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014). The findings of their study revealed that most principals had a very high emotional intelligence. More so, Noyes (2001) and Chastukhina (2002) had acknowledged that leaders possess high emotional intelligence. The differences in these findings could be attributed to the fact that these studies were conducted in the different locations. Principals in those locations seem to have high emotional intelligence compared to principals of secondary schools in Anambra state who possess moderate level of emotional intelligence.

The results of this study also show that principals' performance level in public secondary schools in Anambra State is moderate. This result is not consistent with Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014). The findings of their study was that majority of secondary school principals were very effective in discharging their administrative functions. This finding seems baffling, judging from the situation in secondary schools in Anambra state where there are series of problems that are prevailing in most secondary schools. The findings of the present study is also different from earlier conducted studies in Osun and Kwara States by Okotoni and Okotoni (2003) and Arikewuyo (2009). These researchers found that most secondary school principals were not effective in their administrative functions.

Another finding of this study indicated that there is a medium significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is in line with Caruso, Salovey, and Mayer (2003), Kellett, Humphrey and Sleeth (2006). These researchers found that levels of emotional intelligence significantly influence the performance of a leader. They further stated that principals with high level of emotional intelligence tend to perform better than those with low level of emotional intelligence. The finding of the study is consistent with Pashiardis (2006), Brauckmann (2009), Schmidt (2002) and Fleishman (2004). They found significant relationship between emotional intelligence and instructional leadership. The finding of this study also supports that of Pashiardis (2006) and Brauckmann (2009) who found that emotional intelligence is a significant factor in instructional leadership of school leaders. Fleishman (2004) conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and instructional leadership of primary school teachers and also found a significant relationship. This finding is consistent with Ekeh (2011), Mills and Rouse, (2009), Moore, (2009) and Sala, (2003) these researchers found that high emotional intelligence is positively related with effective leadership.

The above findings are not surprising, given that many researchers have argued that principals' effectiveness and performance fundamentally depends on their ability to solve

complex problems which arise in an organization; and such ability demands high emotional intelligence on the part of principals. It is therefore imperative that principals should have high level of emotional intelligence that will equip them with strong interpersonal skills in order to be able to carry out effective communication, decision making and instructional supervision. Apart from this, if a principal possesses strong emotional skills, such principal will be able to perceive the tone of the school and this will provide him with appropriate skills that will enable him discharge his administrative duties effectively.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals of secondary schools in Anambra state possess a moderate level of emotional intelligence. They also moderately perform their administrative duties. There is medium positive and significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and their administrative performance.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. The researchers recommended that for principals' high administrative performance in schools, Anambra State Ministry of Education should work together with other relevant authorities to make provision for regular in-service professional development programmes for principals on how to effectively improve and apply emotional intelligence in their administration. This will help improve principals' administrative performance and effectiveness.
2. The Post Primary School Service Commission should consider recruiting teachers with high emotional intelligence for principal-ship position. This is likely to enhance appointment of school leaders who will engage in effective administrative practices for improved performance.
3. Another recommendation is that for principals to be able to achieve high administrative performance, such principals should first of all understand that they have great influence within and outside the school. Hence, they should have the necessary knowledge of their subordinates and also try to establish pleasant social interactions with them.

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