

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS OF PRINCIPALS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined Emotional Intelligence Skills of Principals in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State. Two objectives and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational research design was adopted. The population for this study comprised the two hundred and seventy-six (276) public secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size for the study comprised (414) principals, vice principals academic and vice principals' administration, which represents 50% of the entire population. The study used two sets of instruments for data collection. The first instrument was titled "Principals' Emotional Intelligence Disposition Questionnaire" (PEIDQ) while the second was titled "job performance Questionnaire" (JPQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The findings revealed that good principals' self-awareness has the capability to improve job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The study recommended amongst others that Principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State should undergo regular training programs focused on enhancing emotional intelligence skills. Workshops and seminars can be organized to help principals develop self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. During the recruitment process for school principals, emotional intelligence assessments should be included to ensure that candidates possess the necessary EI skills required for effective leadership. The study concluded that emotional intelligence skills of principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State has revealed the critical role emotional intelligence plays in effective leadership. Principals who demonstrate high emotional intelligence skills are better equipped to handle challenging situations, communicate effectively with stakeholders, and create a positive school environment conducive to learning. It is evident that emotional intelligence is a key factor in successful leadership in the educational setting.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence Skills, Principals, Disposition, Secondary School*

INTRODUCTION

Earlier scholars have described intelligence as a skill related to education, with the potential to drive leadership changes. It is understood that intelligence emerges from a combination of intellectual and non-intellectual traits working together. The significance of intelligence in problem-solving was acknowledged by prominent thinkers such as Piaget and Thorndike. Thorndike's work in the 1920s laid the groundwork for emotional intelligence, while Goleman's 1995 publication heightened awareness of its importance in management circles. Since then, emotional intelligence has gained considerable attention among scholars and researchers. Bar-on, as cited in Zehir et al. (2019), defines emotional intelligence as a set of personal, emotional, and social skills that enable individuals to effectively navigate their environment and handle its demands. This concept underscores the importance of understanding and managing one's emotions while also empathizing with others. Emotional intelligence can best be described as the capacity and ability to understand one's feelings and that of others, and also -being able to empathize with others. It is the ability to manage one's own emotions and others' emotions, distinguishing these emotions and feelings, and using them for informed decisions.

The concept of emotional intelligence is considered a critical point for success for the principal. Leaders with high emotional intelligence, perform well because it is expected that they bring to bear their emotional intelligence capabilities such as self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, self-regulation, teamwork conflict management and social/ communication skills. Therefore, it is convenient to assert that a school leader who is able to manage his feelings and thought behaviour, can be able to build a positive and constructive relationships amongst teachers, students and parents.

Emotional intelligence is a decisive and an important standard for effective leadership style. Lack of emotional intelligence can cause a principal colossal failure in leading the school, because he would be more resistant to coping with difficulties. An emotionally intelligent leader has the competencies that are derived from conscious self-control, motivation, empathy and open communication embodied as an principals' job performance. How well a principal connect with himself and others can best be described as emotional intelligence. Dalip (2015) points out that a leader's emotional sensitivity, maturity, and competency is what ultimately decides his destiny. An emotionally intelligent leader will tend to regulate their own emotions and most definitely grasps and manage the emotions of others in an appropriate manner.

Principals are faced with much challenges in getting work and learning competencies accomplished, especially in this modern time. One of the greatest complications experienced by leaders is how to effectively utilise change in the work place (Mohammed, 2018). The changes in the school system as a result of the social changes more often than not impede on employees and the leaders emotions and behaviour, it's factual that every individual looks forward to the need to modify behaviour to cope with a new way of life and work environment. There is a chaotic situation that culminates as a result of changes in the environment, which the school is not left out of its prevailing effects. As such, there are challenges in managing people, which limits team collaboration, increased teaching alternative and adjusting to a new normal.

Emotional intelligence enhances a leader towards effective performance, because emotional intelligence is an enabler of trust and makes people more committed towards organizational goals. Goleman (1998) points, that emotional intelligence makes an effective leader. From Goleman's postulation it is convenient to assert, that an emotional intelligent leader has an impactful leadership skills and team performance, has an optimum way of doing things, which is striking on employees emotions, while taking control of self-emotions. Leading and performing under pressure is not a mean feat, more so in a situation of new challenges. The capacity to manage ones emotions and the team's emotions, at the same time is known as principals' emotional intelligence disposition, which resultant effect is job performance.

Goleman, et al (2016) identifies four dimensions of emotional intelligence, which are:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social awareness
4. Relationship management.

Self-awareness and self-management lies under the subject of personal competence, personal competence emanates from understanding ones strengths, weaknesses, motives and values. Social competence transcends to meaning empathy, awareness and the ability to understand other's needs. One of the skills of an emotionally intelligent leader is being able to manage relationships, which involves influencing people, navigating conflicts and making sure teams are built and bonds are created amongst staff. The most prominent leadership style is vision. Vision helps the leader to be goal oriented, fulfilling task and establishing valid purpose of the organization and it's a potent force the emotional intelligent leader possesses. Vision is something imagined, it is the level to which leaders of organization imagine their organization to be at some point in the future. Genna, Jayet, Ryan, Shayna, & Edem (2015).

Goleman, however, defines leadership style as where the leader is inspiring in vision and helps others to see how they can contribute to the vision. Toren (2014) sees vision as allowing the leader and followers to move together toward a shared view of the future. The visionary leadership style, which is a style of leadership that inspires vision is very effective and it culminates with other leadership styles such as pace setting, coaching and commanding

The proponents of emotional intelligence school, postulates that emotional intelligence is an effective leadership style at the workplace. There are indicators that the classical leadership style is failing and it's being replaced by relationship management, self-management, social awareness and self-motivation. These competencies are taking over the behavioural school of thought, leadership continuum, and action-centred leadership model. As a matter of fact all of these theories which

concentrates on autocratic, democratic, participative and consultative styles try to gravitate towards situations. Principals' job performances tend to translate ideas into new processes and way of doing things. An emotionally intelligence disposed leader is someone that posses the fundamentals of emotional intelligence, which self-motivation, self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social-skills and team-work. The combination of these makes organisational goals attainable, which influences the leader to produce creative ideas for excellent job performance. It is an approach to organizational development and goal oriented leadership. According to Mohammed et al (2014). It's the combination of four elements: emotional intelligence, management innovations, innovative organization and interaction with stakeholders.

Conclusively, principals' emotional intelligence disposition has an alluring impact on job performance, based on the fact that they focus more on influencing the emotions and behaviours and not only understanding behaviour. Emotional intelligence can be defined as a leadership style that enhances competencies that defines the principal.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary schools in Nigeria particularly in Rivers State are saddled with responsibility and leadership of the principal to maintain cordial and healthy relationships and work environment within the school and its environs for conducive learning environment. The principal as the leader of the school collectively manages all the resources of the school including the human aspect to achieve the schools goals. Managing these resources, especially the human resources in the midst of social changes and complexities, is not a mean feat if the principal is not emotionally intelligent.

However, it has been observed that most principals wear their emotions in their sleeves. They react to situations as it bothers the school without considering the emotions and feelings of others. Most principals appear to lack self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, self-regulation, team-work and social skills to effectively lead in the face of any altercation with staff or difficulties.

Most principals appear to lack emotional intelligence hence, they are unable to manage daily stressors that comes with their job as leaders. Stressors such as school climate, decision-making, role ambiguity, little or no support from teachers and non-teaching staff can destabilise the emotions of a principal, if he is not emotionally intelligent.

Principals who lack emotional intelligence cannot easily adapt to the modern changes and the stressors related to their job. This phenomenon may have results to negative work climate, insubordination, absenteeism and interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict. Therefore, this trend has been continuous and hence constitutes a worry to the researcher. The problem of this study put in question form: is there any relationship between management of emotional intelligence disposition of principals and job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the emotional intelligence disposition of principals and job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. assess the relationship between Principals' self-regulation and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. explore the relationship between Principals' self-motivation and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1.What is the relationship between Principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State?
- 2.What is the relationship between Principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between Principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between Principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Concept of Emotional intelligence

Emotion is a difficult concept to define in part because there are so many different emotions in the repertoire of human feelings. Emotions are universal, others are formed only in certain cultures. Some are intense; others are mild. Some are positive; others are negative. Some move people to take action; others do not. Despite these vast differences however, Kacioppo (2019) maintains that psychologists agree that emotions in general consist of three interacting components:

1. Internal physiological arousal
2. Expressive behaviour in the face, body and voice.
3. A cognitive appraisal.

Emotion was conceptualized by Carlson and Hatfield (2017) as a psychological feeling, usually accompanied by physiological reactions such as happiness and sadness. Carlson and Hatfield maintains that, emotions are feeling states with psychological, cognitive and behavioural components. They further explained that the power of emotion is closely related to arousal of the nervous system with various states and strengths of arousal relating, apparently to a particular emotion.

Reisenzein (2010) refers to emotion as various bodily feelings associated with mood, temperament disposition, motivation and also with hormones such as dopamine, or adrenaline and serotonin. In furtherance, Matz (2016) opines that, emotion is often the driving force behind motivation, positive or negative. It was asserted by Schever (2014) that although the word emotion might seem to be about feeling and not about thinking, cognition is an important aspect of emotion particularly the interpretation of events. Schever further says that fear in the mind usually occurs in response to a threat with the cognition and danger and subsequent arousal of heartbeat, and breathing, sweating, linked to behavioural tendency.

Davidson (2015) reasoned that emotions can either be programmed (genetic) or learned and they can be manifested in various ways such as by facial expressions, tone of voice and actions that reflect the emotions. Emotions according to Griffiths (2011) are feelings that have no physical cause. Emotions are regarded as the primary motivating force that arouses, directs and sustains activity (Sturat & Panquet, 2011). Watson (2011) defines emotion as an integrated, distinct, psychophysiological response system. It is an organized, structured reaction to an event that is relevant to goals, needs or survival.

Conversely, Weiss (2013) stated that emotion is not a single thing, but must be considered as a response or responses produced by unified physiological, subjective and behavioural components. Weiss further refers to Frijda's (2015) summary of the components of emotions as experiential effects of the subjective appreciation of affect, the person-situation-object connected with experiential element, the psychological changes within the person and the actual tendencies emanating from the person. Emotions can further be described as operating on two levels namely intrapersonal states and interpersonal states (Frijda, 2015). Frijda further explained that the interpersonal is concerned with the relationship between a subject and an object and the intrapersonal is considered as operating around feelings, being in a state of arousal or experiencing certain motor patterns.

Frijda (2015) defines emotion units at higher levels as complexes made up of basic processes such as feelings of pleasure or pain, individual facial expression components, particular appraisals, particular action plans and activation states.

In the submission of Russell and Barchard (2012), emotion can be subdivided into five components, namely:

1. Objectless affect: This is described as primitive feelings not necessarily associated with a

particular object (Russell & Barchard, 2012).

2. Attributed affect: This is defined as objectless affect that has been linked to a specific object which refers to a feeling in reaction to an event (Russell & Barchard, 2012).
3. Emotional behaviour: This can be defined as any overt activity associated with objectless affect or attributed affect such as body language or a hand gesture (Russell & Barchard, 2012).
4. Perception of affective quality: This is the ability of a specific object or situation to cause a particular feeling (Russell & Barchard, 2012).
5. Emotional episode: This has been defined as the co-occurrence of the above listed events: objectless affect attributed to an object (constituting attributed affect) with the object perceived in terms of affective quality and with emotional behaviour directed at the object.

From the above definitions, emotion in this study is defined as feelings that teachers have over the students in the classroom. These feelings may involve thoughts, psychological and physiological changes. Emotions can also be viewed as a reinforcement factor and as such could be positive or negative as the case may be. Thus, when a student is reinforced positively with emotions, the student is likely to comprehend better and achieve more in academics. For instance such a student usually scores high in assignment, tests and external examination. Conversely, when a student is negatively reinforced, the student achieves lesser and this might hinder academic achievement. Emotions displayed in the classroom can motivate students to work hard toward their academic achievement which plays a role in career development. Consequently, teachers as instructional leaders should display a positive emotions to students since they have influence on students' moods and emotional states which can either help or hinder achievements. Despite a long history of research and debates, there is still no standard definition of intelligence. This has led some to believe that intelligence may be approximately described, but cannot be fully defined.

Intelligence was viewed by Crottfredson (2013) as a general mental capability that, among other things involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, thinks abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience.

Anderson (2016) defined intelligence as the facet of mind underlying the capacity to think, to solve novel problems, to reason and to have knowledge of the world. In the view of Anastasi (2018), intelligence is not a single or unitary ability but rather a composite of several functions. The term denotes that combination of abilities required for survival and advancement within a particular culture. Binet and Simon (2018), refers to intelligence as a fundamental faculty, the alteration which is of the utmost importance for practical life. This faculty is judgment, otherwise called good sense, practical sense, initiative and the faculty of adapting one's self to circumstances. Intelligence was seen by Sternberg (2015) as when a person has learned or can learn to adjust himself to his environment. Drever (2011) opined that intelligence is said to be present where the individual animal, or human being is aware, however, dimly of the relevance of his behaviour to an objective. Drever continued that it is the capacity to meet novel situations, or to learn to do so by new adaptive responses. It is also the ability to perform tests or tasks, involving the grasping of relationships, the degree of intelligence being proportional to the complexity, or the abstractness or both of the relationship. Simonton (2013) summarized intelligence as certain set of cognitive capacities that enable an individual to adapt and thrive in any given environment they find themselves in, and those cognitive capacities include things like memory, retrieval, and problem solving. In the submission of Slatter (2011), intelligence is part of the internal environment that shows through at the interface between person and external environment as a function of cognitive task demands.

Sternberg (2013) referred to intelligence as the ability to achieve success in life. It is referred to the skill in achieving whatever one wants to attain in life within the socio-cultural context. This means that people have different goals for themselves, and for some it is to get very good grades in school and to do well on tests and for others it might be to become a very good player or actress or musician. Intelligence was conceptualized by Thurstone (2021) as a mental trait, the capacity to make impulses focal at the early and unfinished stage of formation. Thurstone continued that it is the capacity for abstraction which is an inhibitory process. Intelligence according to Kureweil (2016) refers to that faculty of mind by which order is perceived in a situation previously considered disordered. Albus (2019) perceived intelligence as the ability of a system to act appropriately in an uncertain

environment, where appropriate action is that which increases the probability of success, and success is the achievement of behavioural sub goals that support the system's ultimate goal. Fogel (2015) defined intelligence as the ability of an individual to generate adaptive behaviour to meet goals in a range of environments.

According to Voss (2015), intelligence is the essential, domain-independent skills necessary for acquiring wide range of domain-specific knowledge. That is the ability to learn anything. Hutter (2015) referred to intelligence as that which measures an agent's ability to achieve goals in a wide range of environments. Sternberg (2013) perceived intelligence as sensory capacity, capacity for perceptual recognition, quickness, range or flexibility or association, facility and imagination, span of attention and quickness or alertness in response. Intelligence according to Gardner (2012) is the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings. Herrnstein and Murray (2016) asserted that intelligence is the capacity of mind, especially to understand principles, truths, facts or meanings, acquire knowledge and apply it to practice. It is the ability to learn and comprehend.

Intelligence according to Gudwin (2011) is the property of mind that encompasses many related mental abilities, such as the capacities to reason, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend ideas and languages and learn. Nakashima (2014) defined intelligence as the ability to adapt effectively to the environment, either by making a change in oneself or by changing the environment or finding a new one. Nakashima continued that intelligence is not a single mental process, but rather a combination of many mental processes directed toward effective adaptation to the environment. According to Wang (2018) intelligence is the general mental ability involved in calculating, reasoning, perceiving relationships and analogies, learning quickly, storing and retrieving information, using language fluently, classifying, generalizing and adjusting to new situations. Goertzel (2016) referred to intelligence as the ability to learn, understand and make judgments or have opinions that are based on reason. Horst (2012) conceptualized intelligence as the capacity for learning, reasoning, understanding and similar forms of mental activity, aptitude in grasping truths, relationships, facts, and meanings. Masum and Oppacher (2012) opined that intelligence is the ability to use memory, knowledge, experience, understanding, reasoning, imagination and judgment in order to solve problems and adapt to new situations. Intelligence according to Legg (2016) is the capacity to inhibit an instinctive adjustment, the capacity to redefine the inhibited instinctive adjustment in the light of imaginably experienced trials and errors and the capacity to realize the behaviour to the advantage of the individual as a social animal.

Intelligence was referred by Asohan (2013) as the adjustment or adaptation of the individual to his total environment, or limited aspect thereof. It is the capacity to recognize one's behaviour patterns so as to act more effectively and more appropriately in novel situations. In furtherance Asohan opined that intelligence is the ability to learn and the extent to which a person is educable. It is the ability to carry out abstract thinking, the effective use of concepts and symbols in dealing with a problem to be solved.

Intelligence according to McCarthy (2014) is referred to as the computational part of the ability to achieve goals in the world. Poole (2011) defined intelligence as the ability to use optimally limited resources including time to achieve goals. Gregory (2009) perceived intelligence as the ability for an information processing system to adapt to its environment with insufficient knowledge and resources.

Lenat and Feigenbaum (2011) summarized intelligence as a global concept that involves an individual's ability to act purposefully, think rationally and deal effectively with the environment. White (2012) conceptualized intelligence as the realization, the successful application of the specific capacity in a particular instance. Peed (2016) saw intelligence as the global ability of an individual to act purposefully, to think logically and to effectively deal with the environment. In the view of Wade and Tavis (2016), intelligence is the ability to profit from experience, acquire knowledge, think abstractly, act purposefully or adapt to changes in the environment. Locke (2015) opined that intelligence can be distinguished from rationality in that, intelligence refers to an individual's capacity to grasp abstractions and rationality refers to how an individual actually uses his or her mind. Fagan (2010) described intelligence as cognitive process that can be measured by performance on certain

elementary tasks. Barkow (2017) asserts that the most common elements in the definitions of intelligence are:

1. Higher-level abilities like reasoning, mental representation, decision, making and problem solving.
2. Ability to learn.
3. Effective adaptation to meet the demands of the environment.

Intelligence, in this study refers to the individual's ability to make good decisions and predictions. It also means the ability of the teacher to understand, guide and direct the students to make accurate decision and judgment about their academics with a view to achieving excellence in that endeavour. Emotional intelligence is individuals' ability to understand and regulate their own emotional responses as well as adapt and respond to others (Mayer, 2012).

Salovey (2012) perceived emotional intelligence more specifically as the ability to perceive emotions, to access knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. The most recent definition that attempts to cover the whole construct of emotional intelligence describes it as the ability, skill or potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand and explain emotions (Hein, 2017). Emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal, social and survival needs important for daily functioning. It is concerned with understanding oneself and others, relating to people and adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands (Shook, 2014).

According to Bass (2015) emotional intelligence is tactical. It helps to predict success because it reflects how an individual applies knowledge to the immediate situation. It governs a person's use and control of coping strategies with certain situation. In the submission of Mayer and Salovey (2012) emotional intelligence has emerged as a salient concept for describing a person's ability to manage intrapersonal as well as interpersonal processes. Exterma (2015) observed that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of individual's social and personal functioning.

Exterma further said that emotional intelligence pertains to emotional and social competencies of students that involve the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.

Emotional intelligence was defined by Mayer and Salovey (2015) as a set of inter-related skills concerning four distinct dimensions:

1. Appraisal and expression of emotions in the self (self-emotional appraisal (SEA)). This relates to individuals' ability to understand their deep emotions and be able to express these emotions naturally.
2. Appraisal and recognition of emotion in others (others' emotional appraisal (OEA)). This relates to peoples' ability to perceive and understand the emotions of those people around them.
3. Regulation of emotion in the self (regulation of emotion (ROE)). This relates to the ability of people to regulate their emotions, which will enable a more rapid recovery from psychological distress.
4. Use of emotion to facilitate performance (use of emotions (UOE)). This relates to the ability of individuals to make use of their emotions by directing them towards constructive activities and personal performance.

In the same vein, Nikolaous (2012) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge and ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional intellectual growth. Emotional intelligence governs the person's use and control of coping strategies within certain situation (Zeidner, 2017).

Emotional intelligence was seen by Bar-On (2011) as an array of non-cognitive capacities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands. Emotional intelligence as Bar-On framed it is composed of emotional, personal, social and survival dimensions of intelligence. Bar-On further states that individuals who are emotionally

intelligent will be competent at understanding themselves and others, relating to people and adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings. This in turn, will increase their ability to be successful in dealing with environmental demands. For Bar-On, emotional intelligence relates to immediate functioning.

Emotional intelligence according to Goleman (2012) is the ability to recognize and manage one's emotions and the emotions of others. Goleman further highlighted that individuals, groups and organizations high in emotional intelligence are presumed to be more capable of utilizing emotion to adapt and capitalize on environmental demands. Similarly, Caruso (2012) opined that emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions, to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

In the view of Mayer and Cobb (2010), emotional intelligence is the emotional information as it relates to the perception, assimilation, expression, regulation and management. It is believed to encompass social and cognitive functions. Mayer and Cobb opined that emotionally intelligent persons have been described as well adjusted, warm, genuine, persistent and optimistic.

In this study, it is clear that emotional intelligence is the ability of the teacher to recognize, perceive or be aware of his/her feelings or dispositions and accommodate, appreciate or tolerate student's actions and behaviour with a view to achieving the set educational objectives. It determines the teacher's response to students' problems, responsibilities and opportunities. Hence, when students are allowed to express their feelings or opinions (emotions) in the classroom through avenues like asking or answering questions with the teacher moderating and guiding them, it creates a conducive environment for learning. Conducive environment creates better opportunity for students to explore which improves students' academic achievement.

Concept of Principalship

A principal is the head administrator of a school, especially secondary school. Encyclopedia of Education (2012) posits that the title of principal is an appropriate designation for the chief administration of a school. Udoh and Akpa (2011) refer to the principal as the executive head of a secondary school. The early school principalship was given to any teacher found to possess some sign of demonstrable administrative ability. A teacher with academic qualifications and the type of personality could be appointed the administrative head in addition to full-time teaching duty. Many of such principals were preoccupied with such tasks as scheduling, attendance taking, reporting among others. The idea of a principal serving as a teacher as well as an administrator continues today in small urban communities and most rural areas (Ukeje, 2002). As school became more complex, the principal was relieved at least some part of the teaching duties.

In Nigeria generally and Rives State in particular, the principalship has evolved from the position and performance of teachers. Hence, the title of principal usually refers to the head of secondary school or a post-primary institution (Aderounmu & Ehiametalor, 2015). The secondary school principals' office had now been transformed into a sort of a midway station between the educational policy makers and the staff and students. The principal as the administrator guides control and provides leadership in a way that supports the aims and objectives of secondary school education as stated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013). Secondary education needs a lot of changes and the school principal is likely to be the key agent to introduce and sustain such change. He is responsible for the smooth running of the school. His challenges therefore, are to ensure that all children reach the levels of academic achievements. This, he achieves by setting instructional methods for the attainment of school goals. The principal must possess certain qualities to reach the height of success. An effective and efficient principal must be a learning officer, a coach, an architect and ideal person, leader of leaders and a teacher.

Theoretical Framework

Contingency Theory of Leadership

Contingency Theory of Leadership, developed by Fiedler (2008) suggests that a leader's ability to lead is contingent upon various situational factors, including the leader's preferred style, the capabilities

and behaviours of followers and also various other situational factors. According to the theory, leaders adopt a suitable leadership style depending on the readiness of followers. The theory suggests that the favorability of the situation determines the effectiveness of task and person-oriented leader behavior. The approach is called "contingency" because it suggests that a leader's effectiveness depends on how well the leader's style fits the context. The performance of leaders cannot be properly understood outside of the situations in which they lead. Prominent among these theories are Fielder's Contingency Theory of leadership, the Path-Goal Theory of leader effectiveness which embodies transactional leadership, Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership Theory, the Cognitive Resource Theory, and the Decision-Process Theory (Bass, 2008). The Fiedler contingency model proposed that effective group performance depended upon the proper match between the leader's style of interacting with his or her followers and the degree to which the situation allowed the leader to control and influence. Fiedler offered two leadership styles, those that are motivated by task and those that are motivated by relationship. Task-motivated leaders are those who are primarily concerned with reaching a goal, whereas relationship-motivated leaders are concerned with developing close interpersonal relationships. In order to measure a leader's style, Fiedler developed the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) questionnaire (Robbins & Coulter, 2011).

Fiedler characterizes situations in terms of three factors, leader-member relations, task structure and position power (Robbins, 2010). Task structure is the degree to which the requirements of a task are clear and spelled out. Leader-member relations refer to the degree of confidence, trust and respect employees have for their leader; rated either good or not. Position power is the amount of authority a leader has over power-based activities like hiring, firing, discipline, promotions and salary increases (Chance & Chance, 2012). According to Hoy (2009), an individual's leadership style is fixed with only two ways to improve leader effectiveness. This could be by bringing in a new leader whose style fit the situation or change the situation to fit the leader by restructuring tasks or increasing or decreasing the power that the leader had over factors such as salary increases, promotions and disciplinary actions.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlational research design. The population for this study comprised the two hundred and seventy-six (276) public secondary schools in Rivers State. These schools have eight hundred and twenty-eight (828) principals including vice-principal academic and vice-principal administration, that served as the respondents for the study. (Rivers State Post Primary School Board, 2022). The sample size for the study comprised (414) principals, vice principals academic and vice principals' administration, which represents 50% of the entire population of (828) principals, vice principals academics and vice principal administration who served as respondents to the study. This was determined using Taro Yamen Formular. The stratified random sampling technique was used for the selection of the sample. Instrument for Data Collection The study used two sets of instruments for data collection. The first instrument was titled "Principals' Emotional Intelligence Disposition Questionnaire" (PEIDQ) while the second was titled "job performance Questionnaire" (JPQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections A and B. Section A contains personal information of the respondents, while section B consists of 30 questionnaire items structured based on the variables of the study. The instrument was modified after 4 points likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) scale of responses. The instrument for this study was validated for face and content validity using the researcher's supervisors and three (3) experts in the Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation from Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. This enabled the researcher to obtain a critical assessment of the instrument in terms of appropriateness and adequacy. The suggestions from these experts were used to improve the content of the instrument before administration. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha to measure the reliability. The researcher administered 20 copies of the instruments to principals outside the sample size. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to analyse the data to ascertain the reliability of each of the instrument at 0.84 reliability index. A test is seen as being reliable when it can be used by a number of different researchers under stable conditions, with consistent results and the results not varying. Reliability reflects consistency and reliability over time.

The researcher administered 414 copies of questionnaire (representing 100%) of instrument considered valid and reliable for use by the research experts, this involved the researcher going out to the field personally with 5 trained research assistants, whom the researcher trained on research standards to help in administering and collecting the 414 instruments. For proper administration and collection, the researcher also gave the assistants adequate orientation on research ethics and norms to manage any situation that may arise in course of the field work. Data obtained from the exercise was collated and analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. This statistical method was considered appropriate because of its functionality in measuring the strength and direction of association that exists between variables measured on interval scale and in this case, each variable under the independent and dependent variables. ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses to ascertain the significant relationship at 0.05 level. ANOVA was used because of its relevance in testing differences between two groups and the relationship between dependent and independent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Answers to Research Questions

Research question 1: What is the relationship between principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 1.1: Summary of Pearson Correlation analysis of the relationship between Principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Correlations

		Principals' self-regulation	principals' job performance
Principals' regulation	Pearson self-Correlation	1	.681
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
principals' performance	Pearson jobCorrelation	.681	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the analysis on table 1 revealed that the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of .681 which indicate a strong positive relationship between Principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding suggests that good Principals' self-regulation has the capability to improve job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research question 2: What is the relationship between principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1.2: Summary of Pearson Correlation analysis of the relationship between principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Correlations

		Principals' self-motivation	principals' job performance
Principals' motivation	Pearson self-Correlation	1	.832
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400

principals' job performance	Pearson Correlation	.832	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the analysis on table 2 revealed that the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of .832 which indicate a strong positive relationship between Principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding suggests that good Principals' self-motivation has the capability to improve job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Decision Rule

If the significant value (P-value) is less than 0.05, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis at 5% level of significance. On the other hand, if the significant value (P-value) is greater than the 0.05, accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis at 5% level of significance.

Hypothesis one There is no significant relationship between principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 1.3: Summary of ANOVA analysis showing the relationship between Principals' self-regulation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	62.999	1	62.999	53.929	.000
Residual	464.938	398	1.168		
Total	527.937	399			

a. Dependent Variable: principals' job performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals' self-regulation

This hypothesis was intended to identify the strength of principals' self-regulation and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The ANOVA table shows that the calculated F-value is 62.999. The degree of freedom is 1 and 398. The calculated F-value is significant at 0.000 level of which is less than the chosen level of probability of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between principals' self-regulation and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Hypothesis Two There is no significant relationship between principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 1.4: Summary of ANOVA analysis showing the relationship between Principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	62.575	1	62.575	52.807	.000 ^b
Residual	471.622	398	1.185		
Total	534.198	399			

a. Dependent Variable: principals' job performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals' self-motivation

This hypothesis was intended to identify the strength of principals' self-motivation and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The ANOVA table shows that the calculated F-value is 62.575. The degree of freedom is 1 and 398. The calculated F-value is significant at 0.000 level of which is less than the chosen level of probability of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between principals' self-motivation and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Principals' social skills and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

The analysis of data on sixth findings revealed the relationship between principals' social skills and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The calculated $r = 0.73$ shows a strong positive relationship between principals' social skills and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This entails that principals' social skills improves their job performance in senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The corresponding test of hypothesis 6 established that the calculated F-value is significant at 0.000 level of which is less than the chosen level of probability of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis that "there is no significant relationship between principals' social skills and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State" is hereby rejected and the alternate is accepted. Thus, there is a positive relationship between principals' social skills and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding was supported by the views of Iremeka et al (2022), whose findings were that proper management of principals' social skills, teamwork, emotion and work attitude will validly and reliably lead to effective school administration secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The finding of this study are therefore consistent with Vijitharan et al (2019) findings indicated that self-motivation and social skills have significant impact on job performance of primary and secondary level school teachers in Jaffna Zone. In furtherance, emotional intelligence has significant impact on school principals' performance.

Principal's self-awareness and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State

Based on the analysis of data, the first findings revealed the relationship between principal's self-awareness and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The calculated $r = 0.63$ shows a strong positive relationship between principal's self-awareness and principals' job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. In essence, principals' self-awareness improves their productivity and relationship with students and staff which in turn enhance academic activities in Rivers State. The corresponding test of hypothesis 1 established that the calculated F-value is significant at 0.000 level of which is less than the chosen level of probability of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis that "there is no significant relationship between principal's self-awareness and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State" is hereby rejected and the alternate is accepted. Thus, there is a positive relationship between principal's self-awareness and job performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding was supported by the views of Oria, et al (2022) findings revealed that the emotional intelligence of public school principals is interpreted as "high emotional intelligence". In particular, on self-awareness, all public school principals perceived themselves to have "very high emotional intelligence". On social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, generally, the respondents are found to have "high emotional intelligence". The finding of this study are therefore consistent with Ijenwa, and Madumere-Obike (2019), who reported that there is significant relationship between principals' emotional intelligence as well as social skills, self-awareness on teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Abia State. In furtherance self-awareness refers to the capability to comprehend one's own emotions and how they influence those around us. A leader that scores high in this construct usually feels secure, self-assured, truthful, and honest, because such leader can easily recognize their own emotional strengths and weaknesses and is able to offer a strong support to subordinates

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the emotional intelligence skills of principals in public secondary schools in Rivers

State has revealed the critical role emotional intelligence plays in effective leadership. Principals who demonstrate high emotional intelligence skills are better equipped to handle challenging situations, communicate effectively with stakeholders, and create a positive school environment conducive to learning. It is evident that emotional intelligence is a key factor in successful leadership in the educational setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the study recommended as follows :

1. **Emotional Intelligence Training:** Principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State should undergo regular training programs focused on enhancing emotional intelligence skills. Workshops and seminars can be organized to help principals develop self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.
2. **Recruitment and Selection:** During the recruitment process for school principals, emotional intelligence assessments should be included to ensure that candidates possess the necessary EI skills required for effective leadership. This can help in selecting individuals who are not only academically qualified but also emotionally intelligent.
3. **Support Systems:** Establish support systems for principals to help them manage stress, build resilience, and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Providing resources such as counseling services, mentorship programs, and peer support groups can contribute to the well-being of principals and, in turn, enhance their emotional intelligence.
4. **Collaborative Leadership:** Encourage collaborative leadership practices among principals, teachers, and staff members. Foster a culture of teamwork, trust, and open communication within schools to promote emotional intelligence at all levels of the educational institution.
5. **Student Engagement:** Principals should focus on enhancing student engagement through emotional intelligence initiatives. By incorporating EI skills into the curriculum, organizing student workshops on emotional awareness, and creating a supportive learning environment, principals can positively impact student behavior, motivation, and academic performance.

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