EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS CORRELATES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ECONOMICS IN ABAKALIKI EDUCATION ZONE OF EBONYI STATE

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine emotional intelligence as a correlate of academic achievement of secondary school students in Economics in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted a correlation research design. A sample of 253 respondent was drawn from a population of 5067 SS2 students offering Economics as a subject from the 20 secondary schools from the population. This was done using simple random sampling technique by balloting with replacement. Two instruments were used in this study: Economic Achievement Test (EAT) and a rating scale. The Economics Achievement Test was used to assess the academic achievement of students in Economics while the rating scale titled Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) was used to collect data on the emotional intelligence of the students. The reliability test of the instruments was established using Cronbach alpha statistics for EIS while Kudder Richardson 20 was used to compute the reliability of EAT with indices of 0.88 and 0.77 obtained for EIS and EAT respectively which indicated that the instrument are reliable for the study. Research question 1 was answered with multiple linear regressions as to measure the degree of relationships existing between the dependent and independent variables. One Way ANOVA was used to test hypothesis 1 at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings indicated that: there is a high joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self awareness, self motivation and social skills) and students' academic achievement in Economics. It was recommended that; teachers should initiate classroom practices that help students to understand and manage their emotional intelligence in Economics learning situations. Teachers should endeavour to understand the emotional reactions of students to teaching and entire Economics learning environment and identify where intervention may be needed.

Key words: Emotional intelligence, Academic achievement, social skills, social awareness

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The concept of Emotional Intelligence has its roots in the late 1930s, when researchers began describing a non-intellective intelligence sometimes described as "social intelligence". Knowing that persons with high intellect cannot always be successful, many people have been trying to find out the causes of success and failure. So, while trying to find out the causes of success and failure, two American University professors Dr. John D. Mayer and Dr. Peter Salovey introduced the concept of "Emotional Intelligence" in 1990 describing it as "a form of social intelligence that involves 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 action". In the 1990's Daniel Goleman a psychologist and science writer specializing in brain and behavior research became aware of Salovey and Mayer's work, and this eventually led to his book, "Emotional Intelligence" which was published in 1995. According to Goleman, 1995, "Emotional Intelligence can help people make better decisions". Goleman (1995) define Emotional Intelligence as," the capacity of recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships".

Emotion can be defined "as a conscious and subjective mental reaction toward a particular event which produces a high intensity of perception of pleasure or displeasure over the attainment of a given goal" (Okon, 2008; Sincere, 2012; Agulanna and Nwachukwu, 2014). Obviously, mood and emotion are two words that are often mistakenly used interchangeably. Schreiner (2013) observed that mood is something a person may not easily express due to its lack of perception and understanding of the stimulus in the body environment. It is bound to last longer either as bad or happy feeling. Emotion on its own is easily expressed, perceived and the stimulus understood. The feelings are sometimes short-lived. It is also the extreme inner feeling of a person which stimulates activities or creates the opportunities for the body to respond either favourably or unfavourably (Bearce, 2009).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) which is a psychological construct is the capability of an individual to motivate, control impulse and delay gratification, to adjust one's mood and remove distress from swamping the ability to think, to empathize and to hope (Duygulu, Hicdurmaz and Akar2011; Mahmoood AbdEl-'Dayem and Mousa 2013; Corina, 2011). It is the people's self-perception of their emotional abilities and skills, personality characteristics and behavioural disposition that influence their ability to cope successfully with environmental demands and pressures. Mestre and Barchard (2014) stated that individuals who have developed high level of EI are able to recognize and regulate their own and others emotions. According to Mayer and Salovey (1997) Emotional Intelligence consists of five basic social and emotional competencies such as self-awareness, managing emotions (self-regulation) motivating oneself (self-motivation), empathy and social skills. Self-awareness is the ability to monitor one's emotional state and to currently identify and names one's emotion. Managing emotion refers to the ability to control or re-direct disruptive impulses and mood and the propensity to suspend judgement, to think before acting. Self-motivation is the passion to work for internal reasons that go beyond money and status. Empathy has to do with the ability to understand the emotional make-up of the people, a skill in treating people according to their emotional reaction while social skill is the proficiency in managing relationship and building networks and an ability to find common ground and build rapport. Academic achievement according to Deepa and Lawrence (2013) is the level of actual accomplishment or proficiency one has achieved in an academic area as opposed to one's potential in the educational goals measured by examination. Preeti (2013) refer

to it as the outcome of education-extent to which a student, teacher and institution has achieved their educational goal. Academic achievement prepares students or future career and also allow them enter competitive field. It can also affect students' opportunities for further education and future occupation. Test scores have been shown to be a powerful predictor of future success as measured by education, occupation and income (Jonsdottir, 2012).

Mayer & Salovey again in the year 1997 describes emotional intelligence as, "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth". According to a report from the National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, the most critical element for a student's success in school is an understanding of how to learn i.e. Emotional Intelligence (EI). Emotional Intelligence is measured in terms of Emotional Quotient (EQ). The key ingredient for this understanding includes: Curiosity, Confidence, Intentionality, Ability to cooperate, Capacity to communicate, Relatedness, Self-control.

These traits are all aspects of emotional intelligence and they can help the student to deal effectively with his/her studies as well as his/her interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Basically, a student who learns to learn is much more likely to succeed. According to Yahaya, emotional intelligence has proven a better predictor of future success than traditional methods like the grade point average, IQ, and standardized test scores (Yahaya, 2011). In simple terms emotional intelligence is that ability which allows people to reflect, to react, and to understand various environmental situations. According to Daniel Goleman, IQ alone is no more the measure for success; emotional intelligence, social intelligence, and luck also play a big role in a person's success (Goleman, 1995). He further states that 20% of success in life depends on IQ and the other 80% depends on emotional intelligence.

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

In his book "Emotional Intelligence", Goleman (1995), described the five dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. They are:

Self-awareness: The ability to recognize and understand personal moods and emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others. It includes self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, and a self-deprecating sense of humor. Self-awareness depends on one's ability to monitor one's own emotion state and to correctly

Internal motivation: A passion to work for internal reasons that go beyond money and status - which are external rewards, - such as an inner vision of what is important in life, a joy in doing something, curiosity in learning, a flow that comes with being immersed in an activity: A propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence. It includes a strong drive to achieve, optimism even in the face of failure, and organizational commitment.

Empathy: The ability to understand the emotional make up of other people. A skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions. It includes expertise in building and retaining talent, cross-cultural sensitivity, and service to clients and customers. (In an educational context, empathy is often thought to include, or lead to sympathy, which implies concern, or care or a wish to soften negative emotions or experiences in others).

Social skills: Proficiency in managing relationships and building networks, and ability to find common ground and build affinity. Social skills include effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, and expertise building and leading teams. Many research findings have proven that the above dimensions of emotional intelligence are related to academic achievement. Some of them are given as follows. David (2016) in his study revealed that there was a significant influence of self-awareness and social awareness on students' academic performance. A research conducted by Torbat et al. (2016) revealed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-regulation Ghamari (2011) in his research concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between internal motivation and academic achievement. With regards to empathy, a study conducted by Faisal et al. (2015) revealed that there was a positive influence of empathy on academic achievement. Finally, a study conducted by Nazir et al. (2015) revealed that students who have higher social intelligence have higher academic achievement.

Academic Achievement

It is the dream of every parent to see their children become successful in their life and education is an important tool for a successful life. It is a continuous process which begins at birth and goes on till death. There are many agencies of education and one of the most popular agencies of education are the schools, colleges and universities in which the child is enrolled to be educated in all aspects of life. And his mastery of the education that he received in the schools, colleges and universities are measured in terms of his level of academic achievement. According to Kalochina (2014)," Academic achievement is the outcome of education – the degree to which a student, teacher and institution has achieved their educational goals. Furthermore, academic achievement is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested" (p- 99).

Statement of Problem

The essence of this study is to investigate Emotional intelligence as a correlate of Students academic achievement in Economics among secondary school students in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State. It has been proven that being emotionally intelligent can equip students for achieving academic excellence and building a good interpersonal relationship with others. Emotional intelligence has been seen as an indispensable skill that supports students to meet up and manage their academic goals. Researchers have affirmed that students' emotional intelligence can predicts higher academic achievement in examinations. In essence, students with strong emotionally intelligence are more successful, effective and efficient in their schools and consequently, are able to achieve higher academic scores. Hence, it is necessary for students to be equipped with the skills of emotional intelligence as to achieve academic success. Therefore, this study investigated the impacts of emotional intelligence on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Economics.

Scope of the Study

This essence of this study is to examine emotional intelligence as correlates of secondary school students' achievement in Economics in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State. The study will focus on the extent emotional intelligence serves as correlate of academic achievement of

students in Economic among senior secondary school students in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State.

Significance of the Study

This research work when concluded will be very useful to the following groups of persons: the students themselves, the teachers, and the management of the schools, the policy makers, the guidance councilors, and the stake holders.

On the part of the students, the work if implemented will go a long way to inform the students what emotions can do in determining their academic achievement either positively or negatively. It will provide the knowledge on how to understand and take care of one's physical bodies, alleviate anxiety, and avoid depression, stress and mood swings. It will also help the students manage their emotions, better communicate ones feelings in a more constructive way, resolve conflicts and enhance leadership skills among their peers.

The findings of the study on emotional intelligence would help to influence the teacher on how he or she feels about his or her work; understand and effectively manage the changing mood of students about a topic in Economics. It will instill thoughtful and tactful skills into the teacher, enables his or her to demonstrate virtues of care, empathy, love and kindness to the students who are experiencing fear and anxiety.

 It will go a long way to help the guidance councilors on how to council the students concerning their emotional activities cum behaviours. The research work if implemented will help the policy makers in making good and appropriate policies that will guide the academic achievements of students based on their emotions.

The findings of the study on emotional intelligence would help the teacher on how he or she feels about his or her work, understand and effectively manage the changing mood of students caused by his or her style of teaching economics. It will train the teacher on effective classroom management strategies and retention factors for new interest of students about a topic in Economics.

The findings will assist the social science as well as the educationist experts to promote skills of resilience in handling difficult tasks. It will help the individual to excel in interpersonal relationship while working with others.

Finally, the findings of this study if implemented will enable the textbook authors to have a wider scope of knowledge about the emotions that can influence student's academic life and its changing challenges.. It will provide a platform that will academically assess issues which affect the school operations through writing.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, this study is aimed at addressing the under listed purpose:

1. Joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self awareness, self motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics among secondary school students in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

1. What is the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self awareness, self motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject?

   Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was stated to guide the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1. The joint relationship among emotional intelligence variables (self-awareness, self motivation and social skills) and academic performance in Economics among secondary school students in Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State is not significant.

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement

Emotional intelligence and academic achievements are closely related. According to Kolachina (2014)," Emotionally intelligent student would have better academic achievement or through EI there is a possibility of improvement of academic achievement." Many research findings have proven that there is significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement. Yelkikalan et al. (2012) states that almost 11% of change in academic achievement can be explained by emotional intelligence. Chew et al. (2013), concluded that as compared to students with low emotional intelligence students with high emotional intelligence perform better in both continuous assessments and the final professional examination. Preeti (2013) states that academic achievement alone is not enough for future success and that both emotional intelligence and academic achievement are needed for future success. So, from the above researches conducted by various researchers we can see that emotional intelligence is closely related to academic achievement.

Theoretical Frame work

Goleman Emotional Intelligence Theory (1995); Daniel Goleman propounded one of the most popular emotional intelligence theories in 1995' Golemans idea of the theory is that life fulfillment and success in life are better predicted by emotional and social skills than by the academic intelligence quotient which is not a major predictor of success. This means that in our current educational system, intellectual quotient (IQ) scores are regarded as strong predictors of a students' academic success. While IQ tests may show students level of intellectual aptitude, they do not reveal information regarding the emotional development of the students, or their ability to connect their emotions to the material that they are learning.

Therefore, Goleman suggests that Emotional Intelligence is the primary indicator for the determination of social-emotional' skills such as self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself. Although IQ and emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) indicators might seem oppose them, they are instead indicators for two different types of intelligences; IQ and

emotional intelligence are not opposing competencies, but rather separate ones. The five domains that Golemen coined at the time of development of this theory in 1995 have not changed. These core competencies of EI by Goleman are:

1. Knowing ones emotions: self awakened; recognizing a feeling as it happens
2. Managing emotions: handling feelings appropriately;
3. Motivating oneself: emotional self control, delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness;
4. Recognizing emotions in others; empathy, the fundamental people skill; and
5. Handling relationship: a skill in managing emotions on others.

Emotional intelligence according to Goleman suggests that individuals must have the ability and aptitude to control feelings through the identification of the assessment of these feelings. Particularly, emotional intelligence refers to emotions such as enjoyment, fear, sadness and anger.

In essence to this study, emotional intelligence is the aptitude to accurately recognize and understand emotional reactions in self and others in abilities such as self esteem, self management, acquiring and managing responsibilities, being accountable, being social and practicing integrity and honest. Hence, academic abilities are necessary in developing a mastery of a knowledge base and the tools required to effectively solve problem and individuals high in EI are more likely be successful academically and in demanding interpersonal situations. The benefits of socio-emotional literacy can be seen inside and outside the classroom because teaching emotional literacy has been found to be very beneficial, especially in the areas of self-awareness, managing emotions, harnessing emotions productively, and empathy, reading emotions and handling relationship.

Empirical Studies: Ghosh, (2014) in a study examined emotional intelligence and academic achievement among advantaged and disadvantaged children in India. The study used three research questions and three hypotheses. It adopted a correlation design; using two research instruments. A simple random sampling was used in drawing a sample of 200 school students of class six studying in the private and government schools of Ranchi town from a population of 2000 students. The data were analyzed with the help of t-ratio and product Moment Coefficients of Correlation. The findings of the study revealed a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievements. The study is related to the study since both studies are focused on finding relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. However, Ghosh study was conducted in India while the present study will be in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The difference is the geographical location which motivated the need to carry out the study in Ebonyi State.

Research Design

The design for this study was descriptive design of the correlation type. Correlation research has been defined as a study aimed at establishing the relationship that exists between two or more variables for the purpose of making a prediction about the relationship. This research design was used because it enables the researcher not only to observe methodologically existing attributes in the population but also to see relationship between the variables. This work is carried out in

Abakaliki education zone of Ebonyi State. The population of the study consists of 5067 senior secondary school students offering Economics as a subject from the 45 public secondary schools that made up the zone. The sample size of 253 senior secondary students offering Economics was selected using simple random sampling technique by balloting with replacement as well as multi stage sampling too.

Two instruments were used for this study; Economics Achievement Test (EAT) and a rating scale. Economics achievement test were used to assess the academic achievement of the Economics Students as a subject. While the rating scale titled: Emotional Intelligence Scale" (IES) with 30 items adapted from Iruloh and Ukaegbu (2015) was used to collect data on the emotional intelligence of the students. The rating scale has two sections A and B section.

Section A elicits information on demographic data, while sections B illicits information on student's emotional intelligence. The section B contains 20items each matched with a 4point scale response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted as 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The content validity of EAT was determined by test blue print while face validity was done for EIS. In ascertaining the face validity of the EIS, the research instrument was given to specialist in educational Economics and measurement and evaluation for scrutiny and comments. The internal consistency reliability of the instruments was established using 30 students from Onueke Education Zone which is outside the study area. The score from the administration were computed, using Cronbach alpha statistics for EIS while Kudder Richardson 20 was used to compute the reliability of GAT. Indices of 0.88 and 0.77 were obtained for EIS and respectively which indicate that the instruments were reliable for the study.

In administering the instrument for this study, the researcher, personally viewed the various schools selected with the help of two well-trained research assistants to ensure a hundred (100) percent return of completed rating scale and test. On arriving at the study to alloy their fear and reduce misinterpretation of the items. Finally, the researcher assured confidentiality of all information provided. The rating scale and achievement test were administers to the students to ensure proper collection and administration of instrument. Respondents were given enough time

to indicate their responses and to return the rating scale on completion. The percentage of return is 100%

Method of Data Analysis

Pearson "r" statistic was used to answer research question 1, 2 and 3 while research question 4 was answered using multiple linear regression so as to measure the degree of relationship existing between the dependent and independent variables using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. (SPSS) version 21 via the computer. The basis for the decision for the research questions' conclusion will be as follows: 0.00-0.2=very low relationship, 0.21-0.40=low relationship, 0.41-0.60=very high relationship. The t-test significance of correlation statistic was used to test hypothesis 1, 2, and 3 while One Way ANOVA was used to test hypothesis 4 at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1
What is the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject?
Table 1;
Summary of the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject

n	r	Decision
253	0.69	High Relationship

Table 4 shows the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness,   self-motivation   and   social skills) and   students' academic performance in Economics as a subject. The result indicated that with **n** as 253, the correlation coefficient is 0.69. The result shows that **r** of 0.69 implies that there is a high joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students academic performance in Economics as a subject. The conclusion is that there is a high joint association among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1
H0$_1$: The joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject is not significant.

Table 2:

The Summary of One-Way ANOVA F-test for the significance of the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and
Social skills) and students' academic performance in Government as a subject

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	Fcal	Ftab	Decision
Regression	99.350	3	33.117			
Residual	106.808	249	429	**77.205**	**2.60**	Reject
Total	2067.158	252				Ho

$F_{critical\,(3.249)} = 2.60$

The result in Table 2 shows the summary of One Way ANOVA F-test table for the significance of the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject. The hypothesis was rejected. This is because the f-calculated value of 77.205 is significantly greater than the f-tabulated of 2.60. The conclusion is that there is significant joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject.

Summary of Findings
1.   There is a significant high joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject.
Discussion of Findings
Joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self awareness, sell motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance
The study finally revealed that there is a high joint relationship among emotional intelligence (self awareness, self motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject. This implies that there is high association among the variables. With this finding, the inference was led on the fact that the joint relationship among emotional intelligence (sell awareness, self motivation and social skills) and students' academic performance in Economics as a subject is significant. This finding is corroborated by Seng, Hanafi, Taslikhan and Raman (2016) study which showed that all the emotional intelligence dimensions are at high level. In line with this, Fayombo (2012) findings revealed significant positive correlations between academic achievement and six of the emotional intelligence components. The emotional intelligence components also jointly contributed 48% of the variance in academic achievement. Similarly, Oyewunmi, Osibanjo and Adeniji (2016) results showed a correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance; affirming that emotional intelligence predicts academic performance. The similarities so recorded among the findings could be attributed that the studies may have used similar statistics in their analysis.

Educational Implications of the Study
The results obtained in the present study allow investigator to generate several educational implications. The result revealed that emotional intelligence indices of students were found to correlate with their academic achievement individually and jointly. Certainly, these results are

encouraging, and support the importance of developing emotional skills among the students in secondary schools, a task still pending in most institutions. To build a complete individual and prepare them for the future, secondary education must train students in the affective and emotional world. If the emotional intelligence of the students are improved and adequately trained, there will be a sound individual that can see things in a clear and distinct way tending towards solving psychological, personal and social problems with case. This will in turn improve students' academic performance and thus make the students to contribute significantly to the growth of the nation. But if the reverse is the case, a confused and a distressed person may be the case.

Recommendations: Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: Therefore, this is responsibility of teachers in secondary schools and educational administrators that they organize following activities:

1. Lesson and activities to develop emotional intelligence of student properly and thereby their intellectual abilities and adjustment.

2.   Several seminars should be organized by secondary education management board and other agencies related to development of emotional intelligence of students.

3.   Teachers should initiate classroom practices that aid students to understand and manage their emotional intelligence in Economics learning situations.

4.   Teachers should endeavour to understand the emotional reactions of students to teaching and entire Economics learning environment, and identify where interventions may be required.

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