

Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness of Heads of Academic Departments in Public Polytechnics in South West Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of HODs in public Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 confidence level. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all the 394 HODs in all the 18 public owned Polytechnics in South West Nigeria. The sample size comprised 197 HODs selected from 11 public Polytechnics using stratified and non-proportionate sampling techniques. Self-designed 25 items validated and reliable instrument, $r = .89$ titled “Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire” (EIAEQ) was used for data collection. Data analysis was done using multiple Regression Analysis and Analysis of Variance. The result showed that emotional intelligence indicators jointly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness in the following descending order: self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship awareness, and self- management significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness and that there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The result further showed that gender was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness as male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on administrative effectiveness. It was recommended inter alia that the appointment of HODs should be democratized to enable members of the department to have opportunity of assessing the emotional intelligence level of the aspiring HODs.

Keywords: administrative effectiveness, emotional intelligence, head of academic departments, public polytechnics, South West Nigeria

Polytechnics in Nigeria are tertiary educational institutions established to train skilled, middle and high-level manpower in vocational and technical education and training, to enhance industrial productivity and promotion of better quality of life of the citizenry as well as in the enhancement of the socio-economic development of the country. Arising from the nature of programs offered by Polytechnics, the institutions are becoming more and more complex and high-tech driven. The effective functioning of Polytechnics has a direct link with the availability of human resources, especially, the academic staff who are expected to carry out the tasks of teaching, research and community service. These set of people are grouped into departments based on their areas of specialization. The department is the smallest academic unit in any tertiary educational institution. Every department is headed by a senior academic staff designated as the Head of Department. Oyebade, Oladipo and Adeyanju (2020), describe the Head of Department as the administrative and academic helmsman of a department who contributes to the realization of the institution's strategic plans through the provision of appropriate management and academic leadership within the department.

As observed by Ada and Okoli (2019), an educational institution is regarded as being successful if it has a clear sense of direction and is administered by heads who are efficacious instructional leaders. There is no doubt therefore, that the roles of heads of departments are increasingly becoming complex and movement through the academic career ladder to become an administrative staff is not adequate a preparation for overseeing the day-to-day administration of a department. Institutional heads are therefore, required to be abreast of the proficiency needed to operate successfully in the complex environment (Adedokun, 2014).

At the departmental level, the HOD has the responsibility of enhancing the learning outcomes of students and the effectiveness of academic members of staff in the discharge of their academic responsibilities by way of partnership with all those concerned with the system (Nzomo, 2012). As human beings, the HODs have feelings which usually represent their psychological and emotional state of mind, and these feelings and dispositions have been shown to determine the intellectual power of the administrator, attachment to accomplishments and setbacks as well as logical and analytical propositions. Perhaps, emotion is a very crucial factor in institutional management (Cook, 2006). These feelings and mood potentialities have been handled by Emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is the capacity of an individual to recognize, examine and be in charge of his/her feelings and to acknowledge them in others, occasioned by an amalgam of self-consciousness, self-management, humanitarian and interpersonal management. In certain circumstances, emotions have an overriding influence on the behavior of people than reasoning (Bradberry & Greaves 2009). Lash (2009) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize one's feelings and those of others, to inspire oneself towards the effective management of feelings and in one's interaction with people. Similarly, Oyakhilome (2009) asserted that emotional intelligence is an integral part of basic human characteristics that are instrumental to keeping a check on the behavioral patterns of an individual. The major emphasis is on the identification and observance of emotions during a person's interaction with others, observe his/her responsibilities and conform with the environment or situations.

Emotional intelligence therefore, has to do with the capability to identify and guide one's emotional tendencies, indicating understanding and reasonableness for the purpose of finding out mind-boggling impediments with flexibility and reasonableness. There is the need for educational leaders to evolve competence in emotional intelligence of self-management to enable them manage others effectively, since, it will be difficult to give to others what one does

not have. In a nutshell, self-management has to do with the individual's capability to manipulate deplorable emotions, such as apprehension, anger etc., in addition to curb emotional thoughtlessness.

The emphasis of this study is on the Goleman's (2002) four indicators of emotional intelligence which are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Self-awareness is crucial to getting to know others and showing understanding. It encompasses the emotional intelligence capabilities of motivation, confidence and emotional check. Social awareness helps to regulate the way one copes with relationships in terms of empathy, organizational consciousness and service orientation. Self-management denotes the propensity to regulate the disturbing reactions such as worries and displeasures. Relationship management involves the control of emotions in others. It has direct impact on relationship with other people. In fact, the effectiveness of one's work personal skills is based on the ability to accommodate or control the emotions of another person.

Onote (2020) asserted that management of educational institutions in Nigeria has been characterized by high level of exhibition of amenable psychological state. Obviously, many institutional administrators in Nigeria seem to be at best be bothered about things affecting them and their kinsmen. A significant relationship is therefore, found to exist between institutional administrators' emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, such that an emotional intelligent administrator tends to be thoughtful and sympathetic in relating with the staff members.

Effective institutional administration in the contemporary societies is measured by the extent at which the administrators carry on themselves and how well they treat others. Efficacious leadership is not only determined by cerebral capability or professional competence, it is connected with the individual's distinctive attributes and personal idiosyncrasies, such as compassion and insight, resilience and influence. Present leaders should therefore have the capability and flexibility to adjust to the dynamic nature of human resources, because, it is these human capabilities that distinguish effective administrators (Liman, et al, 2019).

Research has shown that the level of emotional intelligence has direct and positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. Jones (2012) discovered that a significant statistical association existed between emotional intelligence and administrative practices among senior university administrators, as evident in the display of moderate requisite emotional ability. The study further showed that the Administrators' overall emotional intelligence and other elements of emotional intelligence were significantly connected with the "enabling others to act" constituent of the administrative operation inventory.

Similarly, Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014) reported that a significant proportion of school administrators in the sampled area were highly efficacious, such that a large number of them possessed dominant emotional intelligence, and that there was a significant correlation between the extent of emotional state and administrative effectiveness. The study therefore, concluded that the administrators had a very high level of emotional intelligence and that had significantly influenced their administrative effectiveness. Nelson and Low (2011) found that a large number of effective managers possessed a high level of emotional intelligence and that emotional intelligence is an important factor in the identification of effective managers, nevertheless, it can also be associated with effective task accomplishment. Studies (Oke, 2019 and Oparaji, *et al.*, 2020) indicated that the connection between the mind and emotions appears to be ambiguous to a great number of people. This is because of the feeling that acceptable ideas can

be attainable without emotions. Nevertheless, sincere emotions have been found to have significant association with positive thinking.

The foregoing is an indication that the contemporary institutional administrators have crucial roles to play in providing appropriate administrative and instructional leadership, there is therefore, the need to sustain the lofty ideology in professional affirmation, communication prowess, relational ability and academic responsibility. The prosperity of any educational institution is hinged on the commitment, good thinking and proficiency of the administrator, hence, the indispensability of emotional intelligence of the administrator in the success of any organization.

Statement of the Problem

The head of any academic department in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions, especially, Polytechnics as applicable in this study is expected to provide both administrative and academic leadership that enhance effective and efficient day-to-day operation of the department. Experiences and observations of the researchers have however, shown that in some of the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, the administration at the departmental level is occasionally characterized by frictions among the head, the staff members and students, thereby impeding the healthy interpersonal connections and team spirit among members of the department with regards to the accomplishment of goals. Some of the departmental heads seem to be unconscious of their emotional states as regards others and this has implications on how well they are able to carry on their emotions and those of others. Equally, some of them appear to be emotionally unintelligent especially in the areas of planning, decisions making and conflict management.

It is as a result of these that the study examined the emotional intelligence of heads of departments in relation to administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the nexus between the emotional intelligence of heads of Department and administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the joint contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness of heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.
2. Assess the relative contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness in the Polytechnics.
3. Investigate the difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female HODs in Polytechnics

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study at .05 confidence level:

- Ho1: There is no significant joint contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.
- Ho2: There is no significant relative prediction of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics.
- Ho3: There is no significant difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female HODs in Polytechnics.

Methodology

The design for this study was descriptive survey. The population comprised all the 394 heads of Department in all the 18 public owned Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The sample size comprised 197 HODs selected from 11 Polytechnics (five Federal, seven States) using stratified sampling technique. The stratification was based on institutional location, ownership and gender of the HODs. Non-proportionate sampling technique was used to select the departments in each of the institutions sampled for the study.

A self-designed instrument titled “Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire” (EIAEQ) was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was a 25-item questionnaire with five sub-scales that sought information on HODs’ self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management as well as administrative effectiveness. The instrument was validated by Senior Academic Staff in Educational Psychology and Educational Management in University of Lagos, and Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was determined using split half method with the application of Spearman Brown Prophecy formula, and a reliability coefficient of .89 was obtained. Arising from the high value of the co-efficient, the instrument was adjudged to be reliable for use in the study. The services of four trained research assistants were employed in the administration of the instrument.

Data collected were analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis and Analysis of variance statistical tools at .05 confidence level.

Results

Ho1: There is no significant joint contribution of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses, the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Joint Prediction of HODs Administrative Effectiveness by Emotional Intelligence*

Multiple R= .625

Multiple R² = .556Multiple R² (Adjusted) = .554

Standard Error of Estimate = 1.93247

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	18254.530	4	2281.816	611.018	.000 ^a
Residual	3073.451	192	3.734		
Total	21327.981	196			

a. Predictors: (Constant), self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management

b. Dependent Variable: administrative effectiveness

From Table 1 the administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments by the independent variables was tested using Multiple Regression Analysis. The regression table reveals that multiple R = .625, R² = .556, adjusted R² = .554, Standard Error of Estimate = 1.93247 and p-value = .000. Specifically, the independent variables jointly made 55.6% of the variance of administrative effectiveness. This means that emotional intelligence examined in this study (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) had significant joint prediction of HODs administrative effectiveness.

H02: There is no significant relative contribution of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses, the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2*Relative Prediction of Independent Variable to the HODs Administrative Effectiveness*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	-6.755	.744		-9.078	.000
	Self-awareness	.740	.155	.068	4.778	.000
	Self-management	.057	.014	.069	4.242	.000
	Social awareness	.585	.025	.478	23.496	.000
	Relationship Management	.120	.025	.089	4.850	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Administrative effectiveness

Table 2 shows the relative prediction by the independent variables (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to dependent variable

(administrative effectiveness). In the following descending order, the result shows that self-awareness ($\beta = .740$, $p < .000$), social-awareness ($\beta = .585$, $p < .000$), relationship awareness ($\beta = .120$, $p < .000$), and self- management ($\beta = .057$, $p < .000$) significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness.

H03: There is no significant difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female heads of departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. Two- way Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis; the result is presented in Table 3

Table 3

Summary of Sex, Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria

Source	Type III Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	408.425 ^a	11	37.130	.539	.616
Intercept	574086.064	1	574086.064	8336.277	.000
Sex	4.154	1	4.154	.060	.762
Emotional intelligence	6.817	3	2.273	.040	.841
Admin effectiveness	5.780	2	2.890	.041	.938
Sex*emotional intelligence	5.798	3	1.932	.128	.720
Sex* administrative effectiveness	30.545	2	15.273	.222	.713
Sex*emotional intelligence*adminis trative effectiveness	197.446	4	49.361	.717	.114
Error	13429.046	195	68.866		
Total	713560.000	197			
Corrected Total	13837.471	196			

The Result in Table 3 shows that, there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria $F(1,196) = .060$, $P > .05$. Specifically, male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence. This rejects the hypothesis that, male HODs will differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence.

The result of the analysis equally revealed that, gender was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness $F(3,196) = .040$, $P > .05$. Male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on administrative effectiveness. This implies the rejection of the hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant gender difference on administrative effectiveness of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The result of the ANOVA statistic computed also indicated no interactive effect of gender and emotional intelligence $F(3,196) = .720$, $P > .05$ the same way no interactive effect of gender and administrative effectiveness $F(2,196) = .720$, $P > .05$ of HODs in polytechnics in South West Nigeria. The result of the analysis further showed that, there was no interactive effect of sex, emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of HODs in polytechnics in South West Nigeria $F(4,196) = 2.191$, $P > .05$.

Discussion of Findings

The first result showed that the indices of emotional intelligence examined in the study (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) had significant joint prediction of HODs administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. This is indicative of the fact that the efficaciousness of departmental administrators with regards to the day-to-day operation was significantly influenced by all the components of their emotional intelligence which is evident in the capacity to be conscious of the way and manner in which interpersonal relationships are handled among the staff members. This present study confirms the earlier studies, such as Bonnyventure, Cheluget and Ngala (2022) who reported that emotional intelligence of administrator had an enhancing cushioning impact on the association between collaborative management and task accomplishment. Relatedly, Cayaks and Eskili (2021) discovered that a positive, moderate and significant association existed between administrators' leadership disposition and emotional intelligence. Also, reviewing the place of emotional intelligence in educational institutions, Danilor and Mihailora (2020) declared that emotional intelligence occupies a strategic place in the educational institutions like every other organizations. This is due to the fact that thoughtful school administrators are capable of controlling their emotions and show positive feelings towards the conducts of staff members and students, and this goes a long way in creating a better institutional environment.

The study also showed that in the descending order, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management and self-management significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness. This means that self-awareness mostly predicted administrative effectiveness, while self-management minimally predicted administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. The present study upholds the earlier one by Kim and Wee (2020) which showed that self-awareness had a direct positive link with job satisfaction and effective task accomplishment among various individuals in different organizations. Furthermore, Iroabuchi and Madumere-Obike (2019) found that the performance of teachers in secondary schools was greatly determined by the principals' self-awareness component of emotional intelligence. Also, Diamond (2013) declared that self-awareness has been identified as predictor of service delivery as it is instrumental to understanding the significance of an individual's feelings in relation to task accomplishment. This is because of the fact that successful administrative fulfillment is to a large extent hinged on self-control, and administrators need to control their feelings, conducts, convictions and emotions with a view to paying appropriate attention to administrative functions, they are saddled with.

The last result indicated that there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. This means that the male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence. The study further showed that the sex of HODs was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness. This suggests that the sex of the HODs was not a determinant of administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. The study is inconsistent with the earlier study by Hayat *et al.* (2016) who reported that female secondary school teachers possessed superior emotional intelligent and engagement in continuing professional development programs than the male teachers. Similarly, the study of Gulla and Masrur (2019) revealed that there were variations based on gender regarding personal job fit and emotional intelligence of teachers, and that male teachers were better attached to job and possessed high emotional intelligence than female teachers. Nonetheless, gender disparity was not noticeable as far as job performance was concerned.

With regard to administrative effectiveness, Omoike and Idogho (2011) found that administrative dexterity of HODs in Nigeria universities was high, since no significant difference existed in the aspect of sex. Methner *et al.* (2015) also found that no significant relationship existed between school administrators' gender and their effectiveness in human resource management, student affairs management and financial management.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have shown that emotional intelligence is a strong determinant of administrative effectiveness of heads of academic departments in Polytechnics. Specifically, the study indicated that the indicators of emotional intelligence studied, namely; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management jointly predicted administrative effectiveness. Relatively, self-awareness mostly predicted administrative effectiveness, while the least prediction of effectiveness was evident in self-management. The study further showed that gender had to place in determining the emotional intelligence capability and administrative effectiveness. It can therefore, be concluded that the more likely they are able to display emotional intelligence, the more effective they are likely to be in the day-to-day administration of their respective departments, all things being equal. In this case, the HODs who display a high level of emotional intelligence has the tendency of better positioning to cope with the dictates and intricacies of institutional administration in the contemporary societies. Being thoughtful of others will facilitate the capacity to inspire the staff members and provide appropriate guidance for the enhancement of organizational cohesion. Emotional intelligence is thus, an indispensable factor towards effective institutional leadership.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions made from the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

There is the need to place much attention to emotional intelligence in the appointment of Heads of Department. In doing this, the selection process of HODs based on seniority has to be looked into. Democratization of the appointment is hereby suggested. Through this, members of the department will have opportunity to assess the emotional intelligence level of the aspiring HOD. This is expected to enhance the election of individuals who will participate in efficient and effective administrative practices at the departmental level.

As a matter of policy, management of Polytechnics should put in place machineries to ensure that orientation/ induction programs are organized for the newly appointed/ elected HODs with training on the indices of emotional intelligence as a component. Serving HODs should also be provided with the opportunities for Mandatory Continuing Professional Education on the successful utilization of emotional intelligence in order to promote smooth operation of the departmental affairs.

Heads of Departments should constantly appraise their interpersonal relationship with departmental staff members to ascertain the extent of the realization of the anticipated results. Any observed display of low level of emotional intelligence by HOD should be referred to the institutional Guidance Counselors, hence, counseling units in all polytechnics should be strengthened.

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