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Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness

***UrennaNwagwu; & **Uzoma Chukwuemeka Henry**

*University of the Cumberland. **University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Umuagwo, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: rennychi7@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study looks at the association between emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership effectiveness. The study proposed three objectives: research questions and hypotheses. A quantitative technique was used, with 158 employees completing a survey. The collected data were evaluated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The findings indicated a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. The study's findings indicate that emotional intelligence is an important component of effective leadership, and that businesses should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence in their leaders. The study concludes that emotional intelligence is an important aspect of good leadership. Leaders who can understand and regulate their own emotions, as well as those of their followers, perform better in their roles. Organizations should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence in their leaders through training programs and other interventions. Based on the findings, the study proposes that organizations create training programs that focus on strengthening leaders' emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Effectiveness, Self-Awareness, Empathy, Self-Regulation, Leadership Vision, Decision Making, Productivity.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence refers to a person's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions, as well as

those of others, in a constructive manner across many circumstances (Drigas & Papoutsis, 2019).

The development of emotional intelligence supports the formation of pleasant and

agreeable interpersonal relationships. The ability to perceive and respond to the emotions of others is beneficial in developing effective communication skills, increasing empathy, and creating trust (Andiani et al., 2020). Furthermore, effective leadership requires emotional intelligence. The importance of these talents is increasingly recognized in the professional world, particularly within the context of effective leadership (Cahyono, Tuhuteru, Julina, Suherlan, & Ausat, 2023).

To be an effective leader, you must be able to understand the feelings of people and urge them to work together toward a common goal. This idea is reinforced by scholarly publications such as those written by (Sonmez Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020). As a result, scholars have recognised the importance of emotional intelligence in the context of effective leadership (Saha, Das, Lim, Kumar, Malik, & Chillakuri, 2023).

According to recent research, leaders' emotional intelligence is an important component in determining their level of performance in their various roles (Aquino, Orozco, and Marasigan, 2021). A leader's ability to motivate and guide their team members is dependent on their ability to understand other people's emotions (Subagja, Ausat, & Suherlan 2022). Emotional intelligence can help leaders enhance their decision-making skills and effectively manage conflict, both of which are critical components of excellent leadership (Alharbi & Alnoor, 2022).

Leaders with strong emotional intelligence can identify and understand their own emotions (Zen, Siminto, Harahap, Prasetya, & Ausat 2023). The person in issue has a thorough understanding of their personal strengths, flaws, and values. As a result, people can control their own emotional responses, make better decisions, and deal with stress more effectively. Furthermore, emotional intelligence enables leaders to effectively manage their own emotions as well as those of their team members. Individuals can show empathy for their peers, actively listen to them, and address their wants and problems in a sensitive manner. These qualities help to strengthen interpersonal connections, support group cohesion, and improve overall collaborative accomplishment.

A leader with great emotional intelligence may build a positive work environment, inspire team members, establish strong connections, and produce superior results (Salamah, 2023). Emotional intelligence is an essential part of effective leadership.

Statement of Problem

Even while emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a critical component of effective leadership, many firms continue to undervalue or overlook it when it comes to leadership development programs. This mismatch typically results in leaders who struggle to motivate their teams, handle conflicts, and foster a collaborative work environment. As a result, firms may experience decreasing employee satisfaction, lower staff retention rates, and a fall in overall performance.

Furthermore, current research frequently focuses the theoretical aspects of emotional intelligence without adequately addressing its practical application in leadership contexts. This omission limits the ability of current and future leaders to employ emotional intelligence as a tool to boost their effectiveness. It is critical to identify techniques for incorporating emotional intelligence (EI) into leadership development and training programs, as well as to investigate how EI directly influences leaders' behaviors and outcomes. This paper attempts to fill a critical gap by providing a complete examination of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leader effectiveness, as well as ideas that help improve leadership performance and organizational procedures.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. In specific terms, this study;

- (a) examine the relationship between self-awareness and leadership vision.
- (b) determine the association between empathy and decision making.
- (c) ascertain the nexus between self-regulation and productivity.

Research Questions

- (a) What is the relationship between self-awareness and leadership vision?
- (d) What is the association between empathy and decision making?
- (e) To what extent is the nexus between self-regulation and productivity?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership vision.

H₀₂: There is no significant association between empathy and decision making.

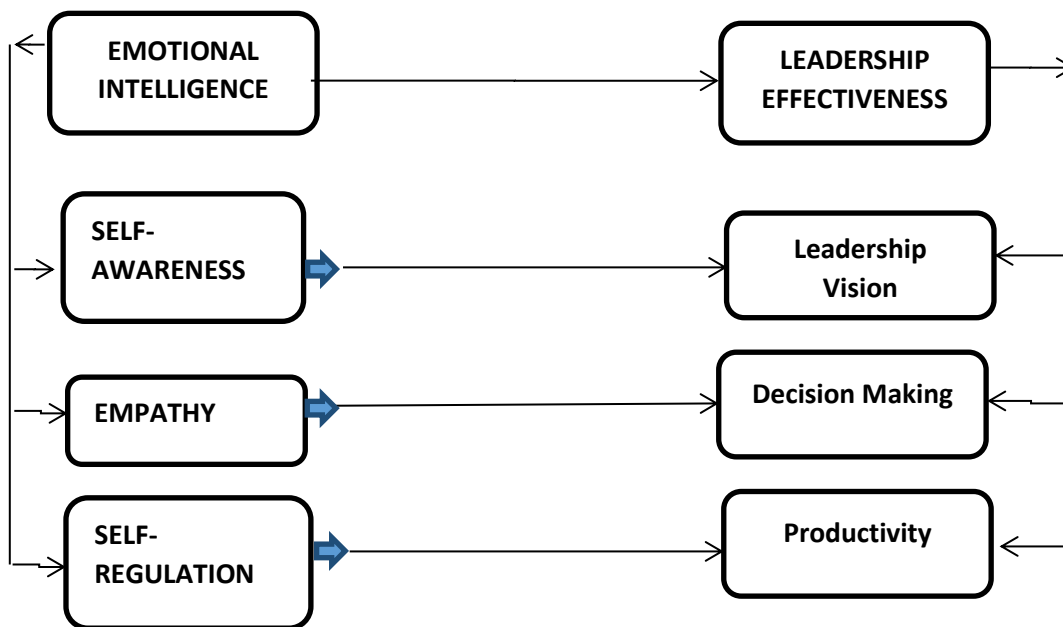
H₀₃: There is no significant nexus between self-regulation and productivity.

Scope of the study

The study scope is examined based on content, geographic and unit scope. The content scope is the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, the geographic scope is Imo and Abia state while the unit is the entire staff of brewery firms which are Nigeria brewery Awo-omamma, and 7up bottling company Aba.

Conceptual Review

The study reviewed the relevant literature on the topic emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.



Source: Researchers concept (2025).

Fig 1: Operational conceptual framework.

Concept of Emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to notice, appraise, and control one's own and others' emotions. It refers to a collection of abilities that help people manage social difficulties, make informed decisions, and improve interpersonal relationships (Salamah, 2023).

Element of Emotional Intelligence

1. **Self-Awareness:** Being self-aware allows you to trust your intuition and make wise decisions (Zen, Siminto, Harahap, Prasetya, & Ausat, 2023). You should be able to easily identify your values, goals, and what motivates you to work hard.
2. **Self-Regulation:** Self-regulation refers to the ability to control one's emotions and impulses, particularly those that are aggressive or disruptive. These sensations typically arise when you must react quickly to changing situations or adjust to them. Your capacity to control these emotions will allow you to keep the discipline necessary to shift course when things do not go as planned (Subagja, Ausat, & Suherlan, 2022).
3. **Empathy:** When acting and making decisions, you must consider more than your personal sentiments and emotions. This does not always imply succumbing to peer pressure or exerting undue effort to win people over. This is simply witnessing other people's emotions and discovering how they react to various situations. This improves your ability to influence others and establish and keep relationships (Cahyono, Tuhuteru, Julina, Suherlan, & Ausat, 2023).

Leadership Effectiveness and EI:

Several studies have found a beneficial link between EI and leadership performance. Leaders with higher EI ratings likely to have better leadership abilities, such as effective communication, adaptability, and conflict resolution. Goleman and Boyatzis (2008) stressed the importance of emotional intelligence competencies in successful leadership, demonstrating the link between EI and key leadership outcomes.

Transformational Leadership:

EI has been related to transformational leadership, which is defined by inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, customized consideration, and idealized impact. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are frequently better at motivating and inspiring their teams, encouraging creativity and innovation, and developing strong interpersonal relationships (Zhu, Riggio, & Reina, 2012).

Theoretical Review

The Path-Goal Theory: The Path-Goal Theory, presented by House (2021), proposes that leaders with high EI are better at adjusting their leadership style to the demands of their followers. They can offer the essential assistance and guidance to help followers reach their objectives, leading to enhanced happiness and performance.

The Servant Leadership Model: Greenleaf (2020) introduced servant leadership, which emphasizes the leader's commitment to serving and elevating their subordinates. Leaders with high emotional intelligence thrive in servant leadership because they have the emotional abilities required to comprehend and resolve their team members' needs and problems.

Anchored theory

This study is based on the Path-Goal Theory. This is because this theory contends that leaders with high EI are better at adjusting their leadership style to the demands of their subordinates.

Empirical studies

Vina (2024) looked at The Role Of Emotional Intelligence In Effective Leadership And Its Impact On Team Performance: A study of University of Ibadan, Nigeria, According to the study, there is a substantial and favorable correlation between emotional intelligence and effective leadership. Regression analysis results demonstrated a positive relationship between leadership effectiveness and emotional intelligence. According to the study's findings, emotional intelligence is a good measure of a leader's performance, and University of Ibadan in Nigeria employs emotionally intelligent staff members. The two emotional intelligence factors that had the most effects on leadership effectiveness in the organization were self-emotion appraisal and emotion usage. However, emotion management seems to be the hardest to manage, which is why it had the least impact on a leader's effectiveness. The results also indicate that a greater portion of the variation in leadership effectiveness can be attributed to the use of emotion.

Vasmine et al (2016) looked Emotional intelligence as a predictor of leadership effectiveness, The results would be applied to the setting of developing nations. Furthermore, it will make a substantial contribution to the practical implications for the application of such predictors in various organizations to improve their efficacy and performance. A self-administered questionnaire with a non-probabilistic technique will be used for the field study, with 141 fully employed employees in Egypt's FMCG sector serving as the sample. The findings have consequences for companies looking to improve their executives' emotional intelligence in a practical and efficient manner. The implementation of these discoveries will result in a variety of improved leadership development techniques. Lastly, research seeks to advance knowledge in both academic and practical domains. Insights from academic research on aspects likely to influence and develop leadership effectiveness are provided, one of which is the significance of emotion intelligence.

Melita et al(2003) looked at Emotional Intelligence Leadership Effectiveness And Team Out-Come, finding show emotional intelligent team members recognize that they have an established team norms that is dedicated emotional intensity that allows to be displayed during team members interaction and act accordingly, these individual are self-aware in that they monitor emotional expression are sensitive to feedback that they provide with regard to social acceptance of their expression, it also emotion intelligent individual effectively regulate the intensity of their emotional displays to be sure the displays, do not exceed the bounds set by team standards.

Gap in Literature

This study filled the gap in the literature by investigating the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between leadership style and leadership effectiveness. By

examining the specific components of emotional intelligence that are most strongly related to leadership effectiveness, this study can provide practical insights for leadership development programs.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study took a survey research approach. This study used a survey approach to define the characteristics of the sample population, as well as crucial variables. It was also used to explain and validate the research findings.

Sources of Data

This study employed primary data sources which include questionnaire distribution.

Population of this Study

This study's population comprised of the staff of selected brewery firms in Imo and Abia State. This brewery are 7up company Aba and Nigeria brewery Awo-omamma bringing a total population size of 262 staff. These figures were gotten from the human resource department of the selected firms.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this study was determined using the Taro Yamane formula by Alugbuo (2005). Formula is stated as follows:

Sample formula =

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where

n = desired sample size

N= size of the population

e= Limit of error tolerance which was assured to be 5% (0.05); confidence limit.

Computing with the above formula, the number of questionnaires to be administered will be obtained

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{262}{1 + 262 (0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{262}{1 + 262 \times 0.0025} \\ &= \frac{262}{1 + 0.655} \\ &= \frac{262}{1.655} \\ n &= \mathbf{158 \text{ respondents}} \end{aligned}$$

Method of Data Collection

This study made use of primary data. According to Kothari (2018), primary data refers to information that a researcher gathers from the field. Primary data was obtained from the original sources using questionnaires.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is designed to measure. This study applied both concept and content validity. For construct validity, the questionnaire was separated into two pieces so that each portion examined information for a specific aim while also closely aligning with the conceptual framework for this study. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was thoroughly examined by a management science specialist.

Reliability of the Instrument

The test-retest approach was used to calculate the coefficient of reliability. A comparison of the results of the two experiments revealed that the research instrument is dependable. Pre-testing or test-retesting was carried out twice in the firms, with a two-week interval between each. The instrument was tested for consistency using a Cronbach alpha test, and a coefficient of reliability greater than 0.70 was found, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (at 0.05% level of significance) aided by IBM SPSS version 25.0.

Decision Rule

According to Asika (2008), there is need to establish the decision rules so as to determine the level of relationship among variables. According to Alvin & Ronald (2020) the decision rules for Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) are as follows:

$$r = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Data Presentation

The data collected in the questionnaire were presented in this section. One hundred and fifty-eight (158) copies of questionnaire were prepared by the researcher and administered to the respondents (employees) of the selected brewery firms in Imo and Abia State. The questionnaire administration and the collection rate were presented in the Table 4.1 below:

Table 1: Questionnaire Administration and Collection

Respondents	Questionnaires		Percentage
	No. Administered	No. Collected	
Senior Staff	87	87	55.1%
Junior Staff	71	71	44.9%
Total	158	158	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 1 indicates how the 158 questionnaires were distributed to respondents (senior and junior personnel) at the selected manufacturing enterprises, as well as the collection rate. Out of the 158 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 87 copies were distributed to senior company staff and 87 copies were collected from them, representing a 55.1% collection rate; 71 copies were assigned to junior staff and all copies were retrieved from the respondents, representing a 44.9% collection rate. In general, the administered questionnaires obtained a 100% response rate.

Bivariate Analysis

The bivariate analysis was used to determine the link between the independent and dependent variables in each hypothesis. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) was utilized to evaluate and determine the relationship between the two variables in each of the hypotheses put forth in this study. The r value was calculated using IBM SPSS version 25.0, and the results are shown below in relation to the study questions and hypotheses, as both fall within bivariate analysis.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership vision.

Table 2: Result of Bivariate Analysis between Self-awareness (SW) and leadership vision (LV)

			SW	LV
Pearson (r)	SW	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.801*
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	0.000
		N	158	158
	LV	Correlation Coefficient	0.801*	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	.
		N	158	158

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 2: presents the result of the bivariate analysis performed between self-awareness and leadership vision.

The p-value is 0.00, which is less than the level of significance (0.05), therefore the null hypothesis, which states that self-awareness has no meaningful relationship with leadership vision, is rejected. A correlation of 0.801 indicates that self-awareness is highly and positively connected with leadership vision. Thus, the conclusion is that self-awareness has a significant relationship with leadership vision.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no significant association between empathy and decision making.

Table 3: Result of Bivariate Analysis between empathy (E) and decision making (DM)

			E	DM
Pearson (r)	E	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.882*
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	0.000
		N	158	158
	DM	Correlation Coefficient	0.882*	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	.
		N	158	158

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 3: presents the result of the bivariate analysis performed between empathy and decision making. The p-value is 0.00, which is less than the level of significance (0.05), hence, the null hypothesis which stated that empathy does not significantly relate with decision making is rejected. With a correlation of 0.882, it implies that empathy is very strongly and positively correlated to decision making. Thus, the conclusion is that empathy does significantly relate with decision making.

Hypothesis 3

H₀₃: There is no significant nexus between self-regulation and productivity.

Table 4: Result of Bivariate Analysis between self-regulation (SR) and productivity (P).

			SR	P
Pearson (r)	SR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.878*
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	0.000
		N	158	158
	P	Correlation Coefficient	0.878*	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	.
		N	158	158

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 4: presents the result of the bivariate analysis performed between self-regulation and productivity. The p-value is 0.00, which is less than the level of significance (0.05), hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between self-regulation and productivity is rejected. With a correlation of 0.878, it implies that self-regulation is very strongly and positively correlated to productivity. Thus, the conclusion is that there is significant relationship between self-regulation and productivity.

Discussion of Findings

The first hypotheses confirmed the null hypothesis, which indicated that there is no significant association between self-awareness and leadership vision. Is rejected. A correlation of 0.801 indicates that self-awareness is very strongly and favorably connected with leadership vision.

Thus, the conclusion is that self-awareness has a significant relationship with leadership vision.

The results of the second hypothesis show that the null hypothesis, which states that there is no substantial relationship between empathy and decision making, is rejected. With a correlation of 0.882, it is clear that empathy is strongly and favorably associated to decision making. Thus, the conclusion is that empathy has a considerable relationship with decision making.

Hypothesis three, claiming that there is no meaningful association between self-regulation and productivity, is rejected. With a correlation of 0.878, it appears that self-regulation is highly and positively connected with productivity. So, the conclusion is that there is a considerable association between self-regulation and productivity..

This is consistent with Robert (2006)'s findings on emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. These findings suggest the efficacy of incorporating EI treatments into managerial staff training and development programs, as well as recruitment and selection processes. Vina (2025) examined the role of emotional intelligence in effective leadership and its impact on team performance. The findings suggest that emotion plays a larger role in determining leadership success. It was found that:

1. There is a significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership vision.
2. There is a significant association between empathy and decision making.
3. There is a significant nexus between self-regulation and productivity.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence (EI) is an essential component of good leadership because it allows leaders to understand and regulate both their own and their followers' emotions. Research repeatedly shows that leaders with high EI are more effective in their professions because they can develop good relationships, communicate effectively, and make educated judgments.

According to the research, emotional intelligence (EI) is an important component of successful leadership. Leaders who can understand and regulate their own emotions, as well as those of their followers, perform better in their roles. As a result, businesses should prioritize the development of emotional intelligence in their leaders through training programs and other interventions.

Recommendations

1. **Develop EI training programs:** Organizations should develop training programs that focus on developing EI in leaders.
2. **Select leaders with high EI:** Organizations should prioritize the selection of leaders who possess high EI.
3. **Encourage self-awareness:** Leaders should be encouraged to develop self-awareness, through practices such as mindfulness and reflection.
4. **Foster a positive organizational culture:** Organizations should foster a positive culture that supports the development of EI in leaders.

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