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Influence of Teacher Characteristics on Emotional Intelligence in Secondary Schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of secondary school teacher qualification, experience, gender, marital status and rank on emotional intelligence in selected secondary schools in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The research was prompted by the significance of emotional intelligence on teachers' professional success and its consequent effects on institutional performance. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 62 teachers from six secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Descriptive research design was used. The 'Teachers Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire' (TEIQ) was administered on respondents to collect relevant data. Simple percentages and t-test statistical tools were used to test the questions and hypotheses. The study revealed that there were differences in the emotional intelligence of teachers based on academic qualifications, years of work experience, gender, rank and marital status. It also revealed that emotional intelligence of teachers in public schools in Ilorin metropolis is generally high. Based on the findings, it was recommended that younger teachers should be mentored by those with longer years of work experience. Universities should develop online emotional intelligence measurement tools to enable teachers determine areas of strengths and weaknesses and also access training tools, to shore up their emotional intelligence. This is expected to result in improved institutional performance.

Keywords: Teacher Characteristics, Academic Improvement, Secondary Schools, Emotional Intelligence.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability of people to understand and master their emotions, as well as control the emotions of other people. According to Adegoke, Adeoye and Dada (2011), it is the ability to think constructively and act responsibly, which ultimately forms the platform for wise

behaviors. It is also defined as the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso & Sitarenios, 2001). The Encyclopedia Wikipedia defined it as the ability or skill to identify, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, of others and of groups. It has been established that success requires more than intelligence quotient (IQ), which has tended to be the traditional measure of intelligence, ignoring the essential behavioural and character elements (businessballs.com). Emotional intelligence is becoming increasingly relevant to organizational development and developing people. Its principles provide a new way to understand and assess behaviour, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and potentials (businessballs.com).

Today, emotional intelligence, is an important consideration in human resource planning, job profiling, recruitment interviewing and selection, management development, customer relations and customer services. According to Baron (1997), emotional intelligence helps to predict job success because it reflects how a person applies emotional knowledge to an immediate situation. Goad (2005) and Justice (2005) indicated in their studies the value and importance of emotional intelligence in teacher preparation programmes.

Teacher characteristics in this paper addressed the academic qualifications, gender, experience, marital status and years of work experience. These characteristics had been observed to affect teachers output, reasoning and emotions (Singh, 2015; Goleman, 1995).The importance of emotional intelligence to teachers cannot be overemphasized. Teachers' personal competence and social competence are required for the achievement of the goals of education. This informed the study on the influence of teacher characteristics on emotional intelligence. The study seeks to ascertain differences in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of academic qualifications, work experience, gender, marital status and rank. The study became imperative owning to the fact that emotional intelligence positively correlates with occupational success and academic improvement in schools (Goleman, 1995, 1998).

Literature Review

Emotional intelligence is considered significant to teachers' professional success and consequently affects institutional performance. Research has shown that emotional intelligence plays a significant role at improving students' learning and school effectiveness (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995; Ogunye, 2007). Its importance is because emotional intelligence competencies contribute to the retention, career effectiveness and personal well-being of people (Salovey

& Mayer, 1990). Penrose, Perry and Ball (2007) revealed that substantial evidence abound, showing that schools make a difference in terms of students' achievement through the teacher factor; while Goad (2005) and Justice (2005) had indicated the value and importance of emotional intelligence in teacher preparation programmes. Previous research studies emphasized students' emotional intelligence as a significant factor in their academic achievement.

Ogunye (2007) studied the impact of emotional intelligence training on academic stress and self-efficacy among senior secondary school students in Ibadan; While Ogunye (2009) worked on managing academic stress with emotional intelligence competencies. Adegoke, Adeoye and Dada (2011) investigated emotional intelligence competencies of students in a Nigerian university. They observed that self-awareness topped the list of emotional intelligence competencies, and that there were no significant differences in the respondents' emotional intelligence competencies based on gender, order of birth and age.

Amirtha and Kadheravan (2006) in their study on "influence of personality on emotional intelligence of teachers" reported that gender, age and qualifications influenced the emotional intelligence of school teachers. Singh (2015) in a study on "emotional intelligence of teacher educators in relation to certain demographic variables" found that teacher educators have near about average emotional intelligence and that there was no significant difference in male and female teacher educators. He reported that there was a significant difference in emotional intelligence of married and unmarried teacher educators. He also found that there was no significant difference in emotional intelligence of high and low experienced teacher educators. The focus of earlier studies informed this research work on the influence of teacher experience, age gender, qualifications, marital status and rank on emotional intelligence. It is meant to bridge the gap in previous research works in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Today's teachers are saddled with greater responsibilities of not just disseminating knowledge to students; but are required to act as mentors, guide, facilitator of learning, counselor, model, evaluator, innovator, administrator, etc. These responsibilities require teachers to be better informed about the abilities, behaviours, emotions and the experiences of students they are required to teach. This cannot be effectively done without teachers' ability to first identify, assess and control their emotions and that of their students to enhance learning. It has been observed that the focus on intelligence skills helps teachers and students to build human development behaviours that are intricately related to the positive

outcomes of goal achievement and personal well-being. In addition, emotional well-being is increasingly recognized as a predictor of success in school, family and work life (Baron, and Parker, 2000). Teacher characteristics has been observed to influence their productivity with regards to their experience, qualifications, gender, marital status and work experience (Singh, 2015; Amirtha & Kadheravan, 2006; Golemen, 1995).This necessitated the focus of the study on the influence of teacher characteristics on emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin.

Research Questions

The research questions generated for the study were:

1. Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of academic qualification?
2. Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of work experience?
3. Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of gender?
4. Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of rank?
5. Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of marital status?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin.
2. There is no significant difference between married and single teachers' emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin.

Purpose of the Study

Earlier research studies connected the relationship of emotional intelligence to achievement, productivity, leadership and personal health (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Epstein, 1998; Sternberg, 1995; Gardner, 1993; Weisenger, 1998; Low, 2000; Nelson and Low, 1999, 2003, 2005).The present study seeks to fill the gap in earlier studies by focusing on the influence of teacher characteristics on emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin. The purpose of the study is to ascertain the differences in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of academic qualifications, work experience, gender, rank and marital status.

Methodology

The present work is a field study of secondary school teacher characteristics, and its influence on their emotional intelligence. It is a descriptive survey that involved data collection from a defined population to describe the observed condition of the population. The study population comprised of public secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Sixty-two respondents, comprising 28 male and 34 female teachers were randomly selected from six secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis, using stratified random sampling technique.

The basic instrument used in the collection of data was a researcher constructed questionnaire tagged "Teachers Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire" (TEIQ). Questionnaire items were derived from information obtained from literature reviewed. The questionnaire has two sections; with Section A containing items on personal information relating to teacher characteristics; while Section B consist of items on Emotional Intelligence of teachers, focusing on personal competence (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation) and social competence of social awareness and social skills. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher, while some teachers in the schools sampled served as research assistants. For the analysis of result, simple percentages, mean, standard deviation (SD) and t-test statistical tools were used to test the questions and hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

The results of the study are presented below:

Question 1: Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of academic qualification?

Table 1: Breakdown of teachers' emotional intelligence by academic qualifications

Academic Qualifications	Self awareness	Self regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills	Average Per-centage
NCE	18.0	16.5	18.5	16.5	15.0	84.50%
B.A./B.Sc/ Bed	18.0	17.0	17.5	17.7	16.0	86.24%
M.A/M.Sc/ M.Ed	15.7	15.7	16.0	17.0	15.0	79.40%

The result in table 1 indicates that there were differences in teachers' emotional intelligence based on academic qualifications. The result showed that holders of the first degree reported the highest emotional intelligence level (86.24), followed by holders of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) with 84.50; while holders of the Masters degree reported the least emotional intelligence level (79.40).

Question 2: Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of years of work experience?

Table 2: Breakdown of teachers' emotional intelligence by years of work experience

Years in Service	Self awareness	Self regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills	Average Percentage
0 – 5	17.2	16.7	15.8	16.6	15.4	81.65%
6 – 10	17.5	16.7	17.7	17.8	15.2	84.87%
11- 20	18.2	16.7	18.0	17.9	16.2	87.06%
21- 35	19.0	18.0	18.3	18.9	17.1	91.29%

Evidence from table 2 showed that differences exist in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of years of work experience. Teachers with the longest years of work experience reported the highest emotional intelligence (91.29), with self-awareness being the most evident branch, followed by empathy. Teachers with the least years of work experience reported the least emotional intelligence (81.65).

Question 3: Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of gender?

Table 3: Breakdown of teachers' emotional intelligence by gender

Gender	Self awareness	Self regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills	Average Percentage
Male	17.6	17.2	17.7	18.2	16.0	86.70%
Female	17.9	16.9	16.5	17.2	15.7	84.29%

The result in table 3 showed that there were differences in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of gender. Male teachers reported higher emotional intelligence (86.72) than their female counterpart (84.09). Empathy was

the most evident branch of emotional intelligence for male teachers, while female teachers' most evident branch was self-awareness.

Question 4: Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of rank?

Table 4: Breakdown of teachers' emotional intelligence by rank

Rank	Self awareness	Self regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills	Average Percentage
GL 07	18.8	16.8	18.8	18.0	16.8	89.20%
08	16.9	16.2	15.9	17.1	15.1	81.20%
09-12	18.4	16.7	17.9	17.5	16.6	87.07%
13-16	18.1	17.3	17.8	18.1	16.1	87.37%

Evidences from table 4 revealed that there were differences in teachers' emotional intelligence based on rank, as fresh NCE teachers on Grade Level 07 reported the highest level of emotional intelligence (89.20), with self-awareness and motivation as the most evident branches. This was followed by the emotional intelligence level of teachers on GL13-16 (87.37), with a gradual decline to 81.20 for teachers on GL 08.

Question 5: Is there any difference in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of marital status?

Table 5: Breakdown of teachers' emotional intelligence by marital status

Marital Status	Self awareness	Self regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills	Average Percentage
Married	17.9	16.8	17.2	17.6	15.9	85.45%
Single	16.9	17.6	16.0	17.7	15.3	83.43%

The result in table 5 showed that differences existed in teachers' emotional intelligence on the basis of marital status. Married teachers reported a higher emotional intelligence (85.45) than their single (unmarried) counterparts (83.43). Married teachers reported that self-awareness was the most evident branch of emotional intelligence; while teachers that were still single reported empathy as the most evident. The least reported branch for both groups was the social skills.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin.

Table 6: t-test analysis of male and female teachers' emotional intelligence

Variables	No of events	X	SD	Df	Cal.t	Critical t	Decision
Male	28	17.34	0.7430	60	1.115	2.000	H_o Accepted
Female	34	16.82	0.7321				

The t-test result in table 6 showed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin. This implies that teachers do not differ much in their emotional intelligence based on gender, although minor differences were evident in their social skills and motivation. The exposure of teachers to the same school environmental conditions would have had effects on their emotional dispositions. The findings agrees with the outcome of the investigations of Adegoke, Adeoye and dada (2011) who observed that there was no significant difference in respondents emotional intelligence competencies based on gender.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between married and single-teachers' emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin.

Table 7: t-test analysis of married and single teachers' emotional intelligence

Variables	No of events	X	SD	Df	Cal.t	Critical t	Decision
Married	55	17.08	0.6961	60	0.733	2.000	H_o Accepted
Single	07	16.70	0.9274				

The t-test result in table 7 revealed that there was no significant difference between married teachers' emotional intelligence and the unmarried (single) ones. The outcome implies that a difference in emotional intelligence of teachers based on marital status was not significant, although some differences manifested in the self-awareness, motivation and self-regulation of the teachers. The finding negates the outcome of Singh (2015) who reported that there was a significant difference in emotional intelligence of married and unmarried teacher educators.

Discussion

The outcomes of this study revealed that holders of the bachelor's degree reported the highest level of emotional intelligence (86.24), followed by the holders of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) (84.50); while holders of

the Masters' degree reported the least level of emotional intelligence (79.40). This may be because the first (bachelor's) degree (B.Ed) is the basic requirement for teaching at the secondary school level; therefore holders of the degree feel satisfied with their personal well-being and thus learn to master their emotions. The Masters' degree holders on the other hand, feel entitled to more than they already earn as salary, and enhanced promotion which does not come immediately. This can evoke negative emotions in this group of teachers. The finding agrees with that of Amirtha and Kadheravan (2006) who found that gender, age and qualifications influence the emotional intelligence of school teachers.

Findings of the study also revealed that teachers with the longest years of work experience reported the highest level of emotional intelligence (91.29), with a steady decline as the years of experience drops. This shows that experience is important in growing emotional intelligence. This is in agreement with Goleman' (1998) assertion that emotional intelligence seems to be largely learned and it continues to develop as individuals go through life and learn from experience. Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999) also assert that in order for emotional intelligence to be considered a standard intelligence, it should increase with age and experience.

The findings of the study also revealed that male teachers reported higher level of emotional intelligence (86.72) than their female counterparts (84.09). This is evident in Nigeria and most part of Africa, where males are expected to take charge and be in control of not only themselves but whatever situation they find themselves. Men are expected to control their emotion in all circumstances and support other family members considered weak. This agrees with Petrides and Furnham (2000) assertion that males "overall" and "self-motivation" estimates of emotional intelligence were significantly higher than were females' estimates.

Evidence from the study again showed that while considering rank, fresh NCE teachers on Grade Level 07 reported the highest emotional intelligence (89.20) which may be due to the effect of the fresh teacher training they received. A gradual decline was evident in the reported levels of emotional intelligence of other teachers on the highest rank to those in the lower ones. This is not strange as the rank of teachers also reflect their years of work experience, which enabled them to steadily develop their emotional intelligence over the years. The outcome agrees with Palmer, Gardner and Stough (2003) that emotional intelligence might be higher in executive population than it is among those in more general roles in organizations. This is supported by Goleman' (1995, 1998) assertion that emotional intelligence might be associated with higher occupational status and success.

The result of the study further showed that married teachers reported higher emotional intelligence (85.45) than their unmarried counterparts (83.43). The resultant effect of marital status on teachers' emotional intelligence may be explained by the union of partners which moderate on, and help them to understand and master their emotions and to control same. This finding agrees with the outcome of Singh (2015) who reported that there was a significant difference in emotional intelligence of married and unmarried teacher educators.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it may be concluded that;

1 There are differences in emotional intelligence of teachers based on qualifications, years of work experience, gender, rank, as well as marital status. This reveals that teacher characteristics actually influence their emotional intelligence in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.
2. It is evident, from the t-test conducted that there is no significant difference between gender and emotional intelligence, as well as between marital status and emotional intelligence of teachers in secondary schools in Ilorin.
3. Emotional intelligence of teachers in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria is generally high (84.45).
4. The most reported branch of teachers' emotional intelligence is self-awareness (88.95), closely followed by empathy (87.90); while motivation (87.10) and self-regulation (84.00) followed respectively. The least reported branch is the social skills.

Recommendations

The study sought to determine the effects of secondary school teacher characteristics on their emotional intelligence. It was carried out.bearing in mind the significance of emotional intelligence to teachers' professional success and its consequent effects on institutional performance. On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Teachers with longer years of experience should be made to mentor young and aspiring teachers to develop appropriate emotional intelligence competencies, in the bid to enhance their performance and to improve institutional successes.
2. There is the need to constantly expose teachers to training workshops on emotional intelligence, to shore up and develop their weak areas of emotional intelligence (especially the social skills branch).

3. Universities and the appropriate departments should as a matter of urgency develop emotional intelligence measurement tools online and expose teachers to same from time to time. This will enable teachers to determine their areas of strengths and weaknesses, and also help them to access training tools online to improve on their weak areas and build on areas of strengths.
4. For recruitment purposes, employers of labour should emphasize information on applicant's emotional intelligence, rather than gender and marital status.

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