

## **Self - Management Dimension of Emotional Intelligence as Determination of Academic Administration in Public University**

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### *Abstract*

*The study examined self – management dimension of emotional intelligence as determinant of effective academic administration in public universities, South-South Nigeria. Three Hundred and fifty academic administrators charge with the governance, managerial and administrative responsibility was randomly sampled in seven public universities in Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta states. The ECI – Emotional Competency Inventory 2.0 developed by Boyatzis and Goleman (1999) measurement scale adopted correlate self – management dimension of emotional intelligence and administrative competences of academic administrators in universities. Quantitative data collected from 200 respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson product moment coefficient and Z-test were used for testing hypothesis at 0.05 establish the level of significance. However, the coefficient value 0.120, Z-r-cal 0.030 less than Z-r-crit 0.195 showed weak positive relationship and was non-significant.*

*Keywords – Emotional intelligence, Self- management, Academic Administration, Academic Administrator, Transformational leadership*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Organizational structure of university creates academic units to engage in teaching and scientific inquiry for knowledge creation, cutting edge technology for the development of humanity and society. University is multi-dimensional organization based on specialization and professionalism. Hoy and Miskel (2008) assumptions of organization as formalized, interdependent, peopled, goal-oriented, structural and political have remained relevant in today's administration of university. University organization is essentially an assembly of scholars from different career paths consciously working together using available inputs, techniques, technologies, capital, sharing information and strategies to achieve predetermined goals (Ikpesu 2016). The subsystems in university interface with one another in relatively stable state performing their statutory academic and administrative responsibility. Academic

units, therefore, create environment for development, preservation and transmission of knowledge and research. Academic units are governed by academic administrators who meritoriously demonstrate excellence in administrative tasks. Yelder and Codling (2004) described them as highly competent and qualified senior academics that by virtue of their academic accomplishments assume the role of managing in teaching, research and administrative experience. Infact, they possess extensive knowledge of the university community, system, tradition and culture entrusted with substantial academic, managerial and leading academic programme. Leadership in university is fluid; transitional, democratic and rotational based on the doctrine of seniority in academic departments except in faculties where elected deans oversee academic units and internal members (Ikpesu, 2016). In advancing Follett's human relations work, Jones and George (2003) posits that power is fluid and should flow to the person who can best help the organization achieve its goals and objectives. Koko (2014) however added that authority should go with knowledge whether it is up the line or down. On the other hand, intellectual ability sometimes is not equated with leading and managing people in organization. An ill – prepared academic administrator have negative consequences to the overall institutional objectives. According to Wolverton, (2005) they jeopardize the quality of a course and cause detrimental effect on institutional teaching and learning effectiveness, thereby lowered university reputation. Hence, leadership competencies are key criteria for choosing who should manage academic community and promote excellent cooperation among internal and external members. In this context, academic administrators such as provosts, deans, directors and heads of department charge with academic administration function largely determines the attainment of institutional objectives. In most cases, they serve as academic leaders, personnel manager, and manager of resources, representative, and advocate with the university and facilitators of management for the attainment of institutional goals (Okeke 2007). Thus, academic administrators perform day- to-day management of personnel, resources and administrative activities; pursue the overall purposes of the university by maintaining excellence in teaching, research and community service. They however create an environment that encourages members to achieve goals, inform them of progress and coach them to work better, giving positive and critical feedback. Most importantly, they provide supportive leadership to team members within the community.

Many have continually lamented the lack of strong leadership to adequately deal with the threats and opportunities of today's organization. Peretomode (2008) attributed the prevalent situation in universities to limited number of experienced lecturers to give academic leadership and the challenges of credibility. Reldan (2011) most leaders underperform and stay average because they lack time to develop leadership in others, possess insufficient requisite skills or training to lead a team. Blanchard (2006) further supported this empirical evidence in a study of 1400 leaders in managerial position to determine what critical components that make an effective leadership in organization and found that 82% leaders fail to use appropriate feedback, listen to or involve others in the process 81%, fail to use leadership style appropriate to the person, task and situation 76% and fail to train and develop their colleagues 76%. In another perspective, Carroll and Wolverton (2004) had equally observed that academic administration is time consuming and have adverse impact on personal teaching and scholarly activities. As a result, academic administrators unlike corporate executives experience daily problem of career advancement and growth, higher expectations to contribute to the development of a learning society and globalized education. Meanwhile, individual's character determines his emotional intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1995) and Bar-On (1996) emotional intelligence is an integral aspect of leader's character and key factor that explains why some individuals thrive, whilst others of equal or greater intellect are less successful. Specifically, the study based on Goleman's emotional intelligence classification attempts to explain how self – management dimension enables academic administration in public universities. Self -management is a critical aspect of the emotional intelligence domains that determines how individual internal mechanisms facilitate understanding and effective management of interpersonal relationship. Internal state, impulses, and self-control competences facilitate adaptation to frequently changing work environment. George (2000) posits that the ability to understand and manage moods and emotions in oneself and in others contributes to leader effectiveness and positively influence follower commitment, innovation, team cohesion and healthy organizational life. Goleman, Boyatzis and

Mckee (2002) compare star performers with average ones in leadership position attribute nearly 90% of the differences in leaders' profiles to emotional intelligent factors. Yet there is still limited numbers of empirical research focus on emotional intelligence in context of academic administration especially in universities in Nigeria. The study, therefore, attempts to explore how self-management dimension of emotional intelligence significantly contributes to academic administration in university especially academic administrators who perform critical administrative functions.

### **Research Question**

How does self-management dimension of emotional intelligence influence academic administration competencies of academic administrators?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between self-management domain of emotional intelligence and academic administration competencies of academic administrators in public universities

## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SUPPORTIVE INFLUNENCE IN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION**

Academic units are deliberate creation of systems working together to achieve institutional goals. The interface with one another can be explained by the system analysis. The system theory is a useful tool for analyzing the complex nature of academic unit and their contributions to the overall university's administration. System theory is the transdisciplinary study of the abstract organizational phenomena, independent of their substance, type, or spatial or temporal scale of existence. The theory is used to explain the principles common to all complex entities, and its mathematical models for describing them. However, system theory is subsumed into four classifications – objects which represent the parts, elements, or variables within the system. Secondly, it consists of attributes and the existence of internal relationships among all parts. Lastly, it exists in an environment and maintains internal synergy within the various subsystems. Therefore, it is a set of things interacting with one another within an environment that eventually translates into a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts. In furtherance, systems theory was expanded by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, (1901 – 1972), a biologist who brilliantly expatiate the intricacy of organizational phenomena. Bertalanffy's argument questioned the independence of individual components and its possibility of linearity. He consistently maintained that a system is more of interactions of its components and clinically emphasized the nonlinearity of those interactions. Furthermore, Von Bertalanffy (1951) extended system theory to include biological systems which was later popularized by Lotfi Zadeh, (McNeill and Freiberger,1993). This simply implies that knowing one part of a system provides general understanding of other parts. In this context, university is structured into academic units based on specialization and professional expertise to pursue predetermined goals. Again, it is populated by people of different academic lineage, cultural diversity and career paths working harmoniously together for achieving its set goals (Ikpesu 2016). Koko (2005), Peretomode (2008) described university organization as a system of social interaction with organized whole comprising interacting personalities bound together in organic relationship. On the other hand, Okeke (2011) university is the melting place of many different aptitudes, skills and specialization and each specialization is enriched by the greatest possible contact with others. From the above perspectives, academic community is a colony of intellectuals charge with academic administration. Academic administration, therefore, is the procedure for managing all academic and administrative activities embarked upon by academic staff for advancing human capital development as well as expanding the frontiers of knowledge in faculties and departments. Organized activities manage and coordinate by academic administrators pooled from diverse intellectual lineage working together to achieve institutional goals. As a result, all academic members are availed with opportunity to learn and acquire relevant managerial, administrative and leadership experiences in various academic faculties to contribute to the

university community. The complex hierarchical structure of university is driven by intellectual stimulation and is characterized with different leadership styles.

Scientific arguments present divergent empirical positions in the literature of leadership and emotional intelligence. In some cases, critics have questioned the traditional leadership approaches to academic administration and argued that for organization to survive and overcome seemingly limitations of traits, behavioural and situational theories, there is need to apply a new leadership styles. According to Coco (2011), Wren (2005) leadership focuses upon the attainment of organizational goals by working primarily with and through people. Thus, survival of organizations including university in the 21<sup>st</sup> century largely depends upon good and result-oriented leadership. These divides explain why some academic administrators implement their vision, ideas and outperformed others. The difference is germane to the evolution of transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership is essentially the ways leaders at various levels emerge from being ordinary – transactional brokers and deal makers to become real agent of major societal change. More importantly, they understand the need for intellectuals and creative leaders to engage with people to forge transformation in organization and society in general. According to Krishnan (2002) transformational leadership is conceived by McGregor Burns as a relationship in which the leader and the follower motivate one another to higher levels which translates into value system congruence between the leader and the follower. It is within the context of demonstrating ability to motivate others to do more than originally expected to do.

Earlier contributors to the conceptual development of emotional intelligence maintain that its principles provide leaders new way for understanding and assessing behaviour of people, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and potential. However, the construct lacks universally accepted definition due to increasing scientific interest. Scholars have defined emotional intelligence from different perspectives. Zeng and Miller (2001) observed that in spite of the much interest in emotional intelligence and the potential contributions of EI to workplace, EI remains elusive. Operational differences of emotional intelligence and its underlying theory contributed to the variance in psychometric properties. Goleman (1995) widely acknowledged as progenitor of emotional intelligence, organized the construct into four classifications and maintain that the model is relevant to organizational development and for developing people. Goleman, Boyatzis and Mckee, (2002) equally maintained emotional intelligence or EQ is twice as important than technical skills and IQ for jobs at all levels. Therefore, emotional intelligence competencies are increasingly important at the higher levels especially in university where academic administrators play critical role within the administrative function. Contextually, emotional intelligence refers to being able to recognize one's feelings, to be aware of others' feelings, differentiate among them and use the information to guide one's thinking, behaviour and decision making. Goleman in Rahim et al (2002) described emotional intelligence as the capacity for organizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. According to Martinez (1997) an array of non-cognitive skills, capabilities and competences that influence one's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures. Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2007), Keltner and Haidt (2001), Brackett et al (2006) believed that emotional intelligence includes the ability to perceive, appraise, and express emotion accurately and adaptively; ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge, access and generate feelings to facilitate cognitive activities and adaptive action, regulate emotions in oneself and others. Thus, social interactions, verbal and non-verbal expressions provide information for understanding thoughts, intentions and behaviours in human relationship. These non-cognitive skills show the extent a leader can handle and manage challenges in life and in the workplace. Bar-On (2000) postulated that individuals having more than average emotional quotients (EQs) are generally more successful in handling pressures and deficiency in emotional intelligence is the reason for existence of emotional problems in organization. However, the study based on Goleman's emotional intelligent hierarchy ascertains how self-management contributes to academic administration in university. Rahim et al (2002) have argued that although there are significant intercorrelations among the various dimensions of EQ, the interrelationships should be explained in such manner that enable practitioners use appropriate dimensions of EQ to increase subordinates' conflict management strategies and performance.

Self-management or self-regulation, one of the Goleman's emotional intelligence dimensions refer to the ability to keep one's own emotions and impulses in check, to remain calm in unhealthy situations and maintain composure irrespective of one's emotions. It is concerned with ability for self-monitoring, adaptation or adjusting behaviour according to environmental factors. This essential emotional competence empowers those in leadership positions to control their feelings and impulses instead of overwhelming them. Self-management revolves around managing emotions, drive to achieve goals; adaptability and frequent use of initiatives. According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) those having uncommon ability for emotional perception and respond appropriately are likely to have better working relationship with people they work with, lead, manage them and remain always empathic. Goleman (1988) however added that such leaders are unflappable in the face of frustration, disappointment and stress. Rahim and Psenicka (1996) they handle challenging situations with absolute confidence and hardly get angry or depressed when face with job stresses nor quit. Self-management skills are what academic administrator may need to remain calm, manage confrontation and emotional outbursts effectively. Barrick and Mount (1991) believe to be outstanding in virtually all jobs from the lower level to the top of corporate leadership, depends on conscientiousness. Conscientious leaders have needed capacity to manage themselves and responsibility. As super-organized, responsible people they plan ahead and are relentless in pursuit of organizational goals.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A correlational design was purported to measure psychometric properties of self-management, a critical component of the Goleman's emotional intelligence framework to determine its relationship with administrative competence of academic administrators in universities. A non-experimental research aimed at gathering data through standardized questionnaire in public universities. The geographical distribution of public universities and the study group spread across six states in South-South geopolitical zone, Nigeria. The design seeks to establish relationship between variables and explains how increase in one could eventually translates into increase or decrease in another. Therefore, the population of 13 public universities and 550 academic administrators in six states of South-South, Nigeria was obtained from NUC (2014) Webometric. However, sample of seven (7) public universities and 350 academic administrators charge with the governance, managerial and administrative responsibility was selected in three states. The ECI – Emotional Competency Inventory 2.0 developed by Boyatzis and Goleman (1999) measurement scales was adopted. Self-management dimension of emotional intelligence was correlated with administrative competences of academic administrators. Final quantitative data gathered from 200 respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the tested hypothesis with Pearson product moment coefficient at 0.05 was converted to z-test to establish level of significance.

## RESULT PRESENTATION

**TABLE 1:  
MEAN ANALYSES OF SELF-MANAGEMENT INFLUENCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
COMPETENCIES**

s/n	Item	n=200	$\bar{X}$	std error
1.	Seeking information from different sources		2.76	0.0375
2.	Avoid aggressive emotional outbursts		2.96	0.0462
3.	Remain calm in stressful situations		2.56	0.0265
4.	Endure unnecessary criticisms		2.81	0.0386
5.	Ability to manage anger		3.01	0.0434
6.	Sustained optimism in time of challenges		3.41	0.0425
7.	Committed to a course despite obstacles		2.87	0.0332
8.	Turn crisis situations into opportunity for growth		2.80	0.0312
9.	Always having positive thoughts		3.06	0.0401
10.	Use time, money and people to achieve goals		3.87	0.0422
11.	Take step to control situations expediently		3.40	0.0367
12.	Re-organize seemly bad experience		2.89	0.0312
13.	Take advantage of new opportunities		3.04	0.0412
14.	Quietly state one's concern without anger		2.78	0.0345
15.	Respond calmly to confrontation		2.92	0.0415

The above results ranked high clearly showed how self-management dimension of emotional intelligence contributes to the administrative competences of academic administrators in public universities. From the result presented, these competences were found to be dominant in academic administration.

**TABLE 2  
CORRELATION OF SELF – MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES**

model	n	r	df	z-rcal	z-rcrit	sig
SEMA AC	200	+ 0.120	199	0.032	0.195	not sig

Key:

SEMA – Self – Management

AC - Administrative competence

The computed coefficient result of 0.120 indicates positive relationship between the independent and criterion variables. However the hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significant with Z-rcal 0.032 less than Z-rcrit 0.195 value showed that correlation between self-management and academic administrators' competencies was non- significant.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULT

Emotional intelligence overriding popularity sparked off enormous scholarly interest. Its principles are widely used for organizational development, understanding human behaviour, attitudes and developing people in workplace. Vakola, Tsaousis and Nikolaou (2004) believed that emotional intelligence predicts positive work attitudes, altruistic behaviour toward organizational change. Despite this claim there are still unsettled arguments in scientific literature surrounding EI as determinant of administrative-leadership competence. As a result, self – management of emotional intelligence domain is assessed to determine whether or not it has supportive influence in academic administration in universities. The psychometric properties of self-management measured were widely accepted and these competences are dominant and leading behaviour in academic administration. Academic administration is a daunting task that requires academic administrators to develop self-management competencies to overcome seemingly challenges. Effective self-management is dependent on how academic administrator understands his emotions, feelings, attitude and behaviour towards situation and people. On the other hand, the consequential effect of rivalry, anxiety and other negative behaviours to individual, group and institution are better imagined. Bashaw, (2000) believed that negative emotions such as fear, anger and hostility use up more energy, lower morale that consequently lead to absenteeism and apathy. As observed, confrontations, anger management and ability to handle disruptive behaviour are integral attributes of organizational leadership. In fact, academic administrators who endure unnecessary criticisms, hostile and impulsive behaviour within the academic community are always focused, resourceful, use time, money and people to achieve personal and institutional goals. As a result, they take advantage of new opportunity, control situations and always optimistic in time of challenges. Rahim and Psenicka (1996) in contributing to this discourse had observed that leaders with strong self-control especially those charge with institutional governance, administration in university handle challenging situations with absolute confidence and hardly get angry during stress. Keltner and Kring (1998) had equally posited that intelligent processing and effective management of emotional information are essential skills for navigating the social world. Emotional intelligence is therefore considered as the strongest indicator of success and its consequences on organizational outcomes has remained indisputable. Goleman's four dimensions of emotional intelligence are necessity for strategic, visionary leadership in higher education. Self-management competences which include self-control, trustworthy, adaptability, conscientious and innovation are key characteristics and facilitators of academic administration. However, the result affirmed low relationship between self-management and administrative competences of academic administrators.

Self-management domain of emotional intelligence shows minimal effect contributing to the overall academic administration in university. The relationship is less appreciable and inconsequential to conclude that self-management domain of emotional intelligence is sole catalyst of academic administration. The disparity can be attributed to personality trait, intelligence, leadership styles, condition of work / institutional policy that could possibly contribute to effective academic administration in university. These factors are equally crucial to success in life and career. Landy (2005) had also attributed the differences to small increase of predictive validity to methodological fallacy, and that alternative explanations are yet to be considered. The outcome is incongruence with different empirical positions reporting contradicting results between emotional intelligence, leadership, employee performance and organizational conflict management. Imran (2013) examined emotional intelligence in context of organizational conflict management identified poor association between the variables measured. Likewise Hayward (2005) measured employee performance, leadership and emotional intelligence using the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire, MLQ (Bass and Avolio, 1997) and Emotional Competence Profile; ECP (Wolmaran and Greeff, 2001) observed that despite the linear relationship that exist the overall correlation was low. The result further revealed lack of strong evidence to affirm the relationship between employee performance, emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. The above empirical evidence however contradicts the contribution by Bass and Avolio (1997), Cooper (1997), Goleman (1998) and Yukl (1998) who earlier reported positive relationship

between leadership and employee performance, and emotional intelligence. Despite the differences in empirical studies, academic administrators may require self-management competencies for effective managing of daily human problems and minimize negative emotional behaviours exhibited by academic workers in academic community. Self-regulatory skills most often are significantly important for strengthening interpersonal relations and consequently contribute to exceptional academic administration.

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