

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Leadership effectiveness is increasingly important as public institutions respond to institutional reforms, technological change, workforce diversity, resource constraints, and growing demands for accountability and quality service delivery. Effective leadership therefore requires more than technical competence and formal authority; it also involves the ability to understand and regulate emotions, manage interpersonal relationships, motivate employees, and respond constructively to complex organisational situations. This study examined the effect of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness in selected public institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, it assessed the effects of self-awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal/emotional competence on leadership effectiveness and their combined contribution. A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Data were collected from employees and managerial personnel in selected public institutions in Lagos State, Rivers State, Anambra State, and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Of the 450 questionnaires distributed, 419 valid responses were retrieved, representing a 93.1% response rate. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), employing descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson product-moment correlation, diagnostic tests, and multiple linear regression. The results showed that self-awareness, self-regulation, interpersonal/emotional competence, significantly and positively influenced leadership effectiveness. Self-regulation recorded the strongest individual effect. The regression model explained 63.8% of the variance in leadership effectiveness ($R^2 = .638$), indicating substantial explanatory power. The findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence is an important predictor of leadership effectiveness in Nigerian public institutions and suggest the need to integrate emotional intelligence competencies into leadership development, recruitment, promotion, succession planning, and organisational capacity-building programmes.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, self-awareness, self-regulation, interpersonal competence, public institutions, Nigeria, multiple linear regression, SPSS.