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Relationship Between Social Intelligence and Leadership Skill of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

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ANNOTATION

This study investigates the relationship between social intelligence and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Correlational research design was adopted. Four research questions and four corresponding null hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of this study. The population of the study comprised all the 16,958 public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The sample size for the study was made up of 375 public senior secondary school students in the area. This sample size is gotten through the use of the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size specification. To get this sample, the researcher adopted the simple random sampling technique. The researcher designed two instruments titles: Social Intelligence Questionnaire (SIQ) and Students' Leadership Skills Inventory (SLSI) for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling. A test re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instruments using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. A reliability coefficient of 0.88 and 0.79 was obtained for Social Intelligence Questionnaire (SIQ) and Students' Leadership Skills Inventory (SLSI) respectively. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis of data generated from the study were aided by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the study are as follows: there was a strong negative correlation between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State; there was a strong negative correlation between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State; there was a strong negative correlation between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State; and there was a strong negative correlation between relationship skills and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Thus, the study concludes that social intelligence relates to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends among others that students should be encouraged to have adequate knowledge of self in order to understand others especially when given leadership responsibilities.

KEYWORDS: Social Intelligence, Leadership Skills, Relationship Skills, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation.

Introduction

Man, naturally is a social animal who does not survive or live by “bread” (food) alone but also by the prudent use of psychological and personal-social properties such as social intelligence. Ahmad and Mohammed (2020) see human as a social being who can never live in isolation from the society in which he lives. According to them, man needs to socialize with others in order to fulfill his/her needs. Thus, every man needs social intelligence to be able to cope with diversities and complexities of human personality in order to achieve all-round adjustment in the world of constant state of flux. When we meet people whose personalities conflict with ours, we tend to express negative attitudes towards such personalities. The negative attitude could be expressed through facial countenance, verbal expression, physical combat or emotional reactions which can cause interpersonal crises amongst individuals. This is the reason social intelligence is an essential property every man should possess if he must exhibit a positive leadership skill.

The term “social intelligence” refers to an individual’s ability to understand and manage his or her relationship with others. Unlike emotional intelligence that involves an individual’s **ability to recognize one’s own feelings and other people’s feelings, social intelligence is basically an individual’s ability to interact with others**. It includes an individual’s ability to understand, and act on, the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of other people. Social and emotional intelligence are two measures of intelligence that are very crucial for effective [leadership](#) at all levels. It is gained by day to day life experiences, understanding different personalities and learning from success and failures. Sometimes, we can also interpret social intelligence as a skill which helps an individual to get along with society and get others’ cooperation.

The concept of social intelligence was propounded by an American psychologist and adult learning researcher, Edward Lee Thorndike who gave the social intelligence definition as the ability “to act wisely in human relations.” Thorndike spent decades studying how people and animals learn through experiments and observation. Thorndike maintained that social intelligence as part of general intelligence and during his research he paid his great attention to the study of cognitive processes, such as social perception. Thorndike (1920) proposes that social intelligence is “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, and to act wisely in human relations”. These definitions are focusing social intelligence more towards understanding and facilitating the social relations. By the definition of Thorndike however, social intelligence relates to both the cognitive aspects (the ability to understand people) and practical aspects (ability to deal with and respond towards them). Balaghat and Pour (2014) maintained that scientists have found that social intelligence is more important than intelligence quotient between various intelligent for managers. Social intelligence is a factor that could play an important role, in relations between managers and organizational members (Beikzadeh & Soltandadashi, 2011). Social intelligence includes self-comprehension, explanation of self-diaries and laws for decision. It encompasses every aspect of social skills (individual ability to enter new and up –to- date positions and suitable behavior in terms of condition), social information processing (the ability of comprehension and prediction of behaviors and feeling of individuals), social awareness (the ability of evaluation unwanted occurrences due to events in social conditions).

Shahid (2017) maintained that socially intelligent leaders are enthusiastic, turn thought into action, like the challenges to meet new and different people, love to make connection and break the ice, good communicator, and sense the feelings of others (empathy). Social intelligence has two main components social awareness “what we sense about others” and social faculty “what we do with that awareness” (Coleman, 2006). Social

intelligence is the capacity to know oneself and to know others. Social Intelligence develops from experience with people and learning from success and failures in social settings. It is more commonly referred to as "tact", "[common sense](#)", or "street smarts". [Social scientist Ross Honeywill](#) postulates that social intelligence is an aggregated measure of self- and social-awareness, evolved social beliefs and attitudes, and a capacity and appetite to manage complex social change (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_intelligence). [Psychologist, Nicholas](#) believes that it is social intelligence, rather than quantitative intelligence, that defines who we are as humans. Social intelligence can influence the nature and tone of relationship that exist between leaders and their subordinates thereby determining effective leadership. Leaders who have high level of social intelligent will tolerate subordinates' idiosyncrasies which will result to healthy leader-subordinate relationship.

Numerous empirical and theoretical studies have suggested that individuals with high social intelligence are more capable of understanding and managing their emotions, which allows them to adjust to their surroundings and become more tolerant to challenging conditions, including stress. Goleman in Olutayo et al. (2018) recognized that social intelligence leads to more effectiveness in leadership. Similarly, Olutayo (2018) pointed out that social intelligence is assumed to be vital trait in leadership. Because leadership is social in nature social intelligence is one of the most important character strengths to determine the success of leaders. Through his or her interactions with others, leaders must motivate people to give their best efforts and align their behaviour with organizational goals.

Daniel Goleman an American psychologist who helped to popularize emotional intelligence, developed five key elements to emotional and social intelligence which include: Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Self-awareness is the ability for one to recognize his or her emotions and their effects. People with great certainty about their feelings manage their lives well and are able to direct their positive feelings towards accomplishing tasks. Self-motivation is being able to motivate yourself and others to do what needs to be done. In addiction recovery, self-motivation is most important, but it can also be a way to support fellow group members and possibly even mentor others later on. People often start out in recovery feeling motivated because they are desperate for change. Empathy is the ability to put yourself in someone else's place, to be able to have some idea of what they are feeling and thinking. Social skills are built on empathy and they are important for many of the same reasons as empathy is important. However, just as self-awareness is the foundation of self-regulation, empathy is the foundation of social skills. Much of our stress in life comes from interpersonal conflict, and much of that comes from poor communication.

Leadership skills are the strengths and abilities individuals demonstrate that help to oversee processes, guide initiatives and steer their employees toward the achievement of goals. Leadership skills are an essential component in positioning executives to make thoughtful decisions about their organization's mission and goals, and properly allocate resources to achieve those directives ([Yasar, 2022](#)). Valuable leadership skills include the ability to delegate, inspire and communicate effectively. Other [leadership traits](#) include honesty, confidence, commitment and creativity. Leadership skills are skills you use when organizing other people to reach a shared goal (Ford, 2021). According to him, whether you are in a management position or leading a project, leadership skills require you to motivate others to complete a series of tasks, often according to a schedule. Leadership is not just one skill but rather a combination of several different skills working together. Some examples of skills that make a strong leader include: Patience, empathy, active listening, reliability, dependability, creativity, positivity, effective feedback, timely communication, team building, flexibility, risk-taking ability to teach and mentor and significant others. These skills cannot be appropriately and effectively demonstrated without employing the properties of social intelligence.

Socially intelligent leaders can be more motivated, tolerable, accepting, non-judgmental, self-aware, self-confident, satisfied and socially proficient, which makes an effective and efficient leadership. As a leader

having these qualities can have a significant effect on the commitment level of your subjects to comply with organizational expectations without much supervision. Leadership is essentially an emotional process, due to the fact that the leader has to be familiar with followers' emotional states, try to appeal to the emotions of the followers, and then attempt to manage followers' emotional states as the conditions dictates. The ability of a leaders to dictate the emotional climate significantly influences performance in organizations; through shared emotional experiences leaders increase group coherence and morale. In addition to this Leadership being a social driven process where the leader's aptitude to persuade the behavior of their followers and subordinates can significantly affect performance outcomes (Kerr et al., 2016).

The leader exercises physical activities by coordinating, organizing, directing, supervising and evaluating human and material resources in the organization. He or she oversees the activities and tasks members of the organization engage in to ensure compliance to the organizational expectations. The leader also exercises psychological and social fitness by ensuring there is a healthy interpersonal relationship between him and his followers. Skills such as empathy, social skill, emotional regulation, self-motivation which are component of social intelligence and they are essentially needed for effective leadership. Lack of these qualities in leader may lead to ineffectiveness and poor interpersonal relationship between the leader and his followers.

Statement of Problem

Students' activities (academic and extra-curricular) in secondary schools are guided and regulated by established rules and regulation which maintain lawfulness, orderliness and healthy interpersonal relationships amongst members of the school community. These rules and regulations are enforced not only by the teachers and principals but also by the students who are appointed or elected to serve in different leadership capacities known as prefects. Student leadership administration is itself often part of larger administration units of the school system. The nature of social interaction that go on amongst students is largely influenced by the administration and leadership provided by student leaders (prefects), and it is widely assumed that school leadership directly influences the social adjustment of students and their achievement outcomes.

Student leaders in every part of the world, particularly Nigeria face challenges due to rising cases of antisocial and unruly behaviors by fellow students. The issue of disobedient to constituted authorities such as drug use and abuse, cultism, sexual exploitation and experimentation, lateness to school, truancy, bullying, examination malpractice, fighting, noise making noncompliance to rule has become a recurrent decimal. Most times student leaders who are entrusted with the responsibility to checkmating the occurrence of these behaviors are engaged on a physical combat with junior students who refused to comply with school rules and regulations. For instance, in many schools, punctuality prefects always engage in physical fight with students who came to school. This is the reason for reports of conflict and crises some secondary schools experience as result of senior students trying to enforce school rules and regulations on their junior counterparts.

Within the last two decades, there has been increasing reports of event of junior students waylaying their senior counterparts (prefects in particular) who tried to punish them for going against the school rules and regulation, leading to serious physical injuries, disabilities and even death. Some senior students have also faced disciplinary committees by the school authority while others have faced civil and legal battles for punishing junior students. Sometimes most of the issues leading to these problems are petty issues that can be possibly ignored or circumvented if social intelligence skills are applied from the beginning. Arising from the foregoing, this study sought to investigate the relationship between social intelligence and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between social intelligence and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. In specific terms, the objectives were to:

1. To ascertain the extent to which social skill relates to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.
2. Investigate the extent to which self-regulation relates to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent to which self-awareness relates to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.
4. Find out the extent to which relationship skills relate to leadership skill of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?
2. How does self-regulation relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?
3. To what extent does self-awareness relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?
4. What is relationship between skills and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between relationship skills and leadership skill of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

Methodology

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all the 16,958 public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The sample size for the study was made up of 375 public senior secondary school students in the area. This sample size is gotten through the use of the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size specification. To get this sample, the researcher adopted the simple random sampling technique. The researcher designed two instruments titles: Social Intelligence Questionnaire (SIQ) and Students' Leadership Kills Inventory (SLSI) for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling. A test re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instruments using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. A reliability coefficient of 0.88 and 0.79 was obtained for Social Intelligence Questionnaire (SIQ) and Students' Leadership Kills Inventory (SLSI) respectively. The Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly

Disagree (SD) = 1, respectively was used in scoring the items in the questionnaire. The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the respondents. This was done to ensure the return of the instrument. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent does social skill relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Social Skill and Leadership Skills

		Leadership skill	Social skill
	Pearson's Coefficient	1	-.418**
Leadership skill	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	375	375

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

0.7 or higher - very strong relationship, .40 to .69 - strong relationship, .03 to .39 – moderate relationship, .20 to .29 – weak relationship, .01 to .19 – negligible relationship, 0 – no relationship

Table 1 above shows the result of a Pearson product-moment correlation that was run to determine if there was a relationship between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship. The result was ($r = -.418$, $n = 375$, $p < 0.05$). This result shows that there was a strong negative correlation between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The result is statistically significant as the p-value of .000 (8.834E-27) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected

Research Question Two: To what extent does self-regulation relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Self-Regulation and Leadership Skill

		Leadership skill	Self-Regulation
	Pearson's Coefficient	1	-.537**
Leadership skill	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	375	375

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

0.7 or higher - very strong relationship, .40 to .69 - strong relationship, .03 to .39 – moderate relationship, .20 to .29 – weak relationship, .01 to .19 – negligible relationship, 0 – no relationship

Table 2 above shows the result of a Pearson product-moment correlation that was run to determine if there was a relationship between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship. The result was ($r = -.537$, $n = 375$, $p < 0.05$). This result shows that there was a strong negative correlation between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The result is statistically significant as the p-value of .000 (4.0244E-46) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question Three: To what extent does self-awareness relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Self-Awareness and Leadership Skills

	Leadership skill	Self-awareness
Pearson's Coefficient	1	-.480**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	375	375

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

0.7 or higher - very strong relationship, .40 to .69 - strong relationship, .03 to .39 – moderate relationship, .20 to .29 – weak relationship, .01 to .19 – negligible relationship, 0 – no relationship

Table 3 above shows the result of a Pearson product-moment correlation that was run to determine if there was a relationship between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship. The result was ($r = -.480$, $n = 375$, $p < 0.05$). This result shows that there was a strong negative correlation between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The result is statistically significant as the p-value of .000 (6.3208E-36) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question Four: To what extent does relationship skills relate to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between relationship skills and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Relationship Skill and Leadership Skill

	Leadership skill	Relationship skill
Pearson's Coefficient	1	-.554**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	375	375

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

0.7 or higher - very strong relationship, .40 to .69 - strong relationship, .03 to .39 – moderate relationship, .20 to .29 – weak relationship, .01 to .19 – negligible relationship, 0 – no relationship

Table 4 above shows the result of a Pearson product-moment correlation that was run to determine if there was a relationship between relationship skills and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship. The result was ($r = -.554$, $n = 375$, $p < 0.05$). This result shows that there was a strong negative correlation between relationship skills and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The result is statistically significant as the p-value of .000 (1.6368E-49) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

A. The analysis of the study from research question one and hypothesis one as indicated in table 1 which examined the relationship between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship, the result found that there was a strong negative correlation between social skill and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State and the relationship was statistically significant. This study is in line with Oguejiofor et al. (2022) who carried out a study titled management of principals' social skills as correlates of effective school organization in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study found that principals' conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills management are significant predictors of effective school administration.

B. The analysis of the study from research question two and hypothesis two as indicated in table 2 which sought to examine the relationship between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship, the result found that there was a strong negative correlation between self-regulation and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. This finding is in agreement with a study by Yeow and Martin (2013) on the role of self-regulation in developing leaders: A longitudinal field experiment. The study observed that the leader self-regulation intervention led to increased followers' ratings of leader's effectiveness, higher team financial performance and higher final team grade compared to the control (non-intervention) condition.

C. From the analysis of data in research question and hypothesis three as indicated in table 3 which sought to examine the relationship between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship, the result found that there was a strong negative correlation between self-awareness and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and the relationship was statistically significant. This finding is in agreement with Tanui et al. (2018) who carried out a study on the relationship between self-awareness and effective leadership in county governments in Kenya. The results of correlation analysis showed that there was a moderately strong, positive and significant relationship between self-awareness and effective leadership.

D. The analysis of the study from research question four and hypothesis four as indicated in table 4 which sought to examine the relationship between relationship skills and leadership skill of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and to ascertain the significance of the relationship, the result found that there was a strong negative correlation between relationship skills and leadership skill of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State, and the relationship was statistically significant. This finding is in consonant with Zařková and Poláček (2015) who found that there was proven connection among social skills and managerial positions and therefore implied that social skills influence the success in the managerial position and in the career growth of the manager. According to them, successful managers achieved high score in the SSI questionnaire.

Conclusion

The study investigated the relationship between social intelligence and leadership skills of public senior secondary school students. Social intelligence is the ability of people to manage interpersonal relationships. It helps peoples to maintain healthy interpersonal relationship at home, work, school or any significant other social settings. In leadership roles, social intelligence can help the leader at all level demonstrate positive leadership skills and perform effectively. Components of social intelligence examine in this study include: Self-awareness,

social skill, self-regulation and relationship skills. Based on the findings, the study concludes that social intelligence relates to leadership skills of public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations;

1. Students should be encouraged to have adequate knowledge of self in order to understand others especially when given leadership responsibilities.
2. Students should be taught social skill which will enable them maintain a healthy interpersonal relationship with classmates and junior students. This will help them develop positive leadership skills.
3. Students should be encouraged to regulate their emotions to enable them tolerate others whether as a leader or follower. Self-regulation will enhance leadership skills of students and attract sincere followership.
4. Students should be encouraged to build relationship skills that will enhance their interpersonal relationship in the school and outside school environment. Relationship skills will enable a student leader maintain a healthy leader-follower relationship.

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