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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF PRINCIPALS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

¹Golu, C.A. & ²Okoye, F. (Ph.D)

^{1&2}Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria

¹acovirtue@gmail.com Phone Numbers: 08162489975, 08031983284.

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Abstract

The study investigated emotional intelligence as a predictor of principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Five research questions guided the study, while five hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 alpha level. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all 12,080 teachers from the 266 state government-owned secondary schools in the six education zones of the State. The sample size for the study consisted of 744 teachers from state government-owned secondary schools. Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) and Job Performance Questionnaire (JPQ) were used to collect data. EIQ and JPQ were validated by three experts. The reliabilities of the EIQ and JPQ were established using Cronbach's alpha method. Coefficients of 0.74 and 0.80 were obtained for EIQ and JPQ, respectively. Data collected were analyzed using linear regression. The findings of the study revealed that intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, stress management, adaptability and general mood positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. It was recommended, among others, that the Ministry of Education should continually organize seminars and workshops for principals on the need to prioritize general mood. This will enable the principals improve their job performance in secondary schools.



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Keyword: Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Stress, Adaptability.

1.1 Introduction

Job performance captures the act of implementing and accomplishing a given task through the combination of skills, knowledge, and the right behaviour to achieve organizational goals and objectives. According to Kacmar and Carlson (2017), job performance refers to the aggregate of

employee behaviours that hold expected value for organizations, whether positive or negative. Job performance of secondary school principals in Anambra State is of great importance to the seamless attainment of secondary education objectives in the State. The researcher's conversations with certain teachers across the state reveal that some principals seem inaccessible, as they are not readily available to discuss their teachers' concerns and ideas, leading to a sense of disconnectedness and frustration among the teachers. At other times, it revolves around the principals' inadequate response to teachers' complaints or lack of empathy and understanding towards their struggles and challenges, leading to a sense of alienation and disconnect within the school community. In light of these trending realities, the efficient job performance of principals seems to be the point of interrogation. Researchers (Baugh & Goldring, 2018; Robinson et al. 2018) have attributed principals' poor job performance to role strain caused by balancing instructional concerns and managing staff members, high responsibilities, leading to increased workloads and stress, complex interactions with teachers, staff, parents, and school boards, insufficient recognition and compensation for principals' efforts, limited autonomy and control over decisions affecting their schools, time constraints, particularly regarding instructional leadership and evaluating teachers, conflict with teachers and staff, resulting in apathy and resistance to change, union issues and political environments that create tension to mention but a few. However, from the researchers' observation of principals' realities in this part of the global divide, the researcher is enthused about the effect of emotional intelligence and workload.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions for productive purposes. According to Alharbi (2019), emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand and manage our emotions, as well as those of others, effectively and positively. It is the state of accurate perception, assessment and expression of emotions, and the ability to develop or acquire emotions that facilitate thinking (Chong et al., 2020). Chong et al. further averred that emotional intelligence involves the skills that enable people to use their emotional awareness to make decisions, communicate more effectively, reduce anxiety, resolve conflicts, and improve relationships. This study is anchored in the Bar-On Model of emotional intelligence, which defines emotional intelligence as an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills (Bar-On et al., 2006). According to Bar-On's model of Emotional Intelligence (EI), EI refers to a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills, and facilitators. Consistent with the Bar-On model, being emotionally intelligent is effectively about understanding and expressing oneself, understanding and relating well to others, and coping successfully with daily demands, challenges, and pressures (Rajesh, 2019). The Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Model comprises five scales: intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood.

Explaining Intrapersonal Intelligence, Bru-Luna et al. (2021) averred that intrapersonal intelligence focuses on self-awareness, self-regard, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualization. It also evaluates how well individuals understand and manage their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. To this end, high intrapersonal intelligence indicates a strong sense of self-awareness and self-confidence. According to Bar-On et al. (2006), intrapersonal intelligence

plays a crucial role in self-development and personal growth. This means that individuals with high intrapersonal intelligence are more self-aware, confident, and able to understand their own emotions and motivations. All these enable them to set realistic goals, make informed decisions, and navigate challenges effectively. Given the foregoing, with intrapersonal ability, one becomes aware of one's feelings, understands one's strengths and weaknesses, and expresses them non-destructively.

It is instructive to note that a secondary school principal with low intrapersonal intelligence may struggle to understand and manage their own emotions effectively. They may frequently experience stress or frustration but lack the awareness or coping mechanisms to regulate these emotions, which can lead to poor decision-making. The principal is likely to exhibit low self-reflection, meaning they may not assess their own strengths and weaknesses or learn from past mistakes. Without self-awareness, they may be inconsistent in their leadership style, reacting impulsively to challenges rather than responding thoughtfully. Such a principal may have difficulty setting clear personal goals or aligning their actions with the school's mission, often feeling unmotivated or lacking direction. They might be prone to burnout because they do not recognize when they need to take a step back or manage their workload effectively. Communication with staff could be strained, as the principal may not be able to clearly express their thoughts or feelings, leading to misunderstandings (Brackett & Katulak, 2021). A principal with low intrapersonal intelligence might also be less open to feedback, as they find it hard to critically reflect on their performance, making professional growth difficult. Idoko (2015) found that principals with high intrapersonal intelligence are more likely to have a clear understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses, which allows them to approach challenges with greater self-awareness. Similarly, Ijah and Muogbo (2018) observed that intrapersonal intelligence further contributes to a principal's ability to set and pursue personal and professional goals.

Interpersonal Intelligence, on the other hand, measures an individual's ability to understand and interact effectively with others, demonstrating empathy, social responsibility, and maintaining positive relationships (Ackley, 2016). Thus, it encompasses the ability to be aware of others' emotions, feelings, and needs, and to establish and maintain cooperative, constructive, and mutually satisfying relationships. High interpersonal intelligence signifies strong social skills and the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships. As such, they can navigate social situations with ease, resolve conflicts constructively, and foster positive connections with others. A secondary school principal with low interpersonal intelligence may struggle to build strong relationships with staff, students, and parents. They are likely to have poor communication skills, making it difficult to connect with others or address concerns effectively (Chang, 2018). This principal may have difficulty empathizing with others, often appearing indifferent or unaware of teachers' or students' emotional needs. As a result, they may come across as distant or unapproachable, leading to a lack of trust and open dialogue within the school community.

Without strong interpersonal skills, the principal may struggle with delegation and rely too heavily on their own ideas, failing to engage staff in decision-making processes (Chang, 2018). Their relationships with students could also suffer, as they may be unable to connect on a personal

level, making students feel unsupported. Ultimately, their leadership could create a school environment characterized by low cohesion and high frustration, negatively affecting both teacher performance and student outcomes. Kacmar and Carlson (2017) observed that a principal's ability to communicate effectively with various stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents, is enhanced by high interpersonal intelligence. Similarly, Krishnakumar (2016) found that interpersonal intelligence plays a critical role in a principal's leadership style, enabling them to be more adaptive and responsive to their team's needs. Furthermore, Kieleko et al. (2017) noted that by effectively leveraging interpersonal intelligence, principals are better equipped to manage diverse personalities and work styles, promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect.

Stress management, on the other hand, evaluates an individual's ability to cope with stress, flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism (O'Connor et al. 2019). As such, stress management reflects a person's ability to manage and adapt to stressful situations, demonstrating resilience, flexibility, and a positive outlook. High stress management indicates effective coping mechanisms and emotional resilience. According to Ahmad et al. (2019), stress management is a key component of emotional resilience and mental well-being. To this end, individuals with strong stress management skills can cope with pressure, adapt to change, and maintain a positive outlook even in challenging circumstances. As such, effective stress management leads to improved decision-making, better problem-solving, and overall emotional stability. A secondary school principal with low stress management will likely exhibit frequent signs of overwhelm and frustration in handling the demands of their position. They may react impulsively to stressful situations, making rash, poorly thought-out decisions (Chong et al., 2020). Such a principal might struggle to prioritize tasks, often trying to do everything at once, which can lead to inefficiency and burnout. As a result, they could appear disorganized and unable to maintain a calm, structured school environment.

Principals' inability to manage stress can lead to emotional outbursts, such as anger or anxiety, which can negatively impact their relationships with staff, students, and parents. Teachers may feel unsupported because the principal is too overwhelmed to offer guidance or resolve conflicts effectively. This principal could also be prone to avoidance, neglecting critical issues because they feel too stressed to address them, allowing problems to escalate. Finally, without proper stress management, their health may deteriorate, leading to absenteeism or reduced productivity and further affecting the school's performance and stability. Lakshmi and Sekhar Rao (2018) observed that principals who are skilled at managing stress are better equipped to handle the high-pressure environment of school leadership, which includes overseeing academic performance, managing staff, addressing student issues, and responding to parents. In contrast, Lee and Chang (2019) argued that principals who frequently exhibit signs of stress, such as frustration or irritability, can create tension and anxiety within the school community, thereby reducing their job performance.

Adaptability is another scale of Bar-On Emotional Intelligence. According to Ahmad et al. (2019), adaptability focuses on flexibility, problem-solving, and reality testing. It measures how well individuals can adapt to change, solve problems, and assess situations realistically. High

adaptability suggests a person's ability to adjust to new circumstances, think critically, and make sound decisions in various situations. According to Ackley (2016), individuals with high adaptability can embrace change, think creatively, and respond resourcefully to new situations. They are open to learning, flexible in their approach, and able to thrive in dynamic environments by quickly adjusting to new challenges and opportunities. A secondary school principal with low adaptability will struggle to adjust to new challenges or changes in the school environment, making them appear rigid and resistant to innovation. They may be uncomfortable with change, preferring to stick to traditional methods even when new approaches are necessary, which can lead to stagnation in school development. In times of crisis or shifting demands, this principal may become indecisive, unable to respond quickly or effectively to emerging issues. According to Davis and Humphrey (2020), their inability to adapt can lead to a lack of creativity in problem-solving, often resulting in the repetition of ineffective solutions rather than exploring alternatives. Staff and students might find them inflexible, as they may be unwilling to accommodate differing perspectives or adjust policies to better suit the school community's needs. According to Day et al. (2017), a principal with low adaptability may create an atmosphere where teacher and student innovation is stifled, as they may discourage experimentation or creative teaching methods. In professional development, they might resist acquiring new skills or updating their leadership practices, which limits their personal and professional growth. Communication gaps may arise if this principal fails to adjust their leadership style to the diverse needs of staff, leading to misunderstandings.

Ultimately, principals' inability to adapt could lead to frustration among teachers, low engagement, and diminished overall school performance. Mayer and Salovey (2021) averred that adaptable principals are often more successful at implementing reforms or new initiatives. This is necessary because schools regularly face changes, such as new teaching methods, technological advancements, or policy changes. Similarly, Medford and Brown (2022) averred that adaptable principals tend to be more collaborative. They recognize that no one solution fits every situation and are open to input from staff, students, and the wider school community. Going further, Maforah and Mokhele (2017) affirmed that a principal with strong adaptability is better equipped to manage diverse teaching staff and student populations.

General Mood is another scale of Bar-On Emotional Intelligence. According to Bru-Luna et al. (2021), general mood assesses happiness, well-being, and overall mood. Thus, it reflects an individual's general emotional state, positivity, and overall sense of well-being. High scores in general mood indicate a positive outlook, emotional balance, and overall life satisfaction. People with a positive general mood tend to be more optimistic, motivated, and better equipped to handle life's ups and downs. A secondary school principal with a low mood may often appear pessimistic or withdrawn, negatively affecting the school's overall atmosphere (Fletcher & Smith, 2018). Their lack of positivity could create an environment where morale among teachers and students remains consistently low, as they fail to inspire enthusiasm or optimism. This principal may struggle to celebrate successes or recognize achievements, leading to a lack of motivation among staff and students. A principal with a low general mood may not provide the emotional support teachers

need, especially during challenging times, leaving staff feeling isolated and unsupported (Fletcher & Smith, 2018). The negative outlook may also impact their decision-making, causing them to avoid risks or resist new opportunities that could benefit the school. Their emotional state can contribute to a sense of stagnation, as they lack the drive to advance or improve school initiatives.

Over time, a principal's low mood can contribute to increased stress and disengagement among staff, leading to poor job performance and a decline in overall school performance. Ultimately, the school community may struggle to thrive in an atmosphere where the leader consistently exhibits a lack of enthusiasm and emotional investment. Chong et al. (2020) found a positive, significant relationship between emotional intelligence (general mood) and job performance among academic workers in private higher education institutions. Put differently, general mood plays a pivotal role in enhancing job performance among educators. Similarly, Oyewunmi et al. (2015) found a positive, significant correlation between leaders' emotional intelligence and employees' performance.

The importance of emotional intelligence cannot be overemphasized. Normally, people can feel anxious in leadership positions and may be disappointed by poor job performance, which can lead to negative self-talk that erodes their confidence. To this end, emotional intelligence could help them identify and understand their emotions and their root causes, and manage them in a very positive way, without interfering with their responsibilities. Emotional intelligence thus improves people's communication and relationship skills (Alharbi, 2019). This is manifested through compassion, which involves understanding others' feelings and seeing things from their perspectives. Chamizo-Nieto et al. (2022) found that emotional intelligence helps people analyze situations more effectively, stay calm, and think critically in challenging situations, thereby improving their problem-solving skills. According to Charles (2020), people need emotional intelligence to enhance their problem-solving capabilities and succeed in their endeavours despite unending challenges. The researcher feels that if principals possess emotional abilities and learn to use them effectively, they could better cope with the sensitive nature of their job at any time. To this end, Amalu (2018) asserted that with emotional intelligence, one may better manage the pressure that comes with daily challenges. This implies that the principal's performance of these responsibilities depends on his ability to balance the demands of his office with meeting the set objectives.

In Anambra State, for instance, the researcher observed that certain principals struggle to maintain a reasonable working relationship with their teachers. At certain times, they are not available to listen to their teachers' difficulties; at other times, they lord it over the teachers, forcing them to work in unfavourable conditions that hinder effective instructional delivery. At other times, they seem to care less about their teachers' activities, leaving the teachers like a flock without shepherd. These unfortunate situations have led the researcher to seek answers in principals' personal characteristics (emotional intelligence) and in their management of the occupational hazards their offices expose them to over time, as revealed in 'workload' and 'job performance'. It has always been the desire of stakeholders in the secondary education sector to ensure the maximum performance of principals. When principals fail to execute their duties, the

objectives of secondary education are threatened. In seeking answers to the issue of principals' job performance in secondary schools, the researcher is interested in assessing emotional intelligence as a predictor of principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to emotional intelligence as a predictor of principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain the:

1. Predictive power of intrapersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Predictive power of interpersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Predictive power of stress management (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
4. Predictive power of adaptability (a component of emotional intelligence) on their job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
5. Predictive power of general mood (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive power of intrapersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive power of interpersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the predictive power of stress management (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
4. What is the predictive power of adaptability (a component of emotional intelligence) on their job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
5. What is the predictive power of general mood (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant predictive power of intrapersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant predictive power of interpersonal intelligence (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. There is no significant predictive power of stress management (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
4. There is no significant predictive power of adaptability (a component of emotional intelligence) on their job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

5. There is no significant predictive power of general mood (a component of emotional intelligence) on principals' job performance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

2. Methods

A correlational research design was adopted for the study. A correlational design helps identify variables, their relationships, and how changes in one variable can affect the other (Ghanad, 2023). This design is deemed appropriate because the researcher predicted principals' job performance using emotional intelligence (already existing) in secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study consisted of all 12,080 teachers in the 267 state government-owned secondary schools in the six education zones of the State. (Source: Anambra State Post-Primary Schools Services Commission, 2025). The sample size for the study consisted of 744 teachers in the state government-owned secondary schools in Anambra State. Simple random sampling and proportionate sampling techniques were used to compose the sample size for the study. The Face-validated Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) and the Job Performance Questionnaire (JPQ) were used to collect data for the study. Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) was adapted from the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997) to assess how principals' emotional intelligence competencies in five (5) dimensions: Inter-personal, Intra-personal, General mood, Adaptability and Stress management affect their job performance. It contains 30 items structured on a four-point rating scale. The range of scores for positive statements was weighted as 4, 3, 2, and 1 for Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively, while negative statements were weighted 1, 2, 3 and 4 for SA-SD respectively. Items 1-6 in the present scale measure inter-personal intelligence; items 7-11 measure intra-personal intelligence; items 12-16 measure general mood; items 17-23 measure adaptability, while items 24-30 measure stress management. The minimum score for the scale is 30, while the maximum score is 120. Thus, scores of 60 or above were considered high emotional intelligence, while scores below 60 were considered low. The second questionnaire is titled 'Job Performance Questionnaire (JPQ). JPQ was adapted from Van der Heijden's (2004) Job Performance Questionnaire (JPQ), which evaluates multiple aspects of job performance, including effectiveness, quality of work, interpersonal relationships, and how individuals contribute to organizational culture. In light of this study, JPQ asked 16 questions about principals' performance. JPQ was structured on a four-point rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The range of scores for positive statements was weighted as 4, 3, 2, and 1 for SA-SD, respectively, while negative statements were weighted 1, 2, 3 and 4 for SA-SD, respectively. The minimum score on the scale is 16, and the maximum is 64. Thus, scores of 32 and above were considered high job performance, while scores below 32 were considered low job performance. The reliability of EIQ and JPQ was assessed by administering them to a similar group of 20 secondary school teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State, South-East, Nigeria, a different location from the study area. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the instrument's internal consistency. The alpha coefficients of 0.74 and 0.80 were

obtained for EIQ and JPQ, respectively. These were deemed sufficient to consider the EIQ and JPQ reliable.

The EIQ and JPQ were administered the same day by the researcher and the seven research assistants using direct administration and a retrieval method. The distribution and collection of the copies of the EIQ and JPQ lasted for two weeks. Within the allotted period, the researcher made follow-up phone calls to the research assistants to ensure that the administration and retrieval of EIQ and JPQ were carried out in line with the briefing provided. Of the 744 EIQ and JPQ copies administered, 680 (91.40%) were retrieved and used for analysis. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data. Hypotheses were tested using a t-test of the significance of beta coefficients. All the hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance with the decision rule that the null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value was less than the alpha level of 0.05; otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

3. Results

Table 1: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients Predicting Principals' Job Performance in secondary schools Contributed by the Variance in Interpersonal Intelligence Scores (n=680).

Model	Unstandardized <i>B</i>	Std Error	Standardized β	T	p-value	Decision
Constant	64.512	2.706		21.360	.000	Significant
Intrapersonal Intelligence Scores	.492	.061	.514	18.254	.000	Significant

The regression coefficients presented in Table 1 show that the standardized regression coefficients (β) for intrapersonal intelligence score is .514. Using the standardized beta (β), power of intrapersonal intelligence positively predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. More so, the unstandardized coefficient (*B*) of .492 shows that a unit rise in intra-personal intelligence increases principals' job performance score by .492. More so, intrapersonal intelligence score with β value of .514 significantly predicted principals' job performance, $t(1,679)=-18.254$, $p=.000$. Since the *p*-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients Predicting Principals' Job Performance in secondary schools Contributed by the Variance in Interpersonal Intelligence Scores (n=680).

Model	Unstandardized <i>B</i>	Std Error	Standardized β	T	p-value	Decision
Constant	64.512	2.706		21.360	.000	Significant
Interpersonal Intelligence Scores	.475	.080	.496	15.037	.002	Significant

The regression coefficients presented in Table 2 show that the standardized regression coefficients (β) for interpersonal intelligence score is .496. Using the standardized beta (β), power of interpersonal intelligence positively predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. More so, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of .475 shows that a unit rise in inter-personal intelligence increases principals' job performance score by .475. Additionally, interpersonal intelligence score with β value of .496 significantly predicted principals' job performance, $t(1,679)=-15.037, p=.002$. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients Predicting Principals' Job Performance in Secondary Schools Contributed by the Variance in Stress Management Scores (n=680).

Model	Unstandardized B	Std Error	Standardized β	T	p-value	Decision
Constant	64.512	2.706		21.360	.000	Significant
Stress Management Scores	.450	.170	.587	12.519	.003	Significant

The regression coefficients presented in Table 3 show that the standardized regression coefficients (β) for stress management score is .587. Using the standardized beta (β), power of stress management positively predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. More so, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of .450 shows that a unit rise in stress management increases principals' job performance score by .450. More so, stress management score with β value of .587 significantly predicted principals' job performance, $t(1,679)=-12.519, p=.003$. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients Predicting Principals' Job Performance in secondary schools Contributed by the Variance in Adaptability Scores (n=680)

Model	Unstandardized B	Std Error	Standardized β	T	p-value	Decision
Constant	64.512	2.706		21.360	.000	Significant
Adaptability Scores	.532	.092	.569	17.915	.001	Significant

The regression coefficients presented in Table 4 show that the standardized regression coefficients (β) for power of adaptability score is .569. Using the standardized beta (β), adaptability positively predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. More so, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of .532 shows that a unit rise in adaptability increases principals' job performance score by .532. In addition, adaptability score with β value of .569 significantly predicted principals' job performance, $t(1,679)=-17.915, p=.001$. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients Predicting Principals' Job Performance in secondary schools Contributed by the Variance in General Mood Score (n=680)

Model	Unstandardized <i>B</i>	Std Error	Standardized β	T	p-value	Decision
Constant	64.512	2.706		21.360	.000	Significant
Adaptability Scores	.372	.076	.391	9.724	.004	Significant

The regression coefficients presented in Table 5 show that the standardized regression coefficients (β) for general mood score is .391. Using the standardized beta (β), general mood positively predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. More so, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of .372 shows that a unit rise in general mood increases principals' job performance score by .372. Additionally, general mood score with β value of .391 significantly predicted principals' job performance, $t(1,679)=-9.724$, $p=.004$. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

4. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that intrapersonal intelligence positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. This points to the fact that a principal's ability to achieve optimal performance is largely a function of their intrapersonal intelligence. In other words, principals' job performance is hardly separable from their intrapersonal intelligence. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Idoko (2015), who found that principals with high intrapersonal intelligence are more likely to have a clear understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to approach challenges with greater self-awareness. This self-awareness leads to better decision-making as they can objectively assess situations, understand their emotional biases, and adjust their actions accordingly. Going further, principals with strong intrapersonal intelligence tend to manage their emotions effectively, preventing stress or frustration from clouding their judgment. The findings of the current study further align with those of Ijah and Muogbo (2018), who found that intrapersonal intelligence contributes to a principal's ability to set and pursue personal and professional goals. Principals with strong self-awareness are clear about their own aspirations and can align them with their school's needs. This helps them stay motivated and focused on long-term objectives, such as improving student outcomes or enhancing teacher development. Principals who understand and manage their emotions effectively create an environment where teachers and students feel emotionally supported and valued. Their emotional awareness enables them to be empathetic and responsive to others' emotional needs, leading to stronger relationships and optimal job performance.

The findings of the study revealed that inter-personal intelligence positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. This is understandable, given that principals with interpersonal intelligence interact effectively with others, and the logical consequence is improved job performance. Put differently, the more principals lend themselves to

interpersonal intelligence, the higher the tendency to record high job performance. The study's findings are consistent with those of Kacmar and Carlson (2017), who found that a principal's ability to effectively communicate with different stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents, is enhanced by high interpersonal intelligence. Thus, effective communication ensures that conflicts are resolved swiftly, creating a harmonious school environment where problems do not escalate unnecessarily. In a similar vein, Krishnakumar (2016) found that interpersonal intelligence plays a critical role in a principal's leadership style, enabling them to be more adaptive and responsive to their team's needs. Principals who are in tune with the emotions and dynamics within the school are more likely to foster collaborative decision-making, encouraging teacher and staff input while enhancing job performance. The findings of the current study are further corroborated by those of Kieleko, Kanori and Mugambi (2017), who found that by effectively leveraging interpersonal intelligence, principals are better equipped to manage diverse personalities and work styles, promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect. They can adapt their communication and leadership approaches to different individuals, which is critical for maintaining a cohesive, productive school community. This flexibility also allows them to address the unique needs of teachers and students, thereby optimizing principals' job performance.

The findings of the study revealed that stress management positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. This shows that principals' ability to deftly manage their stress is a step towards enhancing their job performance. Put differently, the higher a principal's stress management, the greater the tendency to achieve high job performance. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Lakshmi and Sekhar Rao (2018), who found that principals who are skilled at managing stress are better equipped to handle the high-pressure environment of school leadership, which includes overseeing academic performance, managing staff, addressing student issues, and responding to parents. Effective stress management enables principals to remain calm and composed even in challenging situations, allowing them to think clearly and make sound decisions. However, those who manage stress well are more likely to delegate responsibilities, empowering their staff and creating a more collaborative leadership structure. This approach not only reduces the principal's workload but also fosters principals' job performance. In contrast, Lee and Chang (2019) contended that principals who frequently exhibit signs of stress, such as frustration or irritability, can create tension and anxiety within the school community; thereby reducing their job performance.

The findings of the study revealed that adaptability positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. This is rather expected given that the ability of a principal to adapt to situations has a way of engendering locus of control and ultimately, high job performance. Principals who are given the opportunity to adapt, especially in matters of administration, are bound to be high performers. The findings of the current study align with those of Mayer and Salovey (2021), who found that adaptable principals are often more successful at implementing reforms or new initiatives. This is expedient given that schools regularly face changes, such as new teaching methods, technological advancements, and policy changes.

Principals who can adjust quickly and guide their staff through these transitions are more likely to see these changes adopted successfully. Their ability to remain flexible during periods of transformation helps ensure that new initiatives are embraced rather than resisted. Similarly, Medford and Brown (2022) averred that adaptable principals tend to be more collaborative. They recognize that no one solution fits every situation and are open to input from staff, students, and the wider school community. This willingness to listen and adjust their approach fosters a more collaborative school culture, where teachers feel empowered to contribute ideas and take ownership of school decisions while promoting principals' job performance. More so, Maforah and Mokhele (2017) affirmed that a principal with strong adaptability is better equipped to manage diverse teaching staff and student populations. Each teacher and student may have unique needs, and a rigid leadership style can alienate or fail to support them. Adaptable principals are more likely to tailor their approaches to meet the specific needs of individuals, fostering a more inclusive and supportive school environment that enhances job performance.

The findings of the study revealed that general mood positively and significantly predicted principals' job performance in secondary schools. This implies that the higher the general mood, the higher the principals' job performance. This is to the extent that they evaluate their moods and make necessary adjustments to optimize their performance. The findings of the current study agree with those of Chong et al. (2020), who found a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence (general mood) and the job performance of academic workers in private higher education institutions. In other words, general mood plays a pivotal role in enhancing job performance among educators. Similarly, Oyewunmi et al. (2015) found a positive and significant correlation between leaders' emotional intelligence and employees' performance.

5. Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it was concluded that emotional intelligence positively predicted principals' job performance among secondary school students. Finally, the study concluded that there is a significant association between principals' job performance and their emotional intelligence.

6. Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, several recommendations were made, which include:

1. Principals should make a conscious effort to sustain their intrapersonal intelligence to improve their job performance in secondary schools.
2. Guidance and counsellors should schedule counselling sessions for principals on the need to sustain their interpersonal intelligence to enhance their job performance in secondary schools.
3. Principals should endeavor to improve their stress management. This is with a view to improving their job performance in secondary schools.
4. Principals should make a conscious effort to maintain their adaptability to sustain their job performance in secondary schools.

5. The Ministry of Education should regularly organize seminars and workshops for principals on the importance of prioritizing general mood. This will enable principals to improve their job performance in secondary schools.



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