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# Emotional Intelligence and Employee Productivity in Benue Internal Revenue Service

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**Abstract:** *Employees with the capabilities to handle their emotions and related with others perform better in their jobs. Many organizations are not aware of the substantial role of emotional intelligence in employees and fail to provide the need training. The research is conducted to ascertain the effect of emotional intelligence on employee productivity in Benue Internal Revenue Service. The research employed a survey design with a target population of 380 staff of the organization including junior, senior and management levels staff. The data obtained from the participants via self-administered questionnaire were analyzed using correlation and regression. The outcomes revealed that self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management have positive and significant effect on employee productivity. It concludes that emotional intelligence considerably affects the productivity of employees. The research suggests that Employers should encourage employees to develop social skills in relating with colleagues to enhance the work process leading to success in the organization.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Employee Productivity, Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Management.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Employees are considered as the most essential asset to the development of any organization, and organizational success is contingent on their productivity. Employee productivity is among the burning issues organizations have to contend with in the workspace characterized by escalating precariousness and this has triggered the interest of organizations and scholars. Organizations are increasingly concerned with ensuring the productivity of employees in the



achievement of assigned tasks. The profound harmony and the capacity to understand people on a deeper level impact the efficiency of employees so they should have the option to get a grip on their feelings (Ashi, 2023).

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to distinguish, evaluate, manage, and communicate feelings while working in firms. Emotionally intelligent individuals manage their emotions and utilize thoughts to manage same (Ashis, 2023). Over the years, EI has developed into a high priority expertise. In today's work environment, there are consistent interactions that occur among employees that present both positive and adverse consequences on activities of the firms. The abilities that supervisors and subordinates require to flourish in this climate include evidently communicating with each other and examining subjects straightforwardly, paying attention to the issues that are communicated by different gatherings, having the option to really oversee struggle, and motivating each other to work at a more significant level (Schlaegel, Engle, & Lang, 2022).

EI assists people to perceive and utilize their feelings to take care of issues, collaborate with others, and make articulate choices. It is possible to achieve the desired level of productivity through a proper management of emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management as evidently articulated by Goleman (1998). The capability of employees to recognize how their emotions impact on them and others is self-awareness. Self-management is the capacity to handle change while retaining one's self-control (Segon & Booth, 2015). Another dimension of EI, social awareness otherwise known as empathy, reflects the ability to comprehend other people's emotional composition and how to handle same. The relationship management (social skills) entails accepting others and the establishing networks and relations with them (Celik, 2017). Extant literatures suggest that EI assumes a critical part in the job performance, inspiration, decision making, successful management and leadership (Rahman & Haleem, 2018; Pienimaa, Talman & Haavisto, 2021; Schlaegel, Engle & Lang, 2022). In service firms it is imperative for managers to ensure that employees' emotions are properly managed to increase their productivity and overall organizational performance. Employees who are able to manage their emotions distinguish themselves from others and more productive in discharging their duties. In Benue Internal Revenue Service, employees of the organization interact with numerous customers; hence it is indispensable to properly handle their feelings to enhance the firm's reputation while improving their productivity.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is increasing emphasis placed on emotional intelligence in the 21st century by business scholars and practitioners, as an important employee skill during the processes of hiring, promotion, and employee development. Currently, firms are facing the problem of relatively lower level of emotional intelligence amongst majority of employees. Employers pay little attention to the intelligence of prospective employees before hiring them; hence they end up having employees with excellent academic qualifications while scoring low on emotional intelligence. This is evidenced by the low morale, low team spirit and shattered group cohesion amongst employees in service firms. Consequently, prior research advocated assorted methods in boosting employees' emotional intelligence (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017), but the applicability of these techniques remains a dilemma. Besides, the poor rate of



service delivery in most service organizations is occasioned by their inability to accurately handle workers' emotions. This has spurred the current study to carry out an exploration on emotional intelligence indicators (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) and their magnitude of effect on the productivity of employees in Benue Internal Revenue Service (BIRS).

## **Literature Review**

### **Emotional Intelligence**

The construct of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is one of the most habitually investigated topics in organizational behaviour study. Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) defined EI as the capability of employees to identify emotions; stimulate, control emotions and instigate others. Serrat (2017) viewed EI as the competence, capability, expertise, or self-perceived talent to cope, scrutinize, and spot one's emotions as well as others. It is defined by Kaur and Hirudayarai (2021) as the competence to use a rational mind and emotions concurrently, and an essential predictor of organizational outcomes, including job performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Oyewunmi, Oyewunmi & Oludayo, 2015). Emotional intelligence is thus viewed in this research as recognition, comprehension, and monitoring of emotions by employees and colleagues. The domains of EI identified in literature include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman, 1998; Mayer & Caruso, 2002; Winton, 2022; Schlaegel, Engle & Lang, 2022).

Self-awareness (empathy) is the first component of EI which entails understanding how employees' emotions impact on them, colleagues at work and job performance (Wadi, 2020). This domain enables workers to create priorities, rethink about their actions, and formulate well-informed decisions since they are not spontaneous (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002; Winton, 2022). Self-management (self-control) is another variable, which explains the capability of employees to control their emotions intrinsically and extrinsically (Gong, Chen & Wang, 2019). It is a skill that enables individuals to handle changes and uncertainties in the workplace (Goleman, 2017). The modification of behaviour enhances the ability of employees in interacting successfully with others (Goel & Hussein, 2015).

Social awareness is the ability to notice emotions of others and embrace their feelings while implementing smart organizational policies (Goleman, 2000). This construct describes an employee's capacity to distinguish others emotions and the dynamics in the organization. Another dimension of EI is relationship management otherwise known as social skills, which means having knowledge about one's emotions and that of others (Brown, 2014). Relationship management is one of the decisive aspects of employees' job, which allows them to articulate themselves in ways that will empathize and/or inspire others (Goleman, 2001).

### **Employee Productivity**

Productivity of employees in an organization refers to the quantity and quality of work completed by workers utilizing available resources over a specified time period (Dabke, 2016). Employee productivity measures the efficiency of workers in the workplace. It is also defined as the output of workers in a firm (Ashi, 2023). The productivity of workers helps to



determine the specific outputs of firms (Purnama, 2017). It is typically measured regarding timeliness of service and quantity of output.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Employee Productivity**

There is mounting confirmation depicting the connection between emotional intelligence and the productivity of employees. Wadi (2020) lends credence to the argument by establishing a positive and significant link between emotional intelligence and employee job performance. Segon and Booth (2015) in their research reported that emotional intelligence positively affects employees' work performance. Dhani and Shama (2019) also affirmed a positive association between emotional intelligence and employee productivity. A recent research by Schlaegel, Engle and Lang (2022) on the effect of emotional intelligence on employee job satisfaction and performance affirmed that emotional intelligence dimensions considerably affect employee job satisfaction and job performance.

Razali, Wahab, Shaari, Azlan and Taek-Hyun (2022) investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on employee's job performance in Malaysia using a survey of 118 operators of a manufacturing firm. Analyzing the data using regression the study reported that emotional intelligence is moderately related with employee job performance. Zaman, Memon, Zaman, Khan and Shaikh (2021) investigated the effect of emotional intelligence on job performance of healthcare providers working in public sector hospitals of Pakistan using a sample of 230 and data retrieved through questionnaire administration and analyzed Chi-square test and multiple regression established that emotional intelligence has an insignificant effect on employee performance.

Wadi (2020) researched on emotional intelligence and job performance during COVID-19 Crisis in Saudi Arabia using a cross-sectional survey design. The researcher conveniently sampled 340 nurses selected from three tertiary hospitals through an online survey. Data collected were analysed using regression and the result reported a significant effect of emotional intelligence on job performance. In Nigeria, Oyeleye, Audu and Achaku (2019) utilized a survey design to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction among nurses Jos, Nigeria. Using a population of 1,487, the participants were randomly sampled and data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation and multiple regression. The study's outcome showed a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

The effect of emotional intelligence and personality traits on job performance among IT employees in India was conducted by Dhani and Sharma (2018) using a sample of 158 middle management workers who were randomly sampled. Pearson moment correlation and regression analysis were used. The outcome of the research revealed that both emotional intelligence and personality traits significantly predicted employees' job performance. Purnama (2017) investigated the effect of emotional intelligence on employee's performance in Indonesia. The research utilized a correlational design and sampled 80 employees. Data collected using a questionnaire were analysed using regression and found a positive effect of emotional on the performance of employees. Adebukola, Olabode, Ibiyinka and Olumuyiwa (2015) did a research by on emotional intelligence and employees' performance in the public healthcare sector in Nigeria using a survey of 1000 staff of the Federal Neuro-Psychiatric

Hospital. The result of hierarchical regression analysis demonstrated a significant correlation between leaders' emotional intelligence and employee performance.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The research made use of a survey research design and had a population of 380 employees, comprising of both junior and senior staff of Benue Internal Revenue Service (BIRS) in Makurdi, the corporate headquarters of the organization in. A census sampling approach was espoused to consider the entire population. Data were collected through a primary source through the administration of questionnaire. Correlation and regression were employed in analyzing the data.

### Model Specification

Employee Productivity (EP) is considered in this research as a function of Emotional Intelligence (EI). The predictor variables include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. The model is specified thus:

$$EP = f(EI)$$

$$EP = f(SA, SM, SW, RM)$$

where;

EP = Employee Productivity

EI= Emotional Intelligence

SA= Self-Awareness

SM= Self-Management

SW= Social Awareness

RM= Relationship Management

Hence, the explicit form of the model for the study is as follows:

$$EP = \alpha + \beta_1 SA + \beta_2 SM + \beta_3 SW + \beta_4 RM + \varepsilon$$

where:

$\alpha$  = Intercept of the Model (constant)

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$  = coefficients

$\varepsilon$  = error term

## 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A pilot test was conducted prior to data analysis to ensure uniformity of measurement items. The research used correlation to determine the link between independent variables and the dependent variable. Regression was employed to ascertain the magnitude of effect of EI constructs on employee productivity.

Table 1: Reliability Test

S/N	Variable	Cronbach Alpha
1	Self-Awareness	0.907
2	Self-Management	0.891
3	Social Awareness	0.879





4	Relationship Management	0.918
5	Employee Productivity	0.885

Source: Computation from SPSS Output, 2023

The outcome of the reliability test is presented in Table 1 as follows: Self-Awareness ( $\alpha = 0.907$ ), Self-Management ( $\alpha = 0.891$ ), Social Awareness ( $\alpha = 0.879$ ), Relationship Management ( $\alpha = 0.918$ ), and Employee Productivity ( $\alpha = 0.885$ ). The result illustrates that the items employed to assess the variables are exceptionally dependable.

Table 2: Correlations between Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Awareness (1)	1				
Self-Management (2)	.482**	1			
Social Awareness (3)	.572**	.429**	1		
Relationship Management (4)	.503**	.540**	.467**	1	
Employee Productivity (5)	.497**	.472**	.480**	.495**	1

Source: Computation from SPSS Output, 2023

The consequence of the correlation analysis performed to test the connection between the variables demonstrated that there is an affirmative link between self-awareness and employee productivity ( $r = 0.497$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and a positive connection between self-management and employee productivity ( $r = 0.472$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It also reported a positive association between social awareness and employee productivity ( $r = 0.480$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Relationship management and employee productivity are also positively correlated ( $r = 0.495$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 3: Regression Model and Hypotheses Testing

Variable	Standardized Coefficients		Collinearity		Statistics	
	B	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF	
Self-awareness	.349	3.314	.000	.636	1.389	
Self-management	.426	6.260	.000	.629	1.452	
Social awareness	.393	3.272	.000	.672	1.320	
Relationship management	.405	5.395	.000	.693	1.628	
R-Square		.796				
Adjusted R-Square		.774				
Durbin-Watson		1.635				
ANOVA F Statistic		238.260				
Sig.		.000				

Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity

Source: Computation from SPSS Output (2023).

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance (TOL) were used to appraise the variables. The outcomes have shown no issue of multicollinearity with the variables. The



whole research variables explained 79.6% variation in employee productivity in the organization. It postulates that the autonomous variables remarkably explained deviation in the reliant variable ( $R^2 = 0.796$ ). Also, the model is significant and fit (F-Statistics = 238.260; Sig = 0.000 < 0.05).

Hypothesis one ( $H_{01}$ ) stated that self-awareness has no significant effect on employee productivity in BIRS. The result presented in Table 3 pointed out that self-awareness has significant effect on employee productivity ( $\beta = 0.349$ ;  $p$ -value = 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ). In line with the result, Adebukola, Olabode, Ibiyinka and Olumuyiwa (2015) affirmed that emotional intelligence dimensions and employee performance are significantly correlated. A research by Schlaegel, Engle and Lang (2022) affirmed the positive effect of emotional intelligence dimensions employee job performance.

The second hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) stated that there is no significant effect of self-management on employee productivity in BIRS. The outcome indicated that self-management significantly affected employee productivity with a beta value of ( $\beta$ ) = 0.426 and ( $p$ -value = 0.000 which is lower than  $p = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) was therefore rejected. The result is corroborated by Purnama (2017) who established a positive effect of self-management on employee productivity. Zaman, Memon, Zaman, Khan and Shaikh (2021), however, found an insignificant effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance.

The third hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) postulated that social awareness does not have significant effect on employee productivity in BIRS. The outcome showed that there is a positive and significant effect of social awareness employee productivity ( $\beta = 0.405$ ;  $t = 5.395$ ;  $p$ -value = 0.000 < 0.05). The null hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) was therefore rejected. In agreement with the result, Segon and Booth (2015) reported a positive and significant effect of social awareness on the performance of employees.

To test the effect of relationship management on employee productivity in BIRS, the outcome of hypothesis four demonstrated that relationship management considerably affected employee productivity ( $\beta = 0.405$ ;  $t = 5.395$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ) which is lower than  $p = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis ( $H_{04}$ ) was therefore rejected. The result is supported by Dhani and Shama (2019), who established a positive association between emotional intelligence dimensions and employee productivity. In agreement with the result, Razali, Wahab, Shaari, Azlan and Taek-Hyun (2022)

Wadi (2020) affirmed a positive effect of relationship management on employee job performance.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Conclusion**

The research investigated the effect of emotional intelligence on employee productivity in Benue Internal Revenue Service. The study established based on the outcomes that there is a significant connection between emotional intelligence and the productivity of employees. The study concludes that the application of emotional intelligence in the workplace increases employees' productivity through timely service delivery. It also concludes that emotional

intelligence capabilities, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management significantly predicted employee productivity.

### **Recommendations**

The research advanced these recommendations for organizational managers:

- i. There should be active awareness and deployment of training for employees in organizations on the concept of emotional intelligence.
- ii. Organizations should improve the emotional intelligence of staff by increasing their skills through training to help them develop mental abilities.
- iii. Employers should encourage employees to develop social skills in relating with colleagues to enhance the work process leading to success in the organization
- iv. Organizations should ensure that newly recruited employees undergo self-management to help them understand better how handle their emotions.

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