

PRINCIPALS' SELF-AWARENESS, SELF-REGULATION AND EMPATHY OF THEIR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN OGBA/EGBEMA/NDONI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study examined principals' self-awareness, self-regulation and empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprised all the 27 junior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. The sample for this study comprised of 27 junior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. The researcher adopted the census sampling technique to sample 27 schools out of 27 schools. The instrument used for data collection was titled: "Principals' Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation and Empathy of their Emotional Intelligence for Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (PSSEEISAAQ)". Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 levels of significance. The SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that emotional intelligence of principals on self-awareness helps to set realistic and reasonable goals and to know their strength and limitations; on self-regulation, it helps principals to have control over their emotions promote their active engagements in leadership. On empathy, it helps Principals to share the feelings of others and predict the behavior of his subordinates, among others. Therefore, the study recommended that emotional intelligence should be expressed by both the school heads and classroom teachers alike in the learning process knowing that when they possess the ability to understand students' reactions from their own perspective and demonstrate sensitive awareness of the educational dynamics, it will positively enhance effective learning. Further, emotional intelligence should be expressed among school principals in order to foster active participation in leadership, positive educational outcomes among the learners.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Academic Achievement

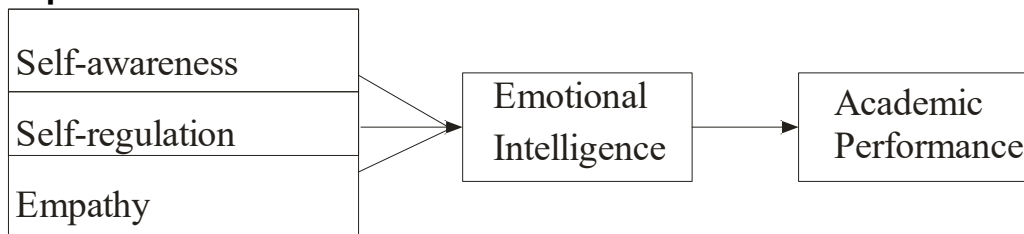
Introduction

Emotional intelligence represents a twin concept incorporating both emotion and intelligence. It is usually expressed through leadership most especially in the school system. School leaders have the responsibility to serve as a change agent, foster shared beliefs and a sense of belonging, inspire, lead, and work in collaboration with the school and broad community in which they serve (Marzano as cited in Lourdes, 2021). The most critical part of personality as well as the welfare of people is emotions because it helps in decision-making. It also improves human behavior and attitudes to achieve goals. It also impact leadership creative ability and produce numerous of psychological issues affecting successful leadership. However, principals need healthy emotions to enhance their ability to observe, think, and analyze school, classroom and leadership events (Amponsah et al. in Alexander, 2023). Thus, a particular behavior that is yet to be resolved or fulfilled negatively affects leadership behaviors. Further, principals should as matter of fact increase the ability to manage their emotional reactions and their relationship with others in ways that will stimulate employees, students, and stakeholders' emotional attitudes in the process of accomplishing the desired goals (Gray, 2009). This ability is what is known as emotional intelligence (Goleman et al., 2013).

Consequently, emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to understand one's own emotions, preferences, abilities, strengths, and limitations (Goleman et al., 2013). Additionally, it refers to the ability to perceive other's emotions and regulate one's behaviors to influence other's responses. Emotional intelligent principals understand how their emotions impact those around them, especially negative ones. Similarly, it can be said to be an innate capacity for emotional regulation that people possess (Amponsah, et al. in Alexander, 2023). This ability according to Goleman is recognize one's emotions and the emotions of others and to understand how one's emotions impact one's actions comprises five domains which include self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, and relationship management (Goleman et al., 2013). However, this study primarily focused on three domains which are emotional self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, and empathy.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's initiative

The conceptual frame showed the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and students' academic achievement. It observed that the independent variables are self-awareness, self-regulation and empathy while dependent variable is students' academic achievement. The independent variables which are self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy are products of emotional intelligence. This means that this diagram above is conceptualized in three aspects as is illustrated above.

Further, it is anticipated that self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy when effectively utilized, will positively enhance students' academic achievement. Effective utilization of self-awareness would enhance knowing who one is and can offer as a person and what is paramount in life that influences people in different ways. Self-regulation implies that ability of a leader to effectively manage difficult situations while discharging his civic duties whereas empathy refers to the ability of individuals (a leader) to understand and share both negative and positive emotions experienced by others. Further, organizations globally, regardless of its size and nature, seek to create, preserve, and enhance high performance among all of its associates, with the sole aim of achieving high productivity and success. The most effective way to achieve this goal is by perpetuating an atmosphere where people feel content, gratified, and enthusiastic (Goleman et al., 2013). Thus, in this kind atmosphere, a strong sensation of trust and unity emanates as people work together in teams to achieve a particular goal or mission.

Principals' Self-Awareness and Students' Academic Achievement

Rasheed (2015) asserted that self-awareness means knowing oneself as a person and what influences people in different ways. Further, it includes how our attitudes and beliefs can influence others. People are able to empathize others after learning and comprehending self-awareness process. In general, self-awareness is essential to personal learning process because it allows individuals to manage themselves and improve their performance. It also helps to set reasonable and realistic goals including career and personal life stress management; however, it starts from understanding and realizing what is the most importance of life (Palmiere, 2012). Goleman et al. (2013), noted that self-awareness means having a deep understanding of one's emotions, as well as one's strengths and limitations and one's values and motives. This self-understanding is determined by

the capacity of self-reflecting, which is defined as the ability to think things over in a quiet and peaceful time alone and sometimes even in a spiritual manner.

Some leaders may rely on prayer or meditation, while others may view this self-reflecting under a much more philosophical perspective. Once leaders achieve the ability to connect with their deeper selves through self-reflecting, they develop an ability of awareness that allows them to understand their surroundings better. As they acquire experience within the organization, their brains start to automatically extract appropriate approaches to specific situations in the workplace and learn to operate in an emotional and intuitive level. In this way, "the brain continually learns in a tacit mode, and begins to accumulate wisdom from a life's on-the-job experience" (Goleman et al., 2013). The ability to connect experience with one's emotional side makes self-awareness the main foundation for all the other domains. This domain is characterized by three competencies: emotional self-awareness (identifying one's own emotions and recognizing their impact; using emotions to guide decisions); accurate self-assessment (knowing one's strengths and limitations), and self-confidence (having a sense of self-worth and capabilities).

Organizations, be it a company, a school or even a nonprofit foundation, seek to establish, maintain, and enhance high performance among all of its members, with the purpose of increasing productivity and success. According to Goleman et al. (2013), achieving a pleasant and cooperative climate relies on the leadership. Leaders are the centerpiece of every organization; therefore, every aspect of their leadership will be reflected on the entire working party. In other words, their behaviors can motivate people or can bring them into antagonism and hostility. Notwithstanding, for leaders' to perform maximally to the success of an organization, it strongly depends on the quality of their relationships. It is the key and most indispensable part of the 'success puzzle. In addition, Goleman et al.(2013) asserted that leaders' success depends on the impact they have on others. Thus, their ability to guide and/or redirect people into the right pathway will successfully lead to the completion of the organization's mission.

Principals' Self-Regulation and Students' Academic Achievement

Self-regulation is one of the components of emotional intelligence. The school principals as the leader of the school are faced with different and even difficult situations while discharging their civic duties. If the situation is managed effectively to his own advantage, it means that the principal has self-regulation of his emotional intelligence. On the other hand, if the same challenging situation is not well managed by the principal, it can be said that the principal does not have self-regulation of his emotional intelligence. Therefore, self-regulation can be said to be the principals' ability to control and manage his emotions, especially in challenging situations. Self-regulation is not a personality trait which measures one's mental intelligence instead it is learnt through experience (Aemero, 2018 & Xiao et al, 2019). To promote active engagement in leadership among principals, positive educational outcomes and desirable characteristics need to be linked with the importance of self-regulated leadership approach as supported by previous studies (Lai, 2011& Whipp & Chiarelli in Sook, et al., 2020).

There are empirical studies that are carried out by scholars in attempt to show the relationship between emotional self-regulation and student academic performance. Although, there appears to be limited literature on this subject matter, but attempt would be made to explore related areas. First, Alexander (2023),who carried out a study to using descriptive research design to determine the influence of self-regulation on the academic achievement of students in Cagayan de Oro City. The findings of the study revealed that reflection stood out as having a significant influence on their academic achievement. Furthermore, the student's overall self-regulation skills significantly influence their academic achievement. More so, students with higher self-regulation, especially in the area of reflection, have higher academic achievements and students with self-regulation skills of reflection, planning, time management, and monitoring have various degrees of impact on academic achievement. In corroboration, Sahranavard et al. in Alexander (2018) highlighted the significant relationship between self-regulation and academic success. Students with higher self-

regulation skills are more likely to plan their studies carefully and be willing to study. Therefore, self-regulation is critical for academic success, particularly in senior high school where students face increased academic demands. Thus, this implies that principals with emotional self-regulation can play a pivotal role in enhancing students' capacity for self-regulation by instructing them on the growth mindset and the role of emotions in the learning process.

Principals' Empathy and students' Academic Performance

Empathy is the capacity to understand and share the feelings of others. Empathy is an inner feeling. It helps leaders to predict the behaviors of others. Leaders who are empathic demonstrate effort and persistence in discriminating others' thoughts and responding to them.

Eisenberg et al. (2014), defines empathy as the ability of individuals to understand and share both negative and positive emotions experienced by others. In support, Weisz and Cikara (2021) emphasize that empathy involves comprehending individuals' opinions, emotional states, and attending to their well-being. It is further considered as a significant component of interpersonal behaviors, as highlighted by (Amicucci et al., 2021). Cialdini et al. (1997) elaborated by saying that empathy encompasses specific abilities rather than mere attitudes. Further, Mercer and Reynolds (2002) corroborated that empathy is a multidimensional construct comprising ethical, cognitive, emotional, and interactional components, which has been theorized across various fields. Empathy can be categorized into two primary types: cognitive and affective, as described by Stojiljkovic, et al., (2012). Cognitive empathy pertains to understanding the emotional experiences of others, while affective empathy involves sharing their emotional experiences.

Leaders' emotional empathy can be applied in different areas of life endeavor. Empathy holds significant value in diverse professional domains, including education, medicine, and social work, due to its essential role in interpersonal interactions (Stojiljkovic et al. in Neda, 2023). Thus, both the cognitive and affective dimensions of empathy are crucial for occupations that involve providing emotional support to leaders within the school community. Studies have accentuated the significance of empathy in the development of principals, teachers and learners, encompassing ethical, communal, and educational aspects (Arghode et al., 2013). Rogers in Neda (2023) emphasized the profound impact of leaders' empathy on the learning process, stating that when principals and teachers possess the ability to understand students' reactions from their perspective and demonstrate sensitive awareness of the educational dynamics, it significantly enhances the likelihood of effective learning. Thus, principals' empathy is however expressed by Tettegah and Anderson (2007) to mean the capacity to engage with learners' concerns, comprehend their viewpoints, and perceive situations through their eyes. Furthermore, Wilson (2010) revealed that principals can foster an educational environment by addressing learners' needs and responding to their apprehensions. In a study investigating empathic teaching, Ikiz (2009) found that empathic teachers effectively manage learner aggression, enhance learners' psychological well-being, and mitigate violent behaviors.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, the ability of principals to understand and manage their own emotional reactions and their ability to influence the emotions of others is lacking. This can potentially lead to poor students' academic performance. This is because, any school principal that is not aware of how their emotions and the emotions of others may impact their leadership may not be able to achieve expected goals and objectives of the school. As a leader principal, he is expected to play strong role on social interactions which is systematically a function of emotional intelligence, and seize the ample opportunity to synergize with his subordinate, students and community stakeholders to bring about expected outcome in the school.

The above state of affairs is capable of generating negative comments among stakeholders regarding the negative outcome which is poor academic performance. Negative comments among stakeholders are clear indication that principals are not exercising the emotional intelligent role

thereby given room for poor academic performance of students. Some are of the opinion that principals have not discovered their emotional intelligent ability and that of others. This is evident in the research carried out by (Arif & Sohail, 2009; Bipath, 2008). In their findings, it was shown that a lack of emotional intelligence in principals can negatively impact teachers' attitudes toward schoolwork, which may result in underperforming schools. Further, The researcher is of the opinion that for principals to be improve students' academic performance, they must show advance level of emotional intelligence which forms the bases for this research study believing that after this study, solution to improving schools' outcomes can be found as well as serve as encouragement to principals in other to demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence. The researcher is further poised to consider the following variables to find out principals' level of emotional awareness, self-regulation and empathy. All these constitute the components of emotional intelligence.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to find out principals' self-awareness, self-regulation and emotional empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. Specifically, the study addressed the objectives:

1. Examine principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
2. Examine principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
3. Determine principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent does principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State?
3. To what extent does principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and each of them was tested at .05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprised all the 27 principals' (19 male and 8 female) in 27 junior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. The sample for this study comprised of 27 principals' (19 male and 8 female) in junior secondary schools in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State. The researcher adopted the census sampling technique to sample 27 schools out of 27 schools. The instrument used for data collection was entitled: "Principals' Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation and Empathy of their Emotional Intelligence for Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (PSSEEISAAQ)". Mean value of ≥ 2.50 whereas mean value < 2.50 was to be rejected, while H_{01-3} was tested using *t-test* statistics at 0.05 level of significance and when the *t-cal* is higher than the *t-crit* the hypotheses were rejected whereas, when *t-cal* is lower than *t-crit*, were accepted. The SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the data.

Results and Presentation of Data

Table 1: Mean Responses of the extent Principals' self-awareness of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

S/ N	Variables	Male Principals (n=19)			Female Principals (n=8)		
		X ₁	SD ₁	Remark	X ₂	SD ₂	Remark
1.	it helps to enhance personal learning process	2.58	1.02	HE	2.50	1.20	HE
2.	it helps individual leaders to manage themselves and improve their performance	3.11	1.20	VHE	2.88	.99	HE
3.	it helps principals to set realistic and reasonable goals	2.89	1.10	HE	2.63	.74	HE
4.	it enables principals to know their strength and limitations	3.16	.90	VHE	3.00	1.07	HE
5.	it helps principals guide their decisions	2.53	1.12	HE	3.38	1.06	VHE
Grand M & SD		2.85	1.07		2.88	1.01	

Source: Field survey, 2024, X=Mean; SD=Standard deviation, ≥ 2.50 accept, otherwise reject
Result in Table 1 above shows the mean response of male and female principals on the extent principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings, both respondents agreed to a high extent that self-awareness of principals' emotional intelligence helps to enhance personal learning process (2.58 and 2.50), it helps individual leaders to manage themselves and improve their performance (3.11 and 2.88), it helps principals to set realistic and reasonable goals (2.89 and 2.63), it enables principals to know their strength and limitations (3.16 and 3.00), among others, can enhance students' academic achievement in the study area.

Table 2: Mean Responses of Respondents on the extent Principals' self-regulation of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

S/ N	Variables	Male Principals (n=19)			Female Principals (n=8)		
		X ₁	SD ₁	Remark	X ₂	SD ₂	Remark
6.	it helps principals to have control over their emotions	2.95	1.13	HE	2.88	1.25	HE
7.	it helps principals to promote their active engagements in leadership	3.32	.82	VHE	3.25	.89	VHE
8.	it helps principals in the achievement of positive educational outcomes	3.11	.94	VHE	2.50	.93	HE
9.	it helps principals to enhance students capacity for self-regulation	2.79	1.08	HE	3.13	1.13	VHE
Grand M & SD		3.04	0.99		2.94	1.05	

Source: Field survey, 2024, X=Mean; SD=Standard deviation, ≥ 2.50 accept, otherwise reject
Result in Table 2 above shows the mean response of male and female principals on the extent principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in

Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings, both respondents agreed to a high extent that self-regulation of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to have control over their emotions (2.95 and 2.88), it helps principals to promote their active engagements in leadership (3.32 and 3.25), it helps principals in the achievement of positive educational outcomes (3.11 and 2.50), it helps principals to enhance students capacity for self-regulation (2.79 and 3.13), and others, can enhance students' academic achievement in the study area.

Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on the extent Principals' Empathy of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

S/ N	Variables	Male Principals (n=19)			Female Principals (n=8)		
		X ₁	SD ₁	Remark	X ₂	SD ₂	Remark
10.	it helps principals to share the feelings of others	2.84	1.01	HE	3.00	1.07	HE
11.	it helps principals to predict the behavior of his subordinates	2.95	1.13	HE	2.50	.76	HE
12.	it helps principals to comprehend subordinates opinion and emotional state	2.53	.84	HE	3.38	.74	VHE
13.	it helps principals to attend to subordinates well-being	3.05	1.27	HE	2.88	.64	HE
14.	it helps to promote emotional support to principals in the school community	2.89	1.20	HE	2.75	1.04	HE
Grand M & SD		2.85	1.09		2.90	0.85	

Source: Field survey, 2024, X=Mean; SD=Standard deviation, ≥ 2.50 accept, otherwise reject
Result in Table 5 above shows the mean response of male and female principals on the extent principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence enhance students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings, both respondents agreed to a high extent that empathy of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to share the feelings of others (2.84 and 3.00), it helps principals to predict the behavior of his subordinates (2.95 and 2.50), it helps principals to comprehend subordinates opinion and emotional state (2.53 and 3.38), it helps principals to attend to subordinates well-being (3.05 and 2.88), among others, can enhance students' academic achievement in the study area.

Test of Result of Hypotheses

Table 4: t-Test Analysis on the extent Principals' self-awareness of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

Categories	N	\bar{x}	SD	A	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male Principals	19	2.85	1.07					
Female Principals	8	2.88	1.01	0.05	25	0.07	1.96	Accept

Source: Field survey, 2024.

Table 4 shows that male principals had mean and standard deviation score of 2.85 and 1.07, while female principals had 2.88 and 1.01 respectively. The t-cal value was 0.07, while the t-crit was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that t-cal was lesser than t-crit, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Table 5: t-Test Analysis on the extent Principals' self-regulation of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

Categories	N	\bar{x}	SD	A	df	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>	Decision
Male Principals	19	3.04	0.99	0.05	25	0.23	1.96	Accept
Female Principals	8	2.94	1.05					

Source: *Field survey, 2024*

Table 4 shows that male principals had mean and standard deviation score of 3.04 and 0.99, while female principals had 2.94 and 1.05 respectively. The *t-cal* value was 0.23, while the *t-crit* was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that *t-cal* was lesser than *t-crit*, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Table 6: *t-Test* Analysis on the extent Principals' Empathy of their Emotional Intelligence enhance Students' Academic Achievement

Categories	N	\bar{x}	SD	A	df	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>	Decision
Male Principals	19	2.85	1.09	0.05	25	0.13	1.96	Accept
Female Principals	8	2.90	0.85					

Source: *Field survey, 2024*

Table 6 shows that male principals had mean and standard deviation score of 2.85 and 1.09, while female principals had 2.90 and 0.85 respectively. The *t-cal* value was 0.13, while the *t-crit* was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that *t-cal* was lesser than *t-crit*, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Findings of the Study

1. Result in Table 1 revealed that self-awareness of principals' emotional intelligence helps to enhance personal learning process.
2. Result in Table 2 revealed that self-regulation of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to have control over their emotions.
3. Result in table 3 revealed that empathy of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to share the feelings of others.
4. There was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-awareness of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
5. There was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' self-regulation of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.
6. There was no significant difference between the mean score of male and female principals' empathy of their emotional intelligence for students' academic achievement in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area of Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Result in Table 1 revealed that self-awareness of principals' emotional intelligence helps to enhance personal learning process. This findings is in conformity with the study of Goleman, *et al.*

(2013), were it was revealed that self-awareness deals with achieving a pleasant and cooperative climate which helps leaders (principals') reflect on the entire working party which their behaviors can motivate people. Palmiere (2012) corroborated that self-awareness of principals helps to set reasonable and realistic goals including career and personal life stress management; however, it starts from understanding and realizing what is the most importance of life.

Result in Table 2 revealed that self-regulation of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to have control over their emotions. This findings is in conformity with the study of Alexander (2023), who carried out a study on the influence of self-regulation on the academic achievement of students in Cagayan de Oro City revealed that reflection stood out as having a significant influence on their academic achievement as this influences their planning, time management, and monitoring. Though, Alexander's work was on students, this present work was carried out on principals which show similar results in significance. Lai, Whipp and Chiarelli in Sook et al., (2020), in support added that self-regulation of principals promotes active engagement in leadership, positive educational outcomes and desirable characteristics; it needs to be linked with the importance of self-regulated leadership approach as supported by previous studies.

Result in table 3 revealed that empathy of principals' emotional intelligence helps principals to share the feelings of others. This finding is in conformity with the study of Ikiz (2009) who found that empathic principals/teachers effectively manage learner aggression, enhance learners' psychological well-being, and mitigate violent behaviors. Also, Arghode, *et al.*, (2013) stressed on the significance of empathy were it was revealed that it helps in the development of principals, teachers and learners, encompassing ethical, communal, and educational aspects. More so, Rogers in Neda (2023) stated emphasizing on the profound impact of leaders' empathy on the learning process, were it was affirmed that when principals and teachers possess the ability to understand students' reactions from their perspective and demonstrate sensitive awareness of the educational dynamics, it significantly enhances the likelihood of effective learning.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study that principal emotional intelligence of self-awareness, self-regulations, and empathy enhances students' academic achievement in schools, it is obvious that if principals if principals utilizes their emotional intelligence in their line of duties, they will definitely realize institutional goals and objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it was recommended that:

1. Principals' should be encouraged to adopt self-awareness regularly in their line of duty.
2. Principals should be trained to how to apply self-regulation in the discharge of their duty. This will help principals to have control over their emotions.
3. The appointment of Principals should be based on principals level empathy. Sharing the feeling of others in the work place is creates a feeling of belongingness on the part of subordinates.

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