Exploratory Study of Demographic Variables, Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support among middle level Civil Servants in Uyo Metropolis

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Abstract
This study aimed at investigating the influence of demographic variables, emotional intelligence and organizational support among middle level civil servants in Akwa Ibom state. In the process of carrying out this investigation, a total of 374 middle level civil servants were purposively recruited to participate in the study. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 50 years with a mean age of 32.6 and standard deviation of 7.02. Out of the 374 civil servants selected, 194 (51.9%) were males while 180 (48.1%) were females. Two instruments were used to collect data; they include a 10-item emotional intelligence scale and the 17-item short version of organizational support scale. The data collected were analyzed using multiple linear regressions and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The result of the analysis revealed that the three study hypotheses were all retained as demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly and significantly predicted emotional intelligence and organizational support among middle level civil servants. Pearson correlation indicated that there is a direct moderate relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational support, r = 0.32, p <0.05. Concomitantly, findings were presented in line with research hypotheses. Discussions were made which highlighted the importance of aligning emotional intelligence training with organizational policies to improve employee well-being, support, and workplace effectiveness. The study also recommends that Human Resource Managers should integrate demographic considerations into emotional intelligence initiatives to promote inclusiveness. It also urges the government to provide regular workshops on emotional intelligence and empathetic leadership. These recommendations were based on the study's findings, which emphasize the significant role of emotional intelligence in enhancing organizational support and improving job performance among civil servants in Akwa Ibom State.

Key Words: Demographic Variables, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, Civil servant.

Introduction
Organizational support is one of the factors that are suspected to be relevant in promoting employees' job performance. It has to do with how organization meets up with the needs of the employees and how the employees perceive such. If the support is favorable, employees are

likely to be effective with respect to their job performance. This probably was one of the reasons Eisenberger, Huntington and Sowa (2012) stated that the concept of organizational support may help to explain employee's job performance to their organization. It therefore refers to employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Organizational support has been found to have important consequences on employee performance and well-being. Organizational support therefore is influenced by, for example, the organization's policies and procedures (Junak, 2007). Based on this viewpoint, Organization support may be encouraged by employees' tendency to ascribe humanlike characteristics to the organization. Levinson (1965) for instance noted that actions by agents of the organization are often viewed as indications of the organizations' intent rather than solely as action of a particular individual. Therefore, organizational support considers the development, nature and outcomes as it may influence job performance.

Research on organizational support began with the observation that if managers are concerned with their employees' commitment to the organization, employees are focused on the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986. Organizational support theory (OST: Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995) holds that employees develop organizational support in order to meet needs for approval, esteem and affiliation, and to assess the benefits of increased work effort. Organizational support increases employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance will be rewarded. Behavioral outcomes of organizational support include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism and turnover intensions.

When employees have high levels of organizational support, the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960) motivates them to help the organization reach its goals and objectives (Eisenberger et al, 1986). Also, when one person treats another well, the reciprocity norm obliges the return of favorable treatment (Gouldner, 1960). To the extent that both the employee and the employer apply the reciprocity norm to their relationship, favorable treatment received by either party is reciprocated, leading to beneficial outcomes for both. Consistent with Eisenberger's proposition, research reveals that employees with high levels of organizational support are more committed to the organizations they work for and more satisfied with their jobs (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Such employees are less likely to be tardy, absent, or resign (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003); and have higher in-role performance (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998).

Aside organizational support, emotional Intelligence (EI) is another essential tool for successful and fulfilling life if used properly within and outside of organizational setting. In day-to-day life, emotions affect relationship with other people as well as one's self-identity and ability to complete a task. To put this in proper context, (Goleman 1999) popularized the concept of emotional intelligence which refers to the capacity for recognizing one's own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions effectively in ourselves and others. Emotional competence is a learned ability that is grounded in emotional intelligence that contributes to effective performance at work.

The first author on emotional intelligence as a science was, Daniel Goleman, a psychologist who wrote for the New York Times. He modeled and extended the concept of emotional intelligence in his book, 'Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ for Character, Health and Lifelong Achievement' which he wrote in 1995. Emotional Intelligence transformed progressively from a mere notion into a dominant theory in many research areas within which its effects on human behavior were analyzed. Recently, emotional intelligence received much interest in organizational support. Results of these studies indicated that emotional intelligence played a pivotal role in organizational support. This relationship was further emphasized by many emotional intelligence theorists who asserted that managers who are emotionally intelligent were highly supported by their organization (Goleman, 1995; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004; Weisinger, 1998). Goleman (1998) defined emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships." Emotional intelligence is the ability to

monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). The importance of emotions in workplace has been established by many scholars. As they have investigated the explanations of emotional intelligence in organizational environment in classical management theory and practice to understand the abilities of human being. Over three decades of psychological assessment intervention and research has justified the importance of taking social and emotional competencies into consideration when attempting to predict occupational effectiveness. Emotional intelligence has been claimed to validly predict a variety of successful behaviors of human being at workplace. Further, it is suggested that emotional intelligence is necessary for recruitment policies and decisions in various organizational activities. Many organizations today look at emotional intelligence among the employees even before hiring them to run the organization effectively. Emotional intelligence is useful in situations and environments purely for the fact that emotional competencies initiate, motivate, and persuade individuals. However, there is a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and various organizational variables such as job satisfaction, job performance, quality of life, interpersonal relationships, job quality, job involvement and management of occupational stress, communication effectiveness and motivation, job satisfaction, and demographic variables programs.

At present, there is very little empirical literature on emotional intelligence within the context of the educational administrations, particularly on relationships, job satisfaction, and demographic variables and how manager's emotional intelligence is affected on communication effectiveness and job satisfaction, which have attracted considerable attention in the organizational literature. Empirical studies found that emotional intelligence increases the service quality of the service provider (Naeem et al., 2008). These review strengthened the notion that emotional intelligence was an essential concept for the success of an organization. Some of the empirical studies confirmed that there existed a significant difference in emotional intelligence among males and females (Petrides and Furnham, 2000; Mandell and Perwani, 2003). The objectives of the study were therefore based on the opinion that emotional intelligence can relate to the organizational support an individual receives; the study also aimed at examining the role demographic variables play on predicting emotional intelligence and organizational support.

Method
Participants
Three hundred and seventy four (374) civil servants were purposively selected to participate in the study. Of this, Out of the 374 participants selected, 194 (51.9%) were males while 180 (48.1%) were females. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 50 years with a mean age of 32.6 and standard deviation of 7.02.

Instruments
Indicate which section of questionnaire takes care of demographic factors since they are part of the study.

Emotional Intelligence scale
This was measured by a 10-item emotional intelligence by Davies, Lane, Devonport, and Scott (2014). The instrument is rated on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by 1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree*. Also, using convergent validity, the scale was correlated with a 33-item emotional intelligent scale by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998).

Participants with score up above the norm (40.09) were termed those with high emotional intelligence while those that obtained scores below (40.09) were termed those that are of low emotional intelligence. The Cronbach Alpha in the main study was 0.46 which indicates a weak but acceptable internal consistency. In order to evaluate the test-retest reliability of the measure in a pilot study, the authors of the 33-item scale asked 22 female and six male college

students from the southeastern United States, with an average age of 32.00, S.D. = 10.13, to complete the scale. They completed the measure twice, with a two-week interval between measurements. Two-week test-retest reliability was 0.78. They also arrived at a predictive validity of, r (63) = 0.32, p<0.01. However, a Cronbach Alpha of 0.67 and a split-half correlation between forms of 0.46 was obtained.

Organizational Support Scale
This was measured with a 17-item short version of organizational support scale by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, (1986) which was validated and standardized by Onyishi (2006). Participants with score above the norm (57.99) were termed those with high organizational support while those that obtained scores below (57.99) were termed those that are of low organizational support. Additionally, a Cronbach Alpha of 0.63 was obtained for the main study indicating an acceptable internal consistency. In a pilot study, the scale was correlated with 12-item organizational Empowerment Scale by Matthews, Diaz and Cole (2003) in order to determine if the organizational support scale has convergent validity. The authors reported a coefficient alpha of 0.91 on the scale. The response options were based on a five point Likert: 1, "strongly disagree" through to 5, "strongly agree". However, the pilot study reported a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.62 and a split-half correlation between forms of 0.38.

Procedure
Before conducting the main study, a pilot study was conducted. Before the administration of the test instruments, the researcher obtained permission from the Head of the various Departments selected using stratified random sampling technique. The instrument was administered on the participants at their various offices after obtaining informed consent from them. Every civil servant met in the office was a potential participant and as such was approached to participate in the study. The researcher assured the participants of confidentiality and their right to discontinue participation at any time, for the study is for academic purpose.

The civil servants that were met in the office on the day of the study were identified by the Head of Department those who are middle level civil servant. Those that were identified were allowed to participate in the study.

Method of Data Analysis
A multiple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis. This was used because it allowed the investigation of the moderating effort of one variable on the others. The analysis was carried out using the version 20 of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Statistics
A multiple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis. This was used because it allowed the investigation of the moderating effort of one variable on the others and how they influence emotional intelligence and organizational support. The analysis was carried out using the version 20 of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Result
Hypothesis 1: Demographic variables will significantly predict emotional intelligence of middle level civil servants in Uyo.

Table 1: Showing multiple linear regressions of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on emotional intelligence.

Predictors	Outcome	β	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2	F	df	Sig
Gender		1.17	0.16	3.09	<0.05				
MS	E.I	0.92	0.13	2.40	<0.05	0.078	7.82	4	<0.05
EQ		0.50	0.18	3.39	<0.05				
RE		0.87	0.06	1.07	>0.05				

NB: MS= Marital Status, EQ= Educational Qualification, RE= Religion, EI= Emotional Intelligence

The results presented in Table 1 shows that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) yielded a coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.280 and multiple correlation square (R^2) of 0.078. This implies that 7.8% of the variance in emotional intelligence was accounted for by the combined effects of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion). Table 1 also indicates that gender was an independent positive predictor of emotional intelligence (â = 1.17; t = 3.09; $p<0.05$), as well as marital status (â = 0.92; t = 2.40; $p<0.05$), and educational qualification (â = 0.50; t = 3.39; $p<0.05$); however, religion did not independently predict emotional intelligence (â = 0.87; t = 1.07; $p>0.05$).

Using the 'Stepwise' method, gender appeared to be the best predictor of emotional intelligence accounting for 3.9% out of the 7.8% combined variance in emotional intelligence among middle level civil servants; quickly followed by educational qualification and marital status as the second and third best predictors of emotional intelligence respectively. Further, Table 1 indicates that there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on emotional intelligence (F $(4,373)$ = 7.82; $p<0.05$). This implies that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly and significantly predicted emotional intelligence among middle level civil servants. Therefore, the first hypothesis was retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational support of middle level civil servants in Uyo.

Table 2: Showing the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between emotional intelligence and organizational support of middle level civil servants..

Variables	Mean	SD	r	Sig
EI	40.09	3.64		
			0.324	<0.01**
OS	57.99	7.04		

NB: EI= Emotional Intelligence, OS = Organizational Support
From the result in Table 2, the correlation analysis of Pearson reveals that there is a direct moderate relationship between the criterion variables. That means, as the higher the emotional intelligence of workers is, the higher the workers organizational support and vice versa, r = 0.32, p <0.05. Hence, the second hypothesis was also retained.

Hypothesis 3: Demographic variables will significantly predict organizational support of middle level civil servants in Uyo.

Table 3: Showing multiple linear regressions of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on organizational support.

Predictors	Outcome	β	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2	F	df	Sig
Gender		-3.32	-0.24	-4.65	<0.05				
MS	O.S	4.70	0.33	6.50	<0.05	0.125	13.17	4	<0.05
EQ		0.53	0.09	1.91	>0.05				
RE		-0.60	-0.02	-0.39	>0.05				

NB: MS= Marital Status, EQ= Educational Qualification, RE= Religion, OS=

Organizational Support.

The results presented in Table 3 clearly indicates that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) yielded a coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.353 and multiple correlation square (R^2) of 0.125. In other words, 12.5% of the variance in organizational support was accounted for by the combined effects of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion). Table 3 also indicates that gender was an independent negative predictor of organizational support (â = -3.32; t = -4.65; p<0.05), just as marital status was also an independent (â = 0.92; t = 2.40; p<0.05).

However, educational qualification was not an independent predictor of organizational support (â = 0.53; t = 1.91; p>0.05) just as religion did not independently predict organizational support (â = -0.60; t = -0.39; p>0.05). Once more, employing the 'Stepwise' method revealed that marital status was the best predictor of organizational support accounting for 6.9% out of the 12.5% combined variance in organizational support among middle level civil servants in Uyo. In addition, Table 3shows that there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on organizational support (F (4,373) = 13.17; p<0.05). The implication of this is that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly predicted organizational support among middle level civil servants. Conclusively, the third hypothesis which states that Demographic variables will significantly predict organizational support of civil servants in Uyo was confirmed.

Discussion/Conclusion

The study investigated the Influence of Demographic Variables on Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support among Civil Servants in Uyo Metropolis. Firstly, it was hypothesized that Demographic variables will significantly predict emotional intelligence of middle level civil servants in Uyo. The result confirmed the hypothesis; implying that there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on emotional intelligence (F (4,373) = 7.82; p<0.05). This implies that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly and significantly predicted emotional intelligence among middle level civil servants.

The finding is in consonance with the findings of (Naeem et al., 2008) who found that demographic variables increases the service quality of the service provider .These review strengthened the notion that emotional intelligence was an essential concept for the success of a business. Some of the empirical studies confirmed that there existed a significant difference in emotional intelligence among males and females (Petrides and Furnham, 2000; Mandell and Perwani, 2003). It was further hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational support of middle level civil servants in Uyo.

The hypothesis was also confirmed implying that, as the higher the emotional intelligence of workers is, the higher the workers organizational support and vice versa.

The finding is consistent with results from previous studies that found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational support. When the organization gives resources to employees in a voluntary manner rather than under circumstances beyond their control, employees will view such aid as being genuinely valued and respected by the organization.

Since supervisors are often viewed as organizational agents, favorable treatment from supervisors should enhance employees' organizational support, however, this relationship is mediated by employees' perception of the degree to which supervisors' actions are designated by organizations, as opposed to their own.

More so, this finding is in line with (Eisenberger et al, 1986) study that found exposure of employees who have high levels of organizational support, the reciprocity norm) motivates them to help the organization reach its goals and objectives. The results have much in common with the Social exchange theorists which have alluded to employment as the trade of effort and loyalty for tangible benefits and social rewards (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983).

Lastly, it was hypothesized that demographic variables will significantly predict organizational support of middle level civil servants in Uyo. The result shows that there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on organizational support (F (4,373) = 13.17; p<0.05). The implication of this is that demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly predicted organizational support among middle level civil in servants. Therefore, the third hypothesis which states that Demographic variables will significantly predict organizational support of civil servants in Uyo was confirmed.

Conclusively, there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) on emotional intelligence.

Also, the higher the emotional intelligence of workers is, the higher the workers organizational support and vice versa. Lastly, demographic variables (gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion) jointly predicted organizational support among middle level civil servants in Akwa ibom State..

Recommendations

1. The Human Resource Manager should lead in incorporating demographic factors such as gender, marital status, education, and religion into HR initiatives. Tailoring emotional intelligence training, support programs, and engagement strategies to these differences will promote inclusiveness and improve overall program effectiveness.
2. The government should organize regular training and workshops focused on developing emotional intelligence among civil servants. This can help improve interpersonal skills, communication, and job satisfaction, thereby enhancing perceived organizational support.
3. Human resource Managers should take steps to ensure that employees feel genuinely valued by the organization. This could involve recognizing employee achievements, offering meaningful feedback, and involving staff in key decisions, which collectively strengthen perceptions of support.
4. The Federal government should provide training for supervisors in empathetic leadership and ensure that their actions align with organizational policies to maintain trust and consistency in support delivery.
5. Senior Management staff should take the lead in fostering a workplace culture where employees feel their efforts are reciprocated with respect, recognition, and adequate resources. By modeling these values and ensuring supportive systems, they can drive higher levels of employee commitment, satisfaction, and overall productivity.
6. The government should strengthen and implement policies that will promote work-life balance, taking into account the impact of marital status on emotional intelligence and individuals' perceptions of support. These policies should be designed to address the diverse needs of the workforce and foster a more supportive and emotionally intelligent work environment.

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