

The Role of Emotional Intelligence among Principals of Secondary Schools: A Case of Plateau State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The study considers the role of emotional intelligence among principals of secondary schools: a case of plateau state. This study administered a questionnaire survey of 217 of principals of secondary schools. Exploratory Factor analysis, correlation and hierarchical regression analyses were performed. Results revealed that the contribution self-management and self-awareness are significantly and positively related to the performance of principals of secondary schools. This study was conducted in plateau state Nigeria. More so, investigation could be conducted to cover other states in the country. The study employed a cross-sectional approach. A longitudinal approach should be employed to study the trend over a period of time. Finally, the two factors identified in motivating principals' behaviour may not be adequate in explaining the phenomenon. Hence, other factors should be considered in subsequent research. Since responsibilities of the principals is a crucial to meet the needs of human resources, it is relevant for the principals to be sure of their state of mind for better performance. Hence, with diverse programmes offered by the government to encourage the performance of the principals to have positive mind-set for high performance. This study contributes to the dearth of evidence of emotional intelligence elements on principals of secondary schools and adding to the body of literature by investigating their ability to manage conflict.*

KEYWORDS: Conflict management; emotional intelligence; Self-management; self-awareness

INTRODUCTION

The world over, studies recognize that leadership is an important part of everyday activity as positive results continue to emerge from the scholars on different aspects of leadership styles, encompassed in Bass's (1985) in recent times leadership paradigm include, transformational, transactional and laissez-faire. One of the attractive elements in the study of leadership is the unrelenting efforts to role of emotional intelligence to successful leadership of principals of secondary schools. Traditionally, Technical experience and intellectual quotient (IQ) may be seen as the only two measures of managerial success. Interpersonal skills also have become an essential component to effective leadership (Goleman, 1998). In this study it is important to understand the effects of one's emotional intelligence in terms of (self-awareness and self-management) and the potential role emotional intelligence has on principals' leadership styles deserves attention.

Emotional intelligence is understood by different scholars but for the purpose of this study, it can be defined as a multifunctional array of interrelated emotional, personal, and social abilities which influence our overall ability to actively and effectively cope with demands and pressures (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). Dulewicz and Higgs (1999) define emotional intelligence as being aware of and managing one's own feelings and emotions; being sensitive to and influencing others; sustaining one's motivation; and balancing one's motivation and drive with intuitive, conscientious, and ethical behavior. Successful leadership today is about how well leaders manage themselves and how well they manage or deal with others. Successful leadership is not about intellectual ability or technical expertise; it is about personal characteristics and human qualities that include empathy and compassion, flexibility and influence. Today's leaders must have the ability and flexibility to adapt to an ever changing workforce, and it's these human abilities that set apart successful leaders. Emotional intelligence has become as important as, if not more important than, intellectual quotient (IQ) and cognitive abilities. Effective leadership is essential to an organization's success; hence, the ability to identify and define effective leadership is crucial. Conventional wisdom denotes technical expertise, superior performance, and established experience translated into effective leadership. Today, successful leaders are defined by inspiring and motivating others, promoting a positive work environment, perceiving and understanding emotions, fostering an organizational climate in which people turn challenging opportunities into successes, and so forth. Kouzes and Posner (1995, p. 40) characterize, "true leaders tap into people's hearts and minds, not merely their hands and wallets." Throughout their research of more than 20 years, Kouzes and Posner (2003, p. 13) found that "credibility is the foundation of leadership." Their work led to the development of a five-practice theory of leadership termed the "Five Practices of Leadership." Kouzes and Posner (2003) believe that leadership can and should be learned, advocating that these five practices are common to all successful people in leadership positions. Each of the five practices contains two behavioural descriptors designed to define the actions or "commitments" necessary to convey exemplary leadership:

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Theoretical Review

Transformational leadership theory

Transformational leadership theory assumes that leadership approach can cause change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leader's vision and aspiration. More so, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance.

James MacGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the concept of transforming leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, but this term is now used in organizational psychology as well. According to Burns, transforming leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation". According to Burns, the transforming approach creates significant change in the life of people and organizations. It redesigns perceptions and values, and changes expectations and aspirations of employees. It is based on the leader's personality, traits and ability to make a change through example, articulation of an energizing vision and challenging goals. Transforming leaders are idealized in the sense that they are a moral exemplar of working towards the benefit of the team, organization and/or community.

Goethals, Sorenson, and Burns (2004) theorized that transforming and transactional leadership were mutually exclusive styles. Transactional leaders usually do not strive for cultural change in the organization but they work in the existing culture while transformational leaders can try to change organizational culture.

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-awareness and conflict management

A number of studies have found positive effects of emotional intelligence on conflict management in organizations. Several other studies contest the notion that leaders with high emotional intelligence are associated with conflict management in organizations. This study account for some pertinent studies relating to self-awareness and self-management dimensions of emotional intelligence and conflict management has been reported here:

The study conducted by Afzalur and Clement (2002) in seven countries revealed that self-awareness has no significant relationship with conflict resolution style. Similarly, Carmeli (2003) observed the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction,

organizational commitment and work-family conflict in ninety-eight senior managers. The result indicates that employees with high self-awareness are more able to balance work-family conflict as they recognize and manage feelings of conflict as they occur.

Additionally, Jordan and Troth (2011) documented the utility of self-awareness for predicting conflict resolution styles, emotional intelligence dimension of self-awareness was negatively linked with conflict resolution methods more so, Lenaghan, Buda and Eisner (2007) supported the finding that possession of self-awareness will act as a protector variable of one's wellbeing in the face of work-family conflict. The results revealed that higher self-awareness positively influence conflict management. Srinivasan (2019) in their research paper investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles of management students. The study found that different problems demand different styles of handling and self-awareness of students is capable of applying the different style of conflict management styles as the situation demands.

Ayoko, Callan and Hartel (2008) examined the dimensions of conflict and emotions by integrating features of conflict management. They proposed through their study that teams with high self-awareness were associated with increased task and relationship conflict and increased conflict intensity. Webb, Koster, Stuart, Reich and Stewardson (2018) examined the extent to which emotional intelligence is related to conflict management within mentoring relationships. The results indicated that self-awareness has no significant correlation with conflict management.

Punia (2011) conducted a study on 250 executives in the National Capital Region Delhi, and found that self-awareness of emotional intelligence has no significant relationship with conflict management. Srivastva and Bharamanaikar (2004) examined the relationship of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution. The results showed that self-awareness has no significantly with conflict management and success. Rosete and Ciarrochi (2015) in his research could not establish a link between self-awareness and workplace measures of conflict management.

Against this backdrop, Rego, Sousa, Cunha, Correia, and Saur (2007) in their study examined the relationship between leaders' self-awareness and conflict management. They found that emotional intelligence alone cannot stimulate conflict management abilities of their teams. Godse and Thingujam (2010) examined the relationship between conflict resolution styles and emotional intelligence dimension of self-awareness. The research revealed that self-management was significantly correlated with the integrating style of conflict resolution. However, the relationship between self-awareness and conflict management has not been given attention in this context. Nonetheless, from the previous studies, we hypothesise

H1 there is a positive significant relationship between self-awareness and conflict management among secondary schools principals of secondary schools.

Self-management and conflict management

A study conducted by Young (2015) investigates the effect of emotional intelligence on conflict management, organizational commitment, and customer service behaviour in Jordan. The results indicate that all emotional intelligence dimensions of self-management, social awareness positively and significantly affect all employees 'work outcomes and conflict management.

Similarly, Abas, Surdick, Otto, and Wood (2014) research was carried out to study emotional intelligence and conflict management styles. From the correlation analysis, there was no significant correlation between supervisors self-management ratings of themselves and the ratings given by their subordinates. In a study of emotional intelligence and conflict management, Schutte's et al. (2001) found that people with higher self-management have higher empathetic perspective taking and self-monitoring in social situations, social skills, cooperation toward partners, levels of affection in relationships, marital satisfaction, and conflict management in relationships. Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (2000) in a study conducted on conflict management and emotional intelligence found that people with high self-management could be more socially effective than their counterparts and thus, could be more skilful in motivating people to achieve goals, aims and missions in organizations.

Singh (2017) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management among. The findings from the study revealed that self-management has no significant relationship with management of conflict. Furthermore, Bala Subramanian, Ghatala and Nair (2008) conducted a study in Apollo Health City, Hyderabad to investigate the relationship of emotional intelligence with organizational conflict management as well as the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness. The findings suggested that self-management significantly correlates with conflict management. Schofield (2016) in his study on emotional intelligence and conflict management in secondary school in London contended that emotional intelligence has no significant relationship. Nebgen and Palmer (2009) conducted a research on self-management and conflict management toward the educational administrator in secondary in U.S.A. The study found that self-management dimension of emotional intelligence to conflict management has no significant correlation.

Fleetwood (2007) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and conflict management styles and strategies in South Africa and found that self-management conflict management have a significantly relationship between both variables. Makaye and Ndofirepi (2012) conducted a research on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution between heads and teachers in masvingo Zimbabwe. Findings from the study stated that self-management has a positive impact on conflict resolution.

Bonkovskaya (2012) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies to increase the organizational effectiveness in Nordic companies in Iceland. Finding show that self-management dimensions of emotional intelligence does not correlate with

conflict management. Similarly, the relationship between self-management and conflict management among principals of secondary schools has not been given adequate focus in plateau. Nevertheless, from the previous studies, we hypothesised

H2 there is a positive significant relationship between self-management and conflict management among secondary schools principals of secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

Design, population and sample

A cross-sectional survey design was employed in this study, and confined to self-employed graduates across North-Central Nigeria. The choice of this region was because whereas as it is predominantly civil service region, the rate of unemployment among graduates remains a threat. A sample of 217 head of secondary schools was drawn from a list of principals (Ministry of education, 2018). The participants were selected using stratified random sampling and systematic random sampling; and data were collected through a personal effort which account to the response rate of 91.7%. The data collection approach was chosen because the limited availability and efficiency of postal and communication services in Nigeria could not allow questionnaires to be mailed, faxed or couriered to respondents without causing selection bias.

RESULTS

Table 2: The frequencies and percentages of the demographic data of respondents

| Factors | Particulars | Frequencies | Percentage % |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Gender | Male | 115 | 56.4 |
| | Female | 89* | 43.6 |
| Age range | 18-25 years | 97 | 47.5 |
| | 26-35years | 27 | 13.2 |
| | 36-45years | 50 | 24.5 |
| | 46 – 55years | 20 | 9.8 |
| | 55 years and above | 10 | 4.9 |
| Marital Status | Single | 93 | 45.6 |
| | Married | 111 | 54.4 |
| Position | Principal | 30 | 14.7 |
| | Vice Principal | 42 | 20.6 |
| | Dean of Studies | 27 | 13.2 |
| | Form masters | 36 | 17.6 |
| | Game master | 19 | 9.3 |
| Work Experience | Class Teachers | 50 | 24.5 |
| | 1-3years | 25 | 12.3 |
| | 4-6years | 70 | 34.3 |
| | 7-10years | 69 | 33.8 |
| | 11years and above | 40 | 19.6 |
| Qualifications | NCE | 64 | 31.4 |
| | B.Sc | 84 | 41.2 |
| | Masters Degree | 52 | 25.5 |
| | PhD | 4 | 2.0 |

Source: Field Data (2018)

From the table above demographic, most of the respondents (principals) of secondary schools are male indicates 115 which represent 89% while the remaining females are 89 representing 43.6% meaning that majority of the males are principals of public and private secondary schools in northern zone. the respondents majority age bracket fell between 18-25years, followed by 20 respondents (9.8) fell between the age of 46-55years, then 26-35years representing 27(13.2%), while the remaining 10(4.9%) were 55years and above. Out of the total respondents 111(54.4%) were married while the Remaining 93(45.6%) were single. 30 respondents representing 14.7% were Principals, 42(20.6%) were vice principals, 27(13.2) were Dean of Studies, 36(17.6) were Form Masters, 19(9.3%) were Game Masters while the remaining 50 (24.5%) were Class Teachers which form the majority of the respondents. 103 respondents representing 50.5% received the income within the range of N11,000-N20,000, 35(17.2) received within the range of N21,000-N30,000, 46(22.5) received within the range of N31,000-N40,000, only 1 respondents receives within the range of N1,000-N10,000 while the remaining 19(9.3) receives the highest income which fell within the range of N41,000 and above.

25(12.3) have been working for the period of 1-3years, 70(34.3) was for the period of 4-6years, 69(33.8) was for the period of 7-10years while the remaining 40 (19.6) respondents had a working experience of 11 years and above. 64(31.4%) were NCE holders, 84(41.2) were B.Sc holders, 52(25.5) were Masters Degree holder, while the remaining 4(2.0%) were PhD holders. From the sample characteristics, the majority indicates that those who are more as principals of public and private secondary schools in northern plateau state.

Measures and questionnaire

The study used 5 Likert-scale questionnaire, designed to measure the opinion or attitude of a respondent to obtain self-reported information. The questionnaire designed is based on the adapted and modified questionnaire on conflict management and emotional intelligent (self-awareness and self-management).

MEASUREMENT AND OPERATIONALISATION

As explained in the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, the independent variable is emotional intelligence (self-awareness and self-management) while the dependent variable is conflict management. These variables were measured using item scales developed by previous scholars drawn from existing literature and theories. Modifications were made where necessary to suit the study context.

Emotional intelligence

The measurement items were adapted and modified to suit the context of this research (Burn, 1978). Example of the items are; I always know which instinct to use in handling issues around me;, I am excellent at empathizing with someone else problem;, When I am terribly angry at someone I consider my actions very carefully;, When I feel that I am too impulsive I tell myself to think before I do something about it; Respondents were required to indicate their degree of

agreement or disagreement, with prescribed items anchored on a 5 point likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Conflict management

Items related to conflict management were adapted and modified based on context (Bass, 1985). The measurement items were adapted from the literature with minor modifications and rewording to ensure contextual consistency. Example of the items are: I feel that conflict is a negative experience for an organization;, When I resolve a conflict, it improves my relationship with people; Respondents were required to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement, with prescribed items anchored on a 5 point likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Control variables – the study predicts self-employment among graduates, and as such, we included age of the respondent, gender and highest qualification in the regression analysis to control for confounding effects associated with them. Age of respondent was controlled using four discrete categories (18-25years, 26-35years, 36-45years, 55years and above). Gender of respondents was controlled using dichotomous scale (male, female). While education level was controlled for using four discrete categories (higher national diploma, bachelor's degree, masters, PhD).

Tests for validity and reliability

Convergent validity was establish through an exploratory factor analysis each variable was reported using principle component analysis and varimax rotation method. Factor loadings below 0.5 coefficients are suppressed to avoid extracting factors with weak loadings. Exploratory Factor analysis was performed on emotional intelligence (self-awareness and self-management). The reported that KMO and Bartlett's (1954) test of sampling adequacy was used to assess whether the questionnaire items used different from each other and reliable factors (Kaiser, 1974). Conflict management in this study was treated as a uni-dimensional variable. The results indicates that [KMO, Bartlett test, and total variance explained for emotional intelligence =KMO=.743 Bartlett test=7274.616, Total Variance Explain=56.41%]

Cronbach's α coefficients were computed to determine the internal consistency (reliability) of the scales of the study variables. The standardized Cronbach's α coefficients for all the scales, are all found to be above 0.7 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) (emotional intelligent α =.792, and conflict management α =.86).The following steps were taken to detect whether common methods variance (CMV) is present as it leads to a false internal consistency. First, the items on the dependent variable were present before the independent variables. Second, dependent, independent and control variables in this study are not similar in content. Third, the anchors for the dependent, independent and control variables are not similar. Third, anonymity of the respondents was assured.

The tests for regression assumptions were run to assess the suitability of the data to perform regression analysis. In doing that, normality, linearity, homogeneity and multi-collinearity were assessed using statistical and graphical means. The results showed that all the parametric assumptions meet the threshold.

| Factors | Percent of Variance | Code | Scale items | Factor Loadings | Mean | Std. Dev. | AVE |
|---------|--|------|---|-----------------|------|-----------|------|
| | Emotional Intelligent (Self-awareness) | SA7 | Correct instinct to use in handling issues | .726 | 4.36 | 0.96 | 0.68 |
| | | SA8 | Being an excellent listener | .607 | 4.25 | 1.04 | |
| | | SA9 | Empathizing with someone else problem | .556 | 3.53 | 1.51 | |
| | | SA10 | Adapting with variety of people | .540 | 4.61 | 1.74 | |
| | Note: Based on the rotation sums of squared loadings, total variance explained = 43.38 percent, Kaiser-Meyer – Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.645; Bartlett test of sphericity = 27.592, significance = 0.000. | | | | | | |
| | Self-management | SM3 | Ability to ask questions | .606 | 4.62 | 1.83 | 0.57 |
| | | SM4 | Seeing working with difficult people as a change to win them over | .594 | 3.62 | 0.63 | |
| | | SM5 | Ability to discover disunity among team | .665 | 3.36 | 1.74 | |
| | | SM6 | Ability to tell the mood of others | .613 | 4.35 | 1.21 | |
| | Note: Based on the rotation sums of squared loadings, total variance explained = 51.40 percent, Kaiser-Meyer – Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.515; Bartlett test of sphericity = 20.578, significance = 0.000. | | | | | | |
| | Conflict Management | CM3 | Fear of confrontation | .655 | 4.29 | 1.28 | 0.58 |
| | | CM4 | Ability to feel that conflict get someone hurt | .725 | 4.18 | 1.39 | |
| | | CM6 | Ability to make someone comfortable when resolving conflict | .570 | 3.16 | 0.93 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----|---|------|------|------|--|
| | | CM8 | Ability to express true feeling when resolving conflict | .538 | 3.72 | 0.94 | |
| | | CM9 | Ability to ask questions when clarifying statement in Conflict resolution | .590 | 4.37 | 1.42 | |
| | Note: Based on the rotation sums of squared loadings, total variance explained = 36.350 percent, Kaiser-Meyer – Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.743; Bartlett test of sphericity = 7274.616, significance = 0.000. | | | | | | |

It is important from the factor analysis that, each item loadings (above 0.5) on the rotated component matrix. This theoretically indicates the convergent validity of emotional intelligent having items measuring separate dimensions at (self-awareness and self-management). More so, reliability tests relating to each component scale were satisfactory, with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of all study variables having 0.7 and above. The four factors were labelled giving the percentages of the total variance explain as follows, emotional intelligent self-awareness (43.38%) and self-management (51.40%) respectively. This implies that self-awareness have more explanatory power than self-management to cause variability to the main construct emotional intelligence.

RESULTS

Correlation analysis

Looking at the correlation results in table 3 it showed a positive and significant association between the study variables (Emotional intelligence and conflict management => $r=.324$, $p<.05$; self-awareness and conflict management => $r=.191$, $p<.05$). This provides support to hypothesis 1 which states that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management among principals of secondary schools. This suggests that, positive changes in emotional intelligence are associated with positive changes in emotional intelligence among principals of secondary schools. The results further show that hypotheses 2, which cover the relationship between the elements of political skills and conflict management are also positive and significant

Similarly, the descriptive statistics generated in this study result from table 3 included means and standard deviations and are presented in Table 3. On a 5-point Likert scale, the means for emotional intelligence and conflict management, self-awareness and conflict management, self-management and conflict management and political skills and conflict management are 4.07, 4.07, 3.94, 3.10 and 3.79 with standard deviations of .008, 0.34, 0.60, 0.76 and 0.65 respectively. as prescribed by Field (2009), when standard deviation are small compared to mean values, it is evident that the data points are close to the means, and hence, calculated means highly represent the observed data.

Table.... provides the inter item correlations of the study variables.

| Variables | Mean | Std Dev | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------|------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---|
| Emotional Intelligent | 4.07 | 0.38 | 1 | | | | |
| Self-Awareness | 4.07 | 0.34 | .463** | 1 | | | |
| Self-Management | 3.94 | 0.60 | .402** | .125** | 1 | | |
| Political Skill | 3.10 | 0.76 | .361** | .284** | .488** | 1 | |
| Conflict Management | 3.79 | 0.65 | .324** | .191** | .144** | .152* | 1 |

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

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)*

In the above correlational matrix it was analyzed that conflict management had positive correlation with other research variables at highly significant variable 3.10. All the variables had positively correlated to each other. The value from 3.10 to 4.07 was highly positive correlated, value from 0.34 to 0.76 were moderately correlated and the value were low correlated to each other.

Table...: Hierarchical Regression Results of emotional intelligence dimensions

| Variables | Model1 | Model2 | Model3 | Tolerance | VIF |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-------|
| Age | .074 | .068 | .054 | .739 | 1.202 |
| Gender | -.017 | -.003 | .007 | .879 | 1.022 |
| Self-awareness | | .398** | .264* | .788 | 1.012 |
| Self-management | | | .384* | .450 | 2.424 |
| <i>Model Summary</i> | | | | | |
| R ² | .005 | .095 | .114 | | |
| Adjusted R ² | -.002 | .084 | .096 | | |
| R ² Change | .007 | .093 | .107 | | |
| F- Value | .526 | 8.558 | 9.949 | | |
| Sign | .462 | .000 | .076 | | |

p*<.05; *p*<.001; *reported results are standardised regression coefficients*)

Giving the regression analysis, the results in model 1 suggest that all the control variables do not make a significant impact in explaining conflict management. This indicates that our

models are not sensitive to sample characteristics and the models are reasonable. More so, self-awareness in model 2 reveals an extra contribution effect of 9.5% ($F=8.558$; $p<.05$) in the variance explained conflict management. In addition, self-awareness is a significant predictor of conflict management ($\beta=.398$, $p<.05$). More still, self-management in model 3 accounts for the extra 11.4% ($F=9.949$; $p<.05$) of the variance explained in conflict management. The model results also show that self-management is a significant predictor of conflict management ($\beta=.384$, $p<.000$)

When self-management was added to the equation in model 3 it accounted for the extra 10.7% of the variance explained in conflict management nevertheless, not significant. Furthermore, emotional intelligence (self-awareness and self-management) is a significant predictor of conflict management. This entails that predictive power and strength of the two dimensions are compared, self-management has a greater effect on conflict management, followed by self-awareness. The results also validate hypotheses 1, & 2. Overall, the model explains 47.39% of the variance in conflict management. The remaining 52.6% is for by factors that is not included in this study.

DISCUSSION

The paper was aim at determining the relationship between emotional intelligence (self-awareness and self-management) on conflict management among principals of secondary schools, the study lay special emphasis on the contribution effect of emotional intelligence dimensions on conflict management. The results argued that following self-awareness and self-management. First, the study reports that self-awareness is a positive and significant predictor of conflict management. The result of this findings is true because individuals who always know which instinct to use in handling issues in organizations around would succeed in managing their differences among employees as documented by Afzalur and Clement (2012). Similarly, such people will perform excellently by empathizing how certain things are being done in using collective efforts by sharing with someone else on how to improve problem that can affect organizational productivity as observed by Singh (2017). More still, when a superior knows more about the employees he/she works with it evidently suggest that allocating responsibilities to the individuals will not be difficult. Doing that can help in changing the people you work with by winning them over in terms of the ability to make someone comfortable when resolving conflict in the organization. Similarly, when a boss have good understanding of the team mates he/she will develop the ability to discover disunity among the team to express true feeling when resolving conflict as authenticated by Carmeli (2003).

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Giving that this paper examine the emotional intelligence dimensions on conflict management among principals of secondary schools. The findings indicates that improvement in conflict management among principals of secondary schools is a function of understanding the dispositions of individual's ability to open up to others to win his/her mindset on conflict

resolutions among other employees by having good understanding of his/her state of mind with a focus on knowing the who the individual mental ability and also how individuals management his/her self in terms of overcoming obstacles in doing things in life. The paper suggest a number of implications. From the academic point of view, we explore the role of both emotional intelligence (self-management and self-awareness) in explaining conflict management. From the theoretical point of view, the result is coherent with the psychological capital theory, which emphasizes the role of openness of the mind in generating ways of managing differences. In totality, our finding confirms that emotional intelligence construct, and the elements are important drivers through which conflict management among principals of secondary schools operates efficiently. Hereafter, principals who possess self-management and self-awareness, have high level of adaptability with variety of people and also the ability to discover disunity among team mates.

There is the need for subsequent studies to isolate; gender, work experience and qualifications to investigate their contributions to conflict management among principals. At policy level, there is the need for a change in the educational system to nurture newly employed staff into conflict management early enough, with emphasis on action orientation as opposed to theory driven. This will go a long way in developing those at the positions of responsibilities. At practical level, leaders must be willing to adapt to the changing environment and not remain unchanged.

Nonetheless, the results of this study must be interpreted with caution. First, although a survey questionnaire was employed in this investigation, follow up interviews which would have informed us of the reasons why the respondents held certain views were not undertaken. Future studies might benefit from a mixed methodology. Second, self-management or self-awareness should be tested as moderating variable in the relationship between political skills and conflict management. Some leaders may find it easy to manage conflict in their respective organizations but for some they will require a lots of emotional intelligence and so it is important that other studies take into account sectoral differences to gain more insights on the relationship between other factors and conflict management. Third, this study was cross sectional and therefore we did not capture changes of individual attitudes over time. This may call for a follow-up studies in a longitudinal design to capture the trend of results. Lastly, giving the fact that our final model in the hierarchical regression, explains about 47.39% of the variation in conflict management, it is imperative that future studies should investigate other factors that would explain the remaining 52.61% of the variance. Despite the limitations, this study reliably makes important contributions as discussed above. Future research may wish to replicate in different country contexts.

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