



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB COMMITMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

Grace Chinyere Nnadi¹,

Benedicta I. Nnodum²,

Chima Ify²,

Chigbu Francisca Eberechukwu¹ⁱ,

Uzoekwe, H. E.¹

¹PhD, Department of Guidance and Counselling,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University,

Awka, Nigeria

²Professor,

Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling,

Imo State University,

Owerri, Imo State,

Nigeria

Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to investigate the emotional intelligence as correlates of job commitment in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The research design adopted for this study was correlational design. Three research questions and a hypothesis guided the study. The population for the study consisted of all 69 school counsellors currently serving in the 194 public schools in Nsukka, Enugu and Awgu Education Zones. Researchers designed questionnaires were used for the data collected. The instruments were face validated by three experts one in measurement and evaluation, and the remaining two from Guidance and Counselling all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The result of the analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.73 for SSCEIQ and 0.83 for SSCJCQ and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.78. The data collected for the study were analysed using Pearson's correlation analysis at the significance level of 0.05 and to test the hypothesis, the data collected were subjected to a simple linear regression model to regress counsellors' responses. The data analysed indicates the following; the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship, the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very low positive relationship, and the relationship between emotional intelligence and gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very

ⁱCorrespondence: email ef.chigbu@unizik.edu.ng

high positive relationship. There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that all education stakeholders and relevant counselling preparatory institutes should work towards improving emotional intelligence abilities and capabilities so as to enhance the job commitment of counsellors.

Keywords: counsellors, emotional intelligence, job commitment, secondary school

1. Introduction

Counselling is usually seen as a motivational relationship dispensed on the platform of love, care, understanding and unconditional positive regards. Counselling is a specialized helping process whereby information is disseminated to a group as to an individual so as to effectively engage them in interactions that will lead to finding a solution to problems as well as making a decision for a better and more stable future (Chigbu, Oguzie & Obi, 2020). In the counselling process, there is an existence of a trained counsellor and a student or students in a secondary school environment. In this process, the counsellor is expected to exhibit the professional experiences and qualities learnt through training so as to achieve a greater result. The success of a counsellor is highly dependent upon his/her behaviour in the counselling setting.

A school counsellor is a professionally trained person who uses his/her skills and strategies to help students in their working environment to resolve and ameliorate their problems in all spheres of life (Chigbu, Ngwaka & Onu, 2020). Counsellors are professionals that have been privileged to be exposed to training that would help them develop their competence in understanding human behaviour and attitudinal disposition and help them self-rediscover their strengths and weaknesses to make appropriate adjustments to life challenges (Okoiye & Anusiem, 2017). Counsellors conduct counselling with purpose and intention; thus, counselling practice is usually geared towards objective achievements. Counsellors should be mindful of their own strengths and limitations through, reflective counselling evaluation (the Professional Counsellor, 2008). Evaluation of counselling skills, abilities and knowledge are important for a healthy counselling relationship.

However, counsellor's skills and abilities include areas that relate to emotional intelligence (Easton, 2004). Counsellor's ability on emotional intelligence plays a vital role in generating counselling performance. It plays a positive role in their personal and social life; this is because emotional intelligence can be linked with empathy and expressions of ourselves (behaviour). A counsellor with a sound emotional intelligence communicates effectively with clients and also helps a client improve their emotional intelligence so that the client can better understand themselves and struggle less when interacting with others. A counsellor with emotional intelligence fully understands one's own emotions, regulates one's self with a healthy interpersonal relationship, is empathetic and motivates

people for self-development. Emotional intelligence is viewed as the ability, capacity, skill, or self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups (Olivier, 2017). To be successful one requires having effective awareness, control and management of one's own emotions, and awareness and understanding of other people (Manoranjan, 2018).

In the context of this study, emotional intelligence is the ability of a school counsellor to fully understand his/her emotions and the emotions of his/her client for self-regulation, healthy interpersonal relationship, empathy, positive motivation and for all-round development and achievements. Emotional intelligence (EI) is found to have a significant impact on everyday life and activities.

Ramachandran and Harshini (2019) conclude that self-awareness has the strongest effect on employee job performance and emotional intelligence and has a key role in increased performance. Freshman and Rubino (2002) reported that emotional intelligence (EI) is a management skill for health care administration. Emotionally intelligent individuals are expected to recognize, manage and use their emotions to eliminate resultant obstacles and advance their career prospects better than people with low EI (Akomolafe, Jude & Onijuni, 2013). Also, there are indications that the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship (Chigbu, et al., 2020).

From the above, it is obvious that EI interferes with individual performance through emotional intelligence. Counsellors can monitor their own levels of stress and be mindful of personal matters which can interfere with their job performance. Hence in the contention above, there is still a misconception between emotional intelligence and job commitment. Are there any existing relationships between the two variables (emotional intelligence and job commitment)? Employer's commitment to the job evokes their worker's consciousness, which will lead to performing the work better with rationality due to having faith in work enhancement (Ozer & Gunluk as cited in Jandaghi, Mokhles & Bahrami, 2011). Cohen and Golan (2007) conclude that where congruence exists between the employer's commitment and his job then job commitment can enhance individual and organizational performance by increasing work motivation and by reducing costs associated with negative organizational behaviour such as turnover, burnout, apathy, and absenteeism. There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment in Iran's Ramin thermal power plant (Seyewdeh, Hoda, Forogh & Azar, 2013).

The results in the above review prompted the researcher in writing this article. In Enugu State, there is a low commitment among counsellors in discharging their duties, as a result of low funding for the educational system and counselling as a whole, which affects procurement of counselling facilities, books and equipment as well as money to organize activities such as student's orientation, excursions, career clubs among others. Apparently, apart from the appointment of the school counsellor in all schools in the study areas, nothing tangible exists at various secondary school locations hence these

defaults can (low funding and nonchalant attitude of government and government agencies) reduce the morale of school counsellors not to be committed to counselling practices.

This is evident in the school counsellors' inability to develop a process and procedure for implementing and evaluating comprehensive school guidance and counselling programme in consultation with students, parents, school committees, school boards, and community members. It is the observed absence of job commitment among secondary school counsellors in the study area that led the researchers to think that school counsellors are experiencing low emotional intelligence and this may adversely affect personality development and adjustment of students in line with their needs, interest, abilities, poor selection of career among others. Considering this to be true, the researchers are worried that the school counsellors' lack of their commitment will affect the totality of educational development hence leading to poor national development. It is based on this background that the researchers investigated emotional intelligence as correlates of job satisfaction in Enugu State, Nigeria.

2. Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is the investigation of EI as correlates of job commitment among secondary schools in Enugu, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated:

- 1) The relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors.
- 2) The relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors.
- 3) The relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment among secondary school counsellors.

2.1 Research Questions

- 1) What is the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors?
- 2) What is the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors?
- 3) What is the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment among secondary school counsellors?

2.2 Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis guided the study and was tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors.

3. Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was correlational design. Correlational design according to Nworgu (2006) seeks to establish the extent of the relationship between two or more variables and also determine the direction and magnitude of such relationship. Nworgu further states that the design also permits the selection of a sample from the population and using the information generated to make inferences or generalizations to the entire population provided the sample representative in the study.

Enugu State is made up of six education zones (Obollorafor, Udi, Agbani, Nsukka, Enugu and Awgu). Through simple random sampling, three education zones were selected, namely Nsukka, Enugu and Awgu with 194 public schools located in the three education zones. The population for the study consisted of all 69 school counsellors currently serving in the 194 public schools in Nsukka, Enugu and Awgu Education Zones. The population was small and manageable so no sampling was done. Researchers developed a self-structured instrument called secondary school counsellor's emotional intelligence questionnaire (SSCEIQ) and secondary school counsellor's job commitment questionnaire (SSCJCQ) with a four points response format.

The instruments were divided into sections. Section A with 10 items (SSCEIQ) and section B with 10 items (SSCJCQ). The instruments were face validated by three experts one in measurement and evaluation, and the remaining two from Guidance and Counselling all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A similar population of 20 school counsellors from Udi education Zone of Enugu state was used during the pilot study. The data collected from the pilot study were analyzed using a Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The result of the analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.73 for SSCEIQ and 0.83 for SSCJCQ and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.78. A face-to-face method of data collection was employed by the researchers in collecting data for the research work. The face-to-face method ensured that all copies of a questionnaire distributed were collected.

To answer the research questions, the data collected were answered using Pearson's correlation analysis at the significance level of 0.05. The decision guide was a significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between counsellors' emotional intelligence was considered to exist if the level of significance is below 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). However, where the significance level is above 0.05 ($P > 0.05$), then the relationship of counsellors' emotional intelligence on counsellors' job commitment would be considered not to exist. To test the hypothesis, the data collected were subjected to a simple linear regression model to regress counsellors' responses, to counsellors emotional intelligence (independent variable) against their response to job commitment (dependent variables). The researchers also used the following guideline to determine the relationship existing between the variables in the research questions: 0.00-0.19 (very low relationship), 0.02-0.39 (low relationship), 0.04-0.59 (moderate relationship), 0.06-0.79 (high relationship) and 0.08 and above (very high relationship). Also, the researchers would reject the null

hypothesis if the exact probability value (P-value) is less than the prior probability value (i.e 0.05 level of significance), otherwise, the null hypothesis would be accepted.

Research Question One: What is the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors?

Table 1: Pearson’s correlation showing the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors

		Emotional Intelligence	Job Commitment	Decision
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.303	Very high positive relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	69	69	
Job Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.303	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	.69	.303	

Table 1 ascertains the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors. The table shows that the value of the correlation coefficient (r) is .303. This indicates that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors?

Table 2: Pearson Correlation showing the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors

		Gender Intelligence	Job Commitment	Decision
Gender Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.002	Very low positive relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.307	
	N	69	69	
Job Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.002	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.307		
	N	69	69	

Table 2 ascertained the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors. The table shows that the value of the correlation coefficient (r) is .002. This indicates that the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very low positive relationship.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment among secondary school counsellors?

Table 3: Pearson Correlation showing the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors

		Gender Intelligence	Emotional Intelligence	Job Commitment	Decision
Gender Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.002	.002	Very high positive relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.312	.307	
	N	69	69	69	
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.002	1	.303	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.312		.000	
	N	69	69	69	
Job Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.002	.303	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.307	.000		
	N	69	69	69	

Table 3 ascertained the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors. The table shows that the value of the relationship coefficient (r) is .303. This indicates that the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors.

Table 4: Summary of regression analysis for the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors

Variables	N	F	R ²	B	Sig.	Decision
Emotional Intelligence	69	434.47	.301	.303	.000	Rejected
Job Commitment						

Note: A Dependent Variable: job commitment; b. Predictors: (Constant), emotional intelligence; df: 1,68; p<.05.

Table 4 indicated that the probability associated with the calculated value R² (.301) for the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is 0.000. Since the probability value of .000 is less than the .05 level of significance (p<.05), the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors. The R² value of .301 shows that emotional intelligence accounts for 89% of the variance in job commitment. The Beta (β) weighting of .303 indicates that for every standard deviation unit change in emotional intelligence, job commitment will rise by .303 (89%) among the secondary school counsellors.

4. Discussion of the Findings

The finding of the study on the work environment as correlates of job commitment among secondary school counsellors in Enugu state, Nigeria as revealed in Table 1 shows that the analysis value of the correlation coefficient (r) is .303, indications, that the relationship between work environment and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship. Similarly, this result was further strengthened by the regression analysis for the relationship between work environment and job commitment among secondary school counsellors as shown in Table 4, which revealed that there is significant relationship between work environment and job commitment in secondary schools ($r^2 = .301$ and $\beta = .303$). By implication, it means that the more satisfied the secondary school counsellors were with their work environment, the more committed they would be to their counselling practice.

Consistent with the result of this study, Olukunle (2015) found a high positive relationship between work environment and job commitment, Olukunle (2015) went further to add that the work environment determines job commitments and the interpersonal relationship existing in the work environment also contribute most significantly to job commitment.

Research question two guided the investigation of the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors in Enugu state. The result of the correlation analysis in Table 2 indicated that the relationship between gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very low positive relationship ($r = 0.002$). Accordingly, the finding of this study is inconsistent with the work done by Ayhan, Yilmaz and Sengul (2011) who found that female genders have a tendency of job commitment than their male counterpart.

Research question three guided the investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment among secondary school counsellors in Enugu state. The result of the correlation analysis indicated that the relationship between EI, gender and job commitment of secondary school counsellors is a very high positive relationship ($r = .303$). The findings of this study are not incongruence with the result of Denise, Winschel, and Toni (2015) who assert that men and women did not seem to possess significantly different levels of emotional intelligence.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered by the study.

- 1) Professional counselling preparation institutes and other relevant education stakeholders should consistently organize emotional intelligence workshops for existing secondary school counsellors.

- 2) Emotional intelligence skills should be incorporated in the identification, selection and training of secondary school counsellors and also into the programme of counsellor education.
- 3) Government and school administrators should ensure the provision of a conducive working environment to their secondary school counsellors in terms of clear policies and procedures, security, freedom and a good emotional climate.

6. Conclusion

Emotional intelligence no doubt is a veritable recipe for effective professional counselling service delivery. This study sought to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and job commitment of secondary school counsellors in Enugu state. In the light of the data collated and analysed by the study, it has been established that emotional intelligence has a very high positive relationship with the job commitment of secondary school counselors in Enugu state. The study equally established a very high positive relationship between emotional intelligence, gender and job commitment.

Relying on the above, therefore, the study concludes that all education stakeholders and relevant counselling preparatory institutes should work towards improving emotional intelligence abilities and capabilities so as to enhance the job commitment of counsellors.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Authors

Nnadi, Chinyere Grace occupied a position Lecturer II with PhD in Guidance and Counselling with a research interest on general issues in interpersonal relationships, adolescents' problems/issues, behavioural problems, delinquent issues among others.

Benedicta I. Nnodum is a professor in Guidance and Counselling with a research interest on general issues in interpersonal relationships, adolescents' problems/issues, behavioural problems, delinquent issues.

Chima Ify is a professor in Guidance and Counselling with a research interest on general issues in interpersonal relationships, adolescents' problems/issues, behavioural problems, delinquent issues

Chigbu, Eberechukwu Francisca occupied a position of Lecturer II with PhD in Guidance and Counselling with research interests in counselling psychology and behavioural problems.

Uzoekwe, H. E. occupied a position as a senior Lecturer with PhD in Guidance and Counselling with research interests on behavioural problems, educational problems and family issues.

References

- Akomolafe, M., Jude, O., & Onijuni, O. (2013). Job satisfaction and emotional intelligence as predictors of organizational commitment of secondary school teachers. *Ife psychologia*, 21(2), 65-70. Retrieved from <https://www.questia.com/read/IP3-3093273901/job-satisfaction-and-emotional-intelligence-as-predictors>.
- Ayhan, A., Yilmaz, S. & Sengul, U. (2011). The effect of gender on organizational commitment of teachers: A meta analysis. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 11 (2): 628-632. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ927369.pdf>.
- Chigbu, E. F., Ngwaka, L. C. & Onu, E. A. (2020). The relationship between work environment and job satisfaction among secondary school counsellors in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies*. Vol.3(4); 85-92.
- Chigbu, E. F., Oguzie, A. E., Obi, J. S. C. (2020). Counselling: An advocacy for Balancing Gender Disparity for Sustainable National Development. *Sapientia Global journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGODAHDS)*, vol.3(2);
- Denise, N., Winschel, B. S. and Toni, D. (2015). Gender, EI and Organizational Commitment: Does EI mean loyal employees? *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, volume 5 (40); 1-13. Retrieved from <http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0415/ijsrp-p4009.pdf> p.66-99.
- Easton, C. J. (2004). The relationship between emotional intelligence and counselling self-efficacy: A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education Psychology, Northern Arizona University.
- Freshman, B. & Rubino, R. (2002). Emotional intelligence. *The health care manager*. 20(4): 1-9. Doi:10.1097/00126450-200206000-00002.
- Jandaghi, G., A. & Bahrami, H. (2011). The impact of job security on employees' commitment and job satisfaction in Qom municipalities. *African journal of business management*, 5 (16), 6853-6858. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266181044_The_impact_of_job_security_on_employees'_commitment_and_job_satisfaction_in_Qom_municipalities
- Manoranjan, T. (2018). *Emotional Intelligence: An overview* Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2006). *Educational Research; Basic Issue and Methodology*. Windon Publishers Ltd., Ibadan.
- Okoie, O. E. & Anusiem, A. U. (2017). Reflective counselling technique and emotional intelligence training in managing expressed performance anxiety of trainee counsellors in South-South, Nigeria.
- Olivier, S. (2017). Understanding and development emotional intelligence. In book. DOI: 10.10071978-981-10-0983-9-37.

- Olukunle, S. O. (2015). Workplace factor as determinants of job commitment among senior non teaching staff of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State. Thesis for M.ED industrial Education university of education Tai Solarin University. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275769606_Workplace_Factors_As_Determinants_Of_Job_Commitment_Among_Senior_Non-Teaching_Staff_Of_Olabisi_Onabanjo_University_Ogun_State.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.4767.0166>
- Professional Counsellor (2008). Reflective Practice: The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors National Newsletter. Issues 4.
- Ramachandran, K. K. & Harshini, S. V. (2019). Impact of emotional intelligence on the job performance of the employees of IT sectors in Chennai City. Think India (Quarterly Journal) Vol.22(4) 7358-7365.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Education Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).