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THE RELATIVE CONTRIBUTION OF THE DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE IN PREDICTING THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF FEMALE AND MALE CIVIL SERVANTS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined the relative contributions of the dimensions of emotional and social intelligence in predicting the occupational stress of female and male civil servants in Rivers State. Four hypotheses were postulated and tested. Correlational design was used to gather data from 600 civil servants drawn through proportionate stratified sampling technique. Three instruments, Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), Social Intelligence Scale (SIS) and Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI) which were validated and had reliability coefficients of 0.827 for EIS, 0.849 for SIS and 0.953 for OSI respectively were the data gathering devices. Multiple regression analysis served as the statistical tool. The results of the study showed that the dimensions of emotional intelligence when considered separately, significantly predicts the occupational stress of both female and male civil servants. In the same vein, the components of social intelligence (social information processing, social skills and social awareness) when considered separately, significantly predicts the occupational stress of both female and male civil servants. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that gender stereotyping should be avoided in our work places. Since gender (female and male) do not mediate the occupational stress of civil servants.*

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, Occupational Stress, Female Civil Servants, Male Civil Servants, Rivers State

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a very complex phenomenon. It is an issue with which many people are familiar with though, it is so widely misused. It is often subject to ambiguity and confusion. An individual stress can be another's excitement and energizer. However, different researchers defined it differently depending on their orientation.

The word stress is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as a "state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy". It is a condition or circumstance, which can disturb the normal physiological and psychological functioning of an individual. In the medical parlance, stress is defined as a perturbation of the body's homeostasis (James, 2013). Stress can best be described as the adverse psychological and physical reactions that occur in an individual as a result of their being unable to cope with the demand made on them (Cole, 2002). Stress therefore could be seen as the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressure of the situation. It is a state of emotional strain or tension resulting from demanding circumstances. Stress arises when people worry they cannot cope with the demands placed upon them. In this case pressure can arise from an individual's personal life as well as from work. The pressure at work is simply referred to as occupational stress.

Occupational stress refers to a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources of the individual. Irene (2005) explained that insecurity about successful performance and fear of negative consequences resulting from performance failure may evoke powerful emotions of anxiety, anger and irritation. She asserted that these stressful experiences are intensified if no help is available from colleagues or supervisors at work. Occupational stress is the emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological reaction to aversive and noxious aspects of work, work environments and work organizations whether private or public (i.e. government).

One cannot discuss the role of the government in national development without giving central attention to civil servants as one of the real agents of development. National development hinges on the contributions of civil servants towards attainment of ministerial goals (Igbokwe-Ibeto, Agbodike & Osawe, 2015). The major work of civil servants is to implement and execute the policies and programmes of the government in power creditably, by harnessing both material and human resources available to them (Olu-Adeyemi, 2009). The different professionals trained in different fields of human endeavour have their contributions to make to national development. Thus, civil servants are very important in the actualization of national goals and development. In spite of the central role civil servants occupy in the national development, research works such as those of Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005) have identified stress as one of the cardinal factors militating against their effective performance.

At this juncture, a brief mention of some common sources of occupational stress in civil service will suffice. Many factors pre-dispose individuals to stress in the work place. These factors may work alone or in concert with other factors to give birth to a regime of occupational stress. It should not be forgotten that the individual spends more time outside the office. In Nigeria, civil servants work from 8am to 4pm daily, the remaining period they spend outside their place of work including public holidays. What happens in these places naturally must have influence on their lives. Some of the factors pre-disposing civil servants to occupational stress include, family background, frustration with politicians, inadequate salaries and allowances, work pressure, overbearing supervision, the fear of disengagement from service without pension and gratuity to mention but a few. Conversely, the aforementioned sources of occupational stress, impact on the performance or productivity of civil servants in the following ways: Declining productivity, absenteeism from work, problem in job relations, and misjudgment of situations etc. So, the current global work environment has made employees more accountable for the success of an organization. The accountability placed on employees is at an unprecedented high.

Occupational stress seems to be a plague, eating deep into the fabrics of our state. Experience shows that government civil service has recorded a high rate of sudden collapse of its' employees, due to the fact that they are saddled with enormous work load, without adequate salaries and allowances, an increase in responsibility is not usually accompanied with a corresponding increase in remuneration. Workers are paid peanut and the peanuts not paid as at when due. Workers face over bearing supervisors and poor working environment which are all precursors to occupational stress.

The immediate fallout of the above scenario among civil servants may include but not limited to, being aggressive to colleagues or client; developing unfavourable or negative attitude to work; suffer from mood swing thereby being unhappy sometimes at work; low productivity which could lead to below average performance. Others are, failure to meet departmental or unit targets; inefficiency; absenteeism, which will in turn lead to pilling up of files that should have been attended to; and low energy level, which could lead to lack of enthusiasm and unhealthy personal

disposition culminating in ill health. These challenges may be psychological, social and emotional in nature. Therefore, may bring to bear the emotional and social intelligence of the worker in his work life.

In the past decade, emotional intelligence and social intelligence have generated enormous amount of interest both within and outside the field of psychology and so, a brief explanation of the two construct will suffice. The concept of emotional intelligence is slightly viewed differently by the pioneers of the construct. For instance, Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Later this definition was refined and broken down into four proposed abilities: Perceiving, using, understanding and managing emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

For Petrides (2001) emotional intelligence encompasses behavioural dispositions and self perceived abilities. Petrides see emotional intelligence as trait emotional intelligence. According to him, trait emotional intelligence is a collection of emotional self-perceptions situated at the lesser levels of personality. Put differently, trait emotional intelligence means individuals' self-perceptions of their emotional abilities. This description of emotional intelligence includes behavioural dispositions and self-perceived abilities.

Trait emotional intelligence was structured along four scopes, namely: well-being, self-control, emotionality and sociability. These four factors gave birth to 15 different sub-factors, and they include: Adaptability, assertiveness, emotion perception, emotion expression, emotion management, emotion regulation, impulsiveness, relationship, self-esteem, self-motivation, social awareness, stress management, trait empathy, trait happiness, and trait optimism.

Another notable proponent of emotional intelligence is Daniel Goleman who in 1995 defined Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships. In addition, Goleman in 1998 outlined four aspects of EI construct: Self-awareness – the ability to interpret one's emotions and recognize their impact while using gut feelings to channel decisions; Self-management – involves controlling one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances; Social awareness – the ability to sense, understand, and react to others' emotions while acknowledging social networks; and Relationship management – the ability to motivate, persuade, and develop others while managing conflict.

In explaining further the construct, Goleman included sets of emotional competencies within each construct of EI. These are emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence for self-awareness construct. Compliance, keeping troublesome emotions and impulses in check, thoroughness and reliability, initiative and innovation and achievement drive all for self-management dimension. Social awareness construct or dimension of EI has four competencies, namely: Empathy, service orientation, organizational awareness and developing others. The fourth construct or dimension of EI according to Goleman (1995) is Social skills with seven competencies, namely: Leadership, influence, change catalyst, communication, conflict management, collaboration and building bonds and team capabilities. Furthermore, Goleman emphasized that emotional skills are not inborn gifts, but cultured capabilities that require nurturing and development to achieve exceptional feat. It is also the position of Goleman that people have general emotional intelligence which determines their potentiality in acquiring emotional competency.

In considering emotional intelligence for this study, the dimensions presented by Goleman is of particular interest to the researchers and constitutes one of the major independent variables of this study.

Another major construct of this study is social intelligence. Social Intelligence (SI) is defined as a diverse and non-cognitive set of skills present in most social settings (Goleman, 2006). From the elementary playgrounds to the corporate boardroom, social intelligence is the way to handle oneself in social environments using "neural jiu-jitsu" to combat the irrational mind from taking over the rational mind. Social Intelligence is constructed not just as a mesh of the IQ and the EI constructs but rather it is interaction with a range or degree of ability categorized into two parts, social awareness and social facility (Goleman, 2006).

Social awareness is an individual's internal ability to sense another person's "inner state" in order to obtain a better perspective of social interaction with that person (Goleman, 2006). Social awareness empathizes the use of "primal empathy" along with "attunement" and "social cognition" to help an individual go beyond verbal communication for a deeper assessment of the true feelings or intentions of another individual. An example guided by Goleman's description of social awareness can be used to view the way civil servants react when they are asked to go beyond their intended tasks. There is the possibility that the civil servants body language could be miss understood when he or she is asked to work on another task in the office that was not in an original request.

On the other hand, social facility is a supplement to social awareness. It builds up self-image in order to have a significant "effect" in social interactions (Goleman, 2006). Social facility focuses on the use of synchrony, self-presentation, and influence to build on true "fruitful" social interactions. Goleman mentioned that being in harmony in both body language and verbal communication is important to move "smoothly" through a social interaction. This, along with self-presentation and influence, are the foundations of effectively getting others to buy-in to what you are presenting. An example, guided by Goleman's description of social facility, can be used to view the ways civil servants handle themselves in situations that depend on image and presentation. In a situational setting where the civil servant has to explain himself or herself, such as to what the root cause was to a client, good social facility could lead to a positive social interaction where the client understands what the civil servant is saying. However, if the civil servant stumbles awkwardly on their words or displays body language that is not friendly, the client could walk away with a negative experience viewing the civil servant as condescending or inept; a situation that could be blamed on occupational stress and low level of emotional and social intelligence among female and male civil servants at their work place.

To this end, Gardner and Stough (2003) explained how emotional and social intelligence (EI) in the workplace reduced stress and gave workers the ability to communicate their emotions for the good of not only themselves, but for the whole organization. Therefore, any stress on an employee coupled with a lack of emotional and social intelligence could lead to an undesirable work place prone to failure (Ramesar, Koortzen, & Oosthuizen, 2009).

In recent years, studies concerning emotional intelligence and occupational stress have being carried out but that of social intelligence and occupational stress are quite rare to the best of the researcher's knowledge. For instance, Slaski and Cartwright (2002) reported that managers who scored higher in emotional intelligence suffered less subjective stress, experience better health and well being and that this relationship affects management performance. Similarly, Darolia

and Darolia (2005) found out that emotionally intelligent people, who are able to understand and recognize their emotions; manage themselves to keep under control in stressful situation. The relationship between emotional intelligence and stress in the work place and health related consequences in workers was investigated by Oginska – Bulik (2005). The study confirmed emotional intelligence is a shield that prevents workers from negative health outcomes, especially from the symptoms of depression. In the same year, Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005) examined the interactive and relative effect of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy on occupational stress of university academic staff. Their findings revealed that emotional intelligence contributed significantly to the prediction of occupational stress of the participants. Singh and Singh (2008) conducted a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress among medical professionals in their organizational lives. The study revealed significantly negative relationship of emotional intelligence with stress for both the genders of medical professionals. In yet another work by Ismail, Suh-Suh, Ajis and Dollah (2009) occupational stress was found to significantly relate to emotional intelligence.

From the works cited above, it is quite obvious that emotional intelligence and occupational stress have been studied even though it is not among civil servants in Rivers State. But that of social intelligence and occupational stress were lacking. Again, to the best of the researchers' knowledge there is a paucity of research work in Nigeria on the relative contribution of the dimensions of emotional and social intelligence in predicting the occupational stress of both female and male civil servants in Rivers State, thereby, creating additional impetus for this study to be conducted. Therefore, the problem of this study is; what are the relative contributions of the dimensions of emotional and social intelligence to the prediction of the occupational stress of both female and male civil servants in Rivers State? Thus in order to systematically answer this question, four hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypotheses:

1. When considered separately, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of occupational stress of female civil servants.
2. When considered separately, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of occupational stress of male civil servants.
3. When considered independently, the three components of social intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of occupational stress of female civil servants.
4. When considered independently, the three components of social intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of occupational stress of male civil servants.

METHODOLOGY

The design adopted in the conduct of this study was the correlational research design. The population for the study comprised of 5,959 civil servants in 26 ministries, from which 600 respondents was drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Three instruments were used for data collection in the study. The first was Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) modified and adapted for use in this research. It was developed by Genos in 2010. The second was Social Intelligence Scale (SIS) modified and adapted for use in this research. It was developed and standardized by Silvera, Martinussen and Dahl (2001). The third instrument was titled, Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI), modified and adapted for use in this study. The OSI was developed by Seaward (2005).

The reliability of the three instruments was determined via the application of Cronbach alpha technique as a measure of its internal consistency by administering it to 30 civil servants randomly selected, who were not part of the study. The coefficients obtained for each section of EIS were as follows; emotional self-awareness(ESA), 0.715; emotional self management (ESM), 0.523; emotional social awareness(ESOA), 0.569; relationship management(RM), 0.680; the entire instrument, 0.827. For SIS, we had 0.587 for social information processing (SIP), 0.658 for social skills (SS), 0.709 for social awareness (SA), and 0.849 for the entire instrument. The third instrument, OSI had an internal consistency of 0.953 coefficient value. Through the assistance of research assistants data were gathered for 28 working days and subjected to multiple regression analysis as statistical tool.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: When considered separately, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of the occupational stress of female civil servants.

To test the significance of the null hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was applied to the data from the four dimensions of emotional intelligence and the occupational stress scores of female civil servants. The main reason was to test for the regression coefficients, which is the representation of the predictive strength of each dimension. The results of the analysis are as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the regression coefficients from the multiple regression analysis. Both the unstandardized and the standardized regression coefficients, the standard error of the estimates, the t-ratio and the level of significance for each of the dimensions of emotional intelligence have been presented.

A closer view of the table shows that the unstandardized regression coefficients (B) range from -1.031 to .708 excluding that of the constant, while those of the standardized coefficients (Beta) are from -.305 to .279. The errors of the estimates excluding that of the constant ranges from .127 to .191 which are minimal, while the t-ratio values are from -5.589 to 5.558 excluding that of the constant.

Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis of the relative contribution of each of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence to the prediction of occupational stress of female civil servants

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	57.644	7.636	7.549	.000	ESA
	.280	.133	.126	2.105*	.036
ESM	.708	.127	.279	5.558*	.000
ESOA	-.506	.191	-.134	-2.655*	.008
RM	-1.031	.184	-.305	-5.589*	.000

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Also, from the table, the t-ratio of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence under consideration was significant predictors (at $p < .05$) of female civil servant occupational stress.

The dimensions are emotional self awareness (ESA), emotional self management (ESM), emotional social awareness (ESOA) and relationship management (RM).

Since, all four dimensions of emotional intelligence are, on their merit, significant predictors of the occupational stress of female civil servants the consequence is the rejection of our null hypothesis with respect to all the dimensions of emotional intelligence. Hence, the dimensions of emotional intelligence independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of female civil servants.

A further analysis of the test result shows that relationship management dimension of emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by emotional self management, emotional social awareness and then emotional self awareness. Indeed, the prediction equation is as follows:

OS = 57.644 + .280ESA + .708ESM - .506ESOA - 1.031RM

From this equation, it could be seen that dimensions such as emotional social awareness and relationship management predicted the occupational stress of female civil servants in a negative dimension while those of emotional self awareness and emotional self management were in positive dimensions.

Hypothesis 2: When considered separately, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of the occupational stress of male civil servants.

To test the significance of this null hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was applied to the data from the four dimensions of emotional intelligence and the occupational stress scores of male civil servants. The main reason was to test for the regression coefficients, which is the representation of the predictive strength of each dimension. The results of the analysis are as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of multiple regression analysis of the relative contribution of each of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence to the prediction of occupational stress of male civil servants

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	93.063	8.121	11.460	.000	
ESA	-.846	.377	-.225	-2.247*	.026
ESM	-2.380	.199	-.694	-11.966*	.000
ESOA	.999	.307	.322	3.255*	.001
RM	.618	.128	.269	4.837*	.000

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 2 shows the regression coefficients from the multiple regression analysis. Both the unstandardized and the standardized regression coefficients, the standard error of the estimates, the t-ratio and the level of significance for each of the dimensions of emotional intelligence have been presented.

A cursory view of the table shows that the unstandardized regression coefficients (B) range from -2.380 to .999 excluding that of the constant, while those of the standardized coefficients (Beta) are from -.694 to .322. The errors of the estimates excluding that of the constant ranges from .128 to .377 which are minimal, while the t-ratio values are from -11.966 to 4.837 excluding that of the constant.

Also, from the table, the t-ratio of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence under consideration was significant predictors (at $p < .05$) of male civil servant occupational stress. The dimensions are emotional self awareness, emotional self management, emotional social awareness and relationship management.

Since, all four dimensions of emotional intelligence are, on their merit, significant predictors of the occupational stress of male civil servants the consequence is the rejection of our null hypothesis with respect to all the dimensions of emotional intelligence. Hence, the dimensions of emotional intelligence independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress (OS) of male civil servants.

A further analysis of the test result shows that emotional self management dimension of emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by emotional social awareness, emotional self awareness and then relationship management. Indeed, the prediction equation is as follows:

OS = 93.063 - .846ESA - 2.380ESM + .999ESOA + .618RM

From this equation, it could be seen that dimensions such as emotional self awareness and emotional self management predicted the occupational stress of male civil servants in a negative dimension while those of emotional social awareness and relationship management were in positive dimensions.

Hypothesis 3: When considered independently, the three components of social intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of the occupational stress of female civil servants.
To test the significance of this null hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was deployed to the data from the three components of social intelligence and the occupational stress scores of female civil servants. The main reason was to test for the regression coefficients, which is the representation of the predictive strength of each component. The results of the analysis are as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis of the relative contribution of each of the three components of social intelligence to the prediction of occupational stress of female civil servants

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	-15.361	1.391	-11.046	.000	
SIP	.383	.094	.145	4.059*	.000
SS	1.170	.072	.493	16.340*	.000
SA	1.109	.108	.371	10.220*	.000

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 3 shows the regression coefficients from the multiple regression analysis. Both the unstandardized and the standardized regression coefficients, the standard error of the estimates, the t-ratio and the level of significance for each of the components of social intelligence have been presented.

A perfunctory view of the table shows that the unstandardized regression coefficients (B) range from .383 to 1.170 excluding that of the constant, while those of the standardized coefficients (Beta) are from .145 to .493. The errors of the estimates excluding that of the constant ranges from .072 to .108 which are minimal, while the t-ratio values are from 4.059 to 16.340 excluding that of the constant.

Also, from the table, the t-ratio of the three components of social intelligence under investigation was significant predictors (at $p < .05$) of female civil servant occupational stress. The components are social information processing, social skills and social awareness.

Since, the three components of social intelligence are, on their merit, significant predictors of the occupational stress of female civil servants the consequence is the rejection of our null hypothesis with respect to the three components of social intelligence. Hence, the components of social intelligence; social information processing (SIP), social skills (SS) and social awareness (SA) independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress (OS) of female civil servants.

A further analysis of the test result shows that social skills component of social intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by social awareness and then social information processing. In fact, the prediction equation is as follows:

$$OS = -15.361 + .383SIP + 1.170SS + 1.109SA$$

From this equation, it could be seen that all the components of social intelligence such as social information processing, social skills and social awareness predicted the occupational stress of female civil servants in a positive dimension.

Hypothesis 4: When considered independently, the three components of social intelligence being studied are not significant predictors of the occupational stress of male civil servants.

To test the significance of this null hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was applied to the data from the three components of social intelligence and the occupational stress scores of male civil servants. The main reason was to test for the regression coefficients, which is the representation of the predictive strength of each component. The results of the analysis are as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of multiple regression analysis of the relative contribution of each of the three components of social intelligence to the prediction of occupational stress of male civil servants

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	-10.960	1.949	5.623		.000
SIP	-.420	.185	-.160	-2.271*	.024
SS	2.774	.272	1.341	10.206*	.000
SA	-1.027	.345	-.443	-2.975*	.003

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 4 shows the regression coefficients from the multiple regression analysis. Both the unstandardized and the standardized regression coefficients, the standard error of the estimates, the t-ratio and the level of significance for each of the components of social intelligence have been presented.

A perfunctory view of the table shows that the unstandardized regression coefficients (B) range from -1.027 to 2.774 excluding that of the constant, while those of the standardized coefficients (Beta) are from -.443 to 1.341. The errors of the estimates excluding that of the constant ranges from .185 to .345 while, the t-ratio values are from -2.975 to 10.206 excluding that of the constant.

Also, from the table, the t-ratio of the three components of social intelligence under investigation was significant predictors (at $p < .05$) of male civil servant occupational stress. The components are social information processing (SIP), social skills (SS) and social awareness (SA).

Since, the three components of social intelligence are, on their merit, significant predictors of the occupational stress of male civil servants the consequence is the rejection of our null hypothesis with respect to the three components of social intelligence. Hence, the components of social intelligence (social information processing, social skills and social awareness) independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of male civil servants.
A further analysis of the test result shows that social skills component of social intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by social awareness and then social information processing. Indeed, the prediction equation is as follows:

OS = 10.960 - .420SIP + 2.774SS - 1.027SA

From this equation, it could be seen that social information processing and social awareness components of social intelligence predicted the occupational stress of male civil servants in a negative dimension.

DISCUSSION

One of the finding of this study was that the dimensions of emotional intelligence independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of female civil servants. A further analysis of the test result showed that relationship management dimension of emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by emotional self management, emotional social

awareness and then emotional self awareness. In the same vein, it was also found out that the dimensions of emotional intelligence independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of male civil servants. A further analysis of the test result showed that emotional self management dimension of emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor. This is followed closely by emotional social awareness, emotional self awareness and then relationship management.

The findings of the present study are in agreement with some past research findings. For example, Belias, Koustelios, Koutiva and Zournatzi (2013) in a study of occupational stress and emotional intelligence among Greek Bank employees found out that occupational stress could be predicted from emotional intelligence. Similar results were found in related studies by Krishnakumar and Lalitha (2014), Matthew, Chigozie and Kosiso (2014), Goswami and Talukdar (2013), and Kalyoncu, Guney, Arslan, Guney, Ayranci (2012).

However, the studies by Darvish and Nasrollahi (2011), Khaniyan, Foroughan, Hosseini and Biglarian (2013) and Yamani, Shahabi and Haghani (2014) revealed findings inconsistent with the present one. Their results showed an inverse relationship (prediction) between occupational (Job) stress and the dimensions of emotional intelligence studied by them. On the other hand, the study by Khaniyan, Foroughan, Hosseini and Biglarian (2013) showed partly that relationship management and emotional social awareness dimensions of emotional intelligence are significant predictors of occupational stress.

Nevertheless, a possible reason that could be adduced for such divergent findings, is that the above studies were carried out in environments other than that of civil service and so, could be challenged with stressors significantly different from those of civil servants in Nigeria.

Another major finding of this investigation was that the components of social intelligence (social information processing, social skills and social awareness) independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of female civil servants. A further analysis of the test result showed that social skills component of social intelligence was the strongest predictor. This was followed closely by social awareness and then social information processing. Similarly, the components of social intelligence (social information processing, social skills and social awareness) independently, do significantly predict the occupational stress of male civil servants. Social skills component of social intelligence was the strongest predictor. This was followed closely by social awareness and then social information processing.

A cursory view of the results revealed that both female and male civil servants occupational stress was significantly predicted by their social intelligence. This could be interpreted to mean that there is no significant difference in the prediction of the occupational stress of civil servants from their social intelligence based on gender.

Nevertheless, the researchers could not find any study that is in agreement or disagreement with the present one. This may be as a result of the fact that most researchers in this field of human endeavour conceive emotional intelligence and social intelligence as the same construct presented from either emotional perspective or social perspective and thus focuses more on the more popular of the two, which happened to be emotional intelligence. Furthermore, it could be that attention has not been drawn to the relationship between social intelligence and occupational stress by researchers in recent times. Again this could be due to the fuzzy idea of the construct social intelligence. The focus of research in this area is largely on understanding the construct

social intelligence, which is richly propagated by Daniel Goleman and those who believe in his school of thought.

Consequently, the present study and its results with respect to social intelligence and its dimensions or components vis-à-vis occupational stress of civil servants in this part of the world could be described as novel reflection of the entire prediction study as it concerns this phenomenon, therefore, providing basic or fundamental literature for further research in this area of study. Accordingly, it could be concluded that the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the components of social intelligence when considered separately, significantly predicted the occupational stress of both female and male civil servants.

To this end, since emotional and social intelligence predicted the occupational stress of both male and female civil servants, indicates that gender do not mediate the occupational stress of civil servants. It is therefore, recommended that gender stereotyping should be avoided in our work places.

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