



## **Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher developed five (5) objectives, five research questions and five null hypotheses that guided the study. The research design used for the study is the correlational research design. The population of the study consists of 18734 science students in all public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sampling techniques used for the study is multistage sampling techniques, with a sample size of 1,070 science students. The instrument used for the data collection was self-structured questionnaire titled Emotional Intelligence Scale with reliability coefficient of 0.87 obtained using test-retest method and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The research questions were answered using mean and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistic. Based on the analysis of the data, the findings of the study revealed that: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy and social skills are positively and highly related to the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study recommended that students emotional intelligence skills should be boosted through enlightenment campaign as it triggers their academic performance, and that the development of students' self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy and social skills should form components of the school curriculum to enhance students' academic performance.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, empathy, self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, and social skills

### **INTRODUCTION**

The success in teaching and learning is measured by the academic performance of students. Academic performance is simply a measure of student's assimilation ability regarding a unit of instruction. It could be seen as the rate to which an institution, teacher or student has been able to obtain its short or long-term educational objectives. It explains how effective a student is in the teaching and learning process. However, the grades obtained by a student in a particular test do not often reflect his level of intelligence or the knowledge he possesses. Some students may not necessarily do well in a classroom situation, but when faced with IQ test, skilled test or performance test, perform excellently. In essence academic performance includes achievements outside the school setting. Roland (2016) saw academic performance to be the different level of noticeable and measurable attitudes of learners. The ability of a student to get acquainted with varieties of skills showcases intelligence, eagerness and consistency; these are qualities which often attract employers of labour as well as institutions of learning. Some institutions of learning may admit and even go to the extent of awarding scholarships to students who when given cognitive tests perform moderately but showcase a form of achievement by persistently acquiring new skills. Many establishments also view this as a selling point, envisaging this set of people, as curious to learn and will invariably make a good intern (Ellie, 2018).

In recent times the poor performance of students at institutions of learning has been an issue that requires an urgent attention globally (Sao, 2011; Siggh & Savita, 2016). Several studies and researches have been carried out since the inception of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to know why some students had difficulty in learning (Sao, 2011). Most of these researches and studies have attributed student's poor academic performance to socio-economic factors such as parents' level of education, home environment, classroom environment, parental interaction, race, gender, level of income of the family and many more (Farid & Manbuneh, 2014; Theresia, Paul & Eric, 2017; Norshluhaily, Ibrahim & Mudassir, 2017). Besides the socio-economic factors, there seem to be other individual factors of the student which may invariably lead to student's poor performance, if not properly handled. These factors are self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy, social skills and many more, which are generally the components of emotional intelligence (EI).

The term emotional intelligence came to light in the early 90's. In 1990, Peter Salovey and John Mayer coined the concept "Emotional Intelligence", seeing it as a type of social intelligence which entails the ability of someone to properly manage and monitor his feelings and emotions, and those of others to make disparities among them, and as well use the knowledge to inform his thinking and action. Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, understand and manage one's own emotions as well as identify, understand and influence the emotions of others (Institute for Health and Human Potential, 2018). Students with high level of emotional intelligence often exhibit a desirable social functioning when it comes to interpersonal relationship. As a result of these improved interpersonal competence, the cognitive as well as intellectual ability of a student with high emotional quotient (EQ) tends to improve which invariably lead to an informed academic performance. Emotional intelligence in essence informs prioritizing of thoughts, attitude structuring and adequate lifestyle choices which positively influence academic performance (Boom & Faezah, 2013).

An individual said to be emotionally intelligent, often possesses a robust measure of inter-personal and intra-personal intelligence. Interpersonal intelligence is that form of intelligence which helps an individual to better understand and as well manage people around him. As a result, interpersonal intelligence helps an individual to develop in him qualities such as empathy and social skills, while intra-personal intelligence is that form of intelligence that helps an individual, to better understand himself, thereby improving qualities such as self-motivation, self-management and self-awareness. Enshrined in the attitude and behaviour of individuals with high EI, are the vital qualities of self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy and social skills which come together to form the components of emotional intelligence.

Self-awareness is an emotional state whereby an individual has a better understanding of his feelings and in turn uses it to properly guide his actions. It is simply the ability to know one's behaviour, attitudes and feelings (Udo & Ukpong, 2016). Individuals with a great measure of self-awareness always know how to go about achieving their aims. In the school context, self-awareness helps a student to be properly placed in the instructional process which invariably results to a high academic performance. This is in line with the view of Johnson (2009) who opined that emotional health is essential for informed learning. He further stated that self-awareness as well as intrinsic motivation invariably results to student's high academic performance. Self-awareness in an individual also results to an informed self-management.

Self-management is a major skill which influences an individual's performance. Self-management is showcased in an individual by effectively planning and achieving the desired aim within a stipulated time frame. Cooper as cited by Laurice and Moir (2009), saw self-management as an individual's application of attitude change strategy, which produces the required change in attitude. Attitudinal challenges can be addressed using self-management technique as a counseling tool. Cognitive transformation can as well be achieved using self-management technique as a brain based therapy (Florence & Moyosola, 2013). According to Abiola and Moyosola (2013), self-management therapy can robustly aid an individual to be involved in a productive learning and studying, thereby motivating him which in turn results to a high academic performance.

Student's enthusiasm regarding a unit of instruction increases when they are adequately motivated. Business dictionary (2019) defined self-motivation as the ability to carry out a task without influence from other people or situation. Individuals who are self-motivated can conveniently complete a task even when the task is challenging, without losing hope or requiring extra encouragement from other people. Self-motivation is deeply rooted in human nature as students who are self-motivated regarding a unit of instruction tends to perform well as they already possess that intrinsic enthusiasm. In essence, for a student to be termed self-motivated, it invariably means he is inspired and determined to pursue and accomplish his academic goals. It is therefore imperative to state that self-motivation has a great influence on student's academic

performance. A student can be motivated because his friends or peers are doing well in a particular unit of instruction. This avails him the opportunity of assuming himself as being in his peer's position, and striving to attain the height reached by his friends or peers. This act of trying to envisage oneself as being in another's position is known as empathy.

Empathy is seen as a driving force for selfless and pro-social behaviour in an individual (Saga, 2014). It is simply the ability to view oneself as being in someone else's condition. The academic system we see today drives students to unlearn the empathy they were born with (Saga, 2014). Empathy drives genuine problem-solving skills as well as cognitive and developmental flexibility which in turn drive academic performance. Acknowledging the achievement of other students is a vital skill to build as a student. This acknowledgement of desirable social behaviour produces an informed feedback to individual student on how to act at any point in time. Basically, their social skills are developed along the line.

Social skills are varieties of attitudes possessed by an individual, which influence his social capabilities, leading to an informed and healthy relationship (Neidiany, Vanessa, & Marta, 2018). They are attributes of an individual which help him to better adapt to challenges faced on daily bases. However, they are social competencies that propel an individual to properly function in any society he finds himself. In the view of Reetu, Vandana, and Purnima (2016), social skill is an individual's ability to adhere to the rules and regulations created to guide the society either in the verbal or non-verbal form. These skills are not inherent in an individual, in essence they are attributes of an individual, which are nurtured and groomed in other to properly fit into the society.

All the components of emotional intelligence discussed above are required to enhance the academic performance of students at every level of education. The extent to which an individual is able to consummate a particular educational goal in schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning is referred to as the academic performance of that individual student. The academic performance of students is assessed using carefully structured tests in the form of examinations, take home assignments, continuous assessment and many more. There is no actual consensus as to which individual factor influences academic performance (one of the reasons for the present study), in essence elements such as student motivation, home environment, test anxiety as well as emotions are often considered when developing theories of school performance (Bossaert, Doumen & Buyse, 2011). It is important, however, to note that academic performance is a diverse concept which embraces several domains of learning.

A good record of academic performance invariably leads to academic success which is simply the ability of a student to achieve what is required of him by an institution. Academic success is a vital concept as it is deeply rooted in the desirable outcomes of life. Individuals who are successful academically tend to be more exposed to good employment opportunities, less likely to be involved in criminal activities, very active in the society and possess a very low level of depression and anxiety (Janelle, 2011). Thus, students who perform well academically are better able to achieve the transition into adulthood and as well achieve carrier and occupational success. It is to ensure that students perform well academically, achieve good transition into adulthood, and as well accomplish carrier and occupational success that this study on the investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State was instituted.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The standard of education in Nigeria has gone far below expectation as the public tends to believe that school leavers today are performing far below what was obtainable in the early 50's and 60's (Jeremiah, Ngbala, & Okpabi, 2017). There seems to be good number of senior secondary school graduates in Rivers State who even after graduating from the secondary school cannot conveniently communicate, either by written or spoken words. Besides effective communication, there seems to be a considerable number of these students also, who go through multiple academic challenges ranging from poor performance in both internal and external examination, unfavourable academic outcome, unpleasant attitudinal disposition, worse still, most of the students drop out as a result of poor performance in their academic activities. As a means to curb these ills, several commendable and informed initiatives have been put forth by both Federal and State governments to trigger the academic performance of senior secondary school students to a greater height. Some of these government introduced interventions are the Universal Basic Education (UBE), Education Trust Fund (ETF) and many more.

Besides these government interventions, experts and researchers have carried out several studies to ascertain the causes of student's poor performance. Factors such as home environment of students, parent's level of education, age of the student, social skills and many more, have been extensively studied by previous

researchers to know their influence on students' academic performance. Despite these interventions and ample findings from these previous studies, the issue (student's poor academic performance) seems far from abating. It is on this regard that the researcher seeks to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the academic performance of students of senior secondary school in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate if self-awareness relates to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain if self-management relates to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Examine if empathy relates to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
4. Explore if self-motivation relates to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
5. Ascertain if social skills relate to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does self-awareness relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does self-management relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does empathy relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
4. To what extent does self-motivation relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
5. To what extent do social skills relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses, tested at the 0.05 level of significance, guided the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between self-management and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between empathy and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
4. There is no significant relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
5. There is no significant relationship between social skills and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. Whenever a research entails assembling numerical data to ascertain if a relationship exists between two or more variables and the degree of relationship determined, such is a correlational research (Obilor, 2018). The population of the study comprised 18,734 senior secondary school (SSS 3) science students of the 276 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State (source; Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, 2019). Applying Taro Yemen's (1984) sample size formula to each of the three Senatorial Districts of Rivers State, a sample size of 1037 senior secondary school (SSS 3) science students was fixed. A multistage sampling technique, comprising of proportional and stratified random sampling approaches, involving 20% of the total number of schools from each of the three Senatorial Districts, was adopted. Based on that, 21 schools were drawn from the 105 schools in Rivers East, 15 schools from the 74 schools in Rivers South-East and 19 schools from the 97 schools in Rivers West Senatorial District

accordingly. All the science students drawn from the 55 selected secondary schools were exposed to purposive sampling technique. The instrument for the study is a questionnaire titled Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), a non-cognitive measure that was developed by the researcher, using the logical construction method with a reliability coefficient of 0.87 obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The scores from the questionnaire responses are compared with students' academic scores of their SSS2 final exams obtained from their school records using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis. The correlation coefficients are categorized as follows:

1. Perfect Correlation: If  $r$  is very close to or equal to  $\pm 1$ , then it said to be a perfect correlation: as one variable increases, the other variable tends to also increase (if positive) or decrease (if negative) in the same or about the same margin.
2. High Degree Correlation: If  $r$  lies between  $\pm 0.50$  and  $\pm 1$  ( i.e.  $\pm 0.50 \leq r \leq \pm 1$ ), then it is said to be a strong correlation.
3. Moderate Degree Correlation: If  $r$  lies between  $\pm 0.30$  and  $\pm 0.49$  ( i.e.  $\pm 0.30 \leq r \leq \pm 0.49$ ), then it is said to be a medium correlation.
4. Low Degree Correlation: If  $r$  lies between  $\pm 0.00$  and  $\pm 0.29$ , but never equal to zero ( i.e.  $\pm 0.00 < r \leq \pm 0.29$ ), then it is said to be a small correlation.
5. No correlation: When the value of  $r$  is zero.

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent does self-awareness relate to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Correlation Analysis of Self-Awareness and Academic Performance of Students of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	r	Remarks
Self -Awareness	24.8	1.9	966	0.61	r is positive and high
Academic Performance	28.2	2.3			

Table 1 shows that a positive correlation coefficient of 0.61 exists between self-awareness and student's academic performance, which indicates that self-awareness is to a high extent related to the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that students with high level of self-awareness are likely to perform well academically, and vice versa.

**Research Question 2:** *To what extent does self-management relate to the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Correlation Analysis of Self-Management and Academic Performance of Students of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	r	Remarks
Self-Management	23.8	2.9	966	0.74	r is positive and high
Academic Performance	28.2	2.3			

A positive correlation coefficient of 0.74 between self-management and student's academic performance is displayed in Table 2 which implies that self-management and academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State are to, a high extent, positively related. Therefore, a student with high level of self-management will most likely do well academically.

**Research Question 3:** *To what extent does empathy relate to academic performance of students of public senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Empathy and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	r	Remarks
Empathy	25.6	2.5	966	0.32	r is positive and low
Academic Performance	28.2	2.3			

Table 3 presents a positive but low correlation coefficient of 0.32 between empathy and student's academic performance which indicates that empathy and the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are positively related to a low extent. In essence, empathy does not influence students' academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Research Question 4:** *To what extent does self-motivation relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Self-Motivation and Academic Performance of Students of Senior Secondary School in Rivers State.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	r	Remarks
Self-Motivation	24.5	2.3	966	0.83	r is positive and high
Academic Performance	28.2	2.3			

Table 4 reveals a positive correlation coefficient of 0.83 between self-motivation and students' academic performance, implying that self-motivation and the academic performance of students of senior secondary school in Rivers State are positively related to a high extent. In other words, a student with high self-motivation will undoubtedly have a high academic performance while a student with low self-motivation will have poor academic performance.

**Research Question 5:** *To what extent do social skills relate to academic performance of students of senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 5: Correlation Analysis of Social Skills and Academic Performance of Students of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	r	Remarks
Social Skills	24.5	2.4	966	0.56	r is positive and high
Academic Performance	28.2	2.3			

A positive correlation coefficient of 0.56 between social skills and students' academic performance which is displayed in Table 5, indicates that social skills and the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State are, to high extent, positively related. In essence, a student with high level of social skills is expected to have high level of academic performance.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: T-transformation Analysis of Self-Awareness and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State.

Variable	N	df	r	t-trans.	$\alpha$	t-crit.	Decision
Self-Awareness	966	964	0.61	18.10	0.05	1.97	H <sub>01</sub> : Rejected
Academic Performance							

The data in Table 6 displays the result of the t-transformed analysis on the relationship between self-awareness and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result shows a significant positive relationship between self-awareness and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State at the 0.05 level of significance (t-trans = 18.10 > t-crit = 1.97 at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; df = 964). Thus, the null hypothesis that "there is no significant relationship between self-awareness and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State" is rejected. This implies that students are high in self-awareness have the tendency to perform high academically.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between self-management and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 7: T-transformation Analysis of Self-Management and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State.

Variable	N	df	r	t-trans.	$\alpha$	t-crit.	Decision
Self-Management	966	964	0.74	25.91	0.05	1.97	H <sub>02</sub> : Rejected
Academic Performance							

The information in Table 7 presents the result of the t-transformed analysis on the relationship between self-management and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result shows a significant positive relationship between self-management and academic performance of

students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State at the 0.05 level of significance ( $t\text{-trans} = 25.91 > t\text{-crit} = 1.97$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $df = 964$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between self-management and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is rejected. This connotes that students who are high in self-management have the tendency to perform high academically.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between empathy and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 8: T-transformation Analysis of Empathy and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	N	df	r	t-trans.	$\alpha$	t-crit.	Decision
Empathy	966	964	0.32	7.93	0.05	1.97	H <sub>03</sub> : Rejected
Academic Performance							

Table 8 presents the result of the t-transformed analysis on the relationship between empathy and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result shows a significant positive relationship between empathy and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State at the 0.05 level of significance ( $t\text{-trans} = 7.93 > t\text{-crit} = 1.97$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $df = 964$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between empathy and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is rejected.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of public senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 9: T-transformation Analysis of Self-Motivation and Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

Variable	N	df	r	t-trans.	$\alpha$	t-crit.	Decision
Self-Motivation	966	964	0.83	35.01	0.05	1.97	H <sub>04</sub> : Rejected
Academic Performance							

The information in Table 9 presents the result of the t-transformed analysis on the relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result shows a significant positive relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State at the 0.05 level of significance ( $t\text{-trans} = 35.01 > t\text{-crit} = 1.97$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $df = 964$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is rejected. This connotes that students who are high in self-motivation have the tendency to perform high academically.

**Hypothesis 5:** There is no significant relationship between social skills and academic performance of students of senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 10: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of Students’ Social Skills and Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State.

Variable	N	df	r	t-trans.	$\alpha$	t-crit.	Decision
Social Skills	966	964	0.56	4.91	0.05	1.97	H <sub>05</sub> : Rejected
Academic Performance							

The information in Table 7 presents the result of the t-transformed analysis on the relationship between social skills and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result shows a significant positive relationship between social skills and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State at the 0.05 level of significance ( $t\text{-trans} = 4.91 > t\text{-crit} = 1.97$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $df = 964$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between social skills and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is rejected. This connotes that students who are high in social skills have the tendency to perform high academically.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the data analysis, the findings of the study revealed that self-awareness relate positively and significantly to the academic performance of the students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is in collaboration with that of Ann (2006) who found that self-awareness is the ability of an individual to comprehend his feelings, behaviour and attitude; and that the vitality of self-awareness exceeds an individual's well-being and mental health to incorporate meaningful effect on a day to-day functioning, thus enhances the academic and other performances of the individual.

The study further showed that self-management has a positive and significant relationship with academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding aligns with the view of Marin (2012) that self-management is an individual's capacity to successfully work towards achieving a meaningful goal; and that self-management is an effective and efficient way of regulating and monitoring one's self in order to better improve cognitive and general attitude. Buckman (2000) also stated, in line with this result that an adequate self-management skill entails a student to be a good decision maker which positively influences his academic performance.

Also, the research finding indicated that empathy relates significantly positively to academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result is in line with the finding of Loana (2019) who noted that empathy is a propelling force for learning, that students who have received more empathy also have a surpassing desire for learning, which also reduces the harmful effect of stress, thereby creating an enabling environment in which students have a sense of belonging the moment they enter a classroom. Kiliopuska (1992) posited that students with high level of empathy have better self-esteem, behave in a healthy manner and also have more positive attitudes, which boost their overall performance.

The result of the study also revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-motivation and academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding agrees with the result by Mishra (2011) who admitted that self-motivation is an essential element of emotional intelligence, and that it is an internal drive which propels an individual towards achieving a particular goal. Scott (2015) also noted that self-motivation triggers student's satisfaction in a particular topic which invariably results to an informed academic performance. Self-motivated students are capable of planning and mastering their learning processes which lead to success in their academic performance.

Finally, the study found that social skills have positive and significant relationship with academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. In support of this result, Dowd & Tierney (2017) revealed that social skills are vital components of an effective communication process and they boost an individual's interpersonal ability. They further noted that social skills promote students' positive behaviour, reduce undesirable behaviour, and positively enhance students' overall well-being and academic performance.

## CONCLUSION

The investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of students of public senior secondary school students in Rivers State has been conducted with the following results: self-awareness, self-management, empathy, self-motivation and social skills have positive and significant relationship with academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study also deduced that students with high level of emotional intelligence often exhibit a desirable social functioning when it comes to interpersonal relationship. The research concludes that emotional intelligence has great impact on an individual's academic and professional achievement; emotional intelligence also promotes thought prioritization as well as attitude management which in turn favour academic performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are put forward to ensure that this study achieves its objectives:

1. Government, through the school management should educate the students through seminar on the importance of self-awareness and its positive impact on academic performance.
2. Students should promote or increase their self-management to enable students achieve educational and other goals.
3. School management should create awareness to the students on how to build empathy, thus, boost their self-esteem which on the long run impact positively on their academic and other performances.

4. Government, through the school management, should conduct enlightenment campaigns for the students to educate them on the importance of self-motivation because it triggers students' satisfaction and better academic performance.
5. Multi-national companies, as part of cooperate social responsibilities, should help the host communities to provide social skills for students to boost their academic performance.

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