
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION: UNVEILING GENDER DISPARITIES AMONG TEACHERS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

There is vast imbalance in emotional intelligence of agricultural teachers across gender line as they see their profession as last resort for survival which affects their commitment to job and decreases their performance on job. This study examined gender disparity of agricultural teachers' emotional intelligence in Oyo State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 90 {45 and 45 male and female respectively} agricultural teachers for the study. The first stage involved the stratification of the State into senatorial districts. The second stage involved the random selection of 3 Local Government Areas each across the senatorial districts. Stage three involved purposive selection of 30 agricultural teachers in each of the selected Local Governments in stage two. Using structured questionnaire, data were obtained on emotional intelligence of agricultural teachers. Data were analyzed using student t-test statistic. T-test revealed no significant difference ($p>0.05$) in emotional intelligence ($t = 0.59$), self-awareness ($t = 0.18$), self-management ($t = -0.02$), social-awareness ($t = 0.62$) and relationship management ($t = 1.04$) exhibited by male and female. The study concluded that the emotional intelligence of the male respondents is not different from their female counterpart. Therefore, management should enhance the emotional capacity of the teachers to increase their competency in order to support students in overcoming negative personality and emotions for improved academic achievement.

Keywords: Gender, Emotional intelligence, Teachers, Disparity

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is regarded as one of the backbones of the Nigerian economy since it produces food and employs the bulk of the population. However, teaching as a profession does not only involve the transference of information/knowledge from teachers to students but also entails multidimensional

human interaction which aims at fulfilling the goals of the organizations (Fapojuwo *et al.*, 2022). Highly qualified teachers are significant in providing high-quality education. The quality of a teacher is determined by their teaching and behaviour, both of which are highly influenced by the emotional and physical ability to adjust to changing situa-

tions. According to Avvisati *et al.* (2013), teaching is a very demanding job that requires a great deal of emotional labour and exhaustion. Heavy professional obligations, interaction with colleagues, students, and work-family strain all add to teachers' emotional labour, and many of them are unable to find a balance between job demands, relationships at school, and family pressure. Teachers may experience frustration and dissatisfaction with both teaching and their educational organization as a result of all of these factors (Fapojuwo *et al.*, 2022).

Teachers' emotional intelligence determines their ability to deal with the unusual events that arise during the teaching and learning process (Shafiq and Rana, 2016). Employees with high emotional intelligence are capable of conquering such challenges with a positive attitude (Shafiq and Rana, 2016). Sadri (2012) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to detect and understand one's emotions and that of others'. According to Bradberry (2012), emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of one's own emotions, manage one's conduct and moods, and comprehend the behaviour and moods of others to improve the quality of personal relationships. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to control their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. This aids in improving teachers' capacity to cope with physiological and psychological stress while executing their tasks as well as maintaining their performance at work (Kassim *et al.*, 2016). According to Shukla (2016), an emotionally intelligent teacher may assess issues arising from perceived organizational unfairness positively and efficiently, but workers with low emotional intelligence may exacerbate the issue due to their incapacity to evaluate the same correctly.

A study by Sony and Mekoth (2016) revealed that employees with high emotional intelligence are more adaptive to situations and demonstrate the capacity to behave in a mature and restrained manner in a crisis. They have the ability to perform better than others, which increases their level of job satisfaction. Likewise, Bambale *et al.* (2015) perceived emotional intelligence to be a major predictor of organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction. Feimi and Vela (2023) expressed that emotional intelligence skills and competencies are effective and important instruments for understanding, supporting, sustaining, and improving the satisfaction and commitment of employees at work. Therefore, emotional intelligence is a crucial construct for the teaching profession since teachers with high emotional intelligence are better able to evaluate and set their own emotions as well as the emotions of their students. This contributes to the development of the teacher-student relationship (Bambale *et al.*, 2015; Long *et al.*, 2016).

Gender appears to have an impact on emotional intelligence. Numerous studies have investigated gender differences in emotional intelligence (EI), producing diverse and sometimes conflicting outcomes. Joseph and Newman (2010) argued that females have a higher level of emotional intelligence than males because they can decode nonverbal emotional information, have greater emotional understanding, sensitive to others' emotions, and demonstrate greater interpersonal competencies. Asmamaw and Semela (2023) reported that female leaders scored significantly higher than their male counterparts in EI, particularly in social awareness and relationship management. However, the study also noted that males outperformed females in the domain of self-management. Similarly, D'Amico and Geraci (2022), in

their research found that females exhibited greater ability-based EI.

However, some recent findings suggest a contrary trend, particularly in workplace contexts. Gul Bhatti (2013) found that the male employees are more emotionally intelligent than the female employees since they are more aware of their emotions and can better regulate them. Likewise, Feimi and Vela (2023) found that male employees demonstrated superior performance across multiple EI dimensions, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management relative to their female counterparts. Similarly, Nehayadav (2018) found that male employees in the IT sector scored higher in EI, especially in self-awareness and stress management.

Tommasi *et al.* (2023) reported no notable differences in the overall EI scores between male and female, a finding echoed by Sangole, Borkar and Date (2023), who observed parity in EI and its component traits among male and female participants. Vadivel and Kate (2019) also concluded that emotional intelligence levels were largely comparable between the sexes. Due to the conflicting findings of emotional intelligence across gender line and the significance of teachers on students' career choice, a study of agricultural teachers' emotional intelligence regarding gender is needed. The study therefore examined the gender disparity of agricultural teachers' emotional intelligence in Oyo State, Nigeria. The hypothesis was tested in null form.

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) of male and female agricultural teachers.

Research Methodology

The research was carried out in Oyo State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 90 (45 male and 45 female, respectively) agricultural teachers for the study. The first stage involved the stratification of the State into senatorial districts. The second stage involved the random selection of 3 Local Government Areas across each senatorial district. Stage three involved purposive selection of 30 teachers in each of the selected local governments in stage two because they teach agriculture. A structured questionnaire was used in collecting data and Goleman Emotional Competencies Model (Goleman *et al.*, 2008) was adopted to measure emotional intelligence of the respondents on the basis of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Student-t test was used to analyze the differences in emotional intelligence and its dimension between male and female agricultural teachers in the study area.

Results and Discussion

Test of Difference in Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) Between Male and Female Employees'

There was no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male ($t = 0.59$) and female (Table 1). This is in line with Tommasi *et al.* (2023) who reported no significant differences in overall EI scores between genders, a finding echoed by Sangole *et al.* (2023), who observed parity in EI and its component traits among male and female participants. Vadivel and Kate (2019) also concluded that emotional intelligence levels were largely comparable between the sexes. However, with reference to the mean scores

(Figure 1), male scored higher ($\bar{x} = 78.15$)

than the female ($\bar{x} = 76.83$). This implies that male agricultural teachers are more emotionally intelligent compared to their female counterparts. This is in line with previous research findings which indicated male employees to be more emotionally intelligent than female (Nehayadav, 2018; Feimi and Vela, 2023).

In contrast, the study of Joseph and Newman (2010) found women to be more emotionally intelligent than men. Asmamaw and Semela (2023) also reported that female leaders scored significantly higher than their male counterparts in EI. Similarly, D'Amico and Geraci (2022), found that females exhibited greater ability-based EI.

Both male and female respondents however have high level of emotional intelligence. According to a study conducted by Sony and Mekoth (2016), male and female employees with high emotional intelligence are more adaptive to circumstances and demonstrate the capacity to respond in a more mature and controlled manner in crisis situation than individuals with low emotional intelligence. They have the ability to do things better and perform better than others, which increases their job satisfaction. Bambale *et al.* (2015) also posited that male and female employees with greater emotional intelligence can recognize the causes of negative and positive emotions, as well as the source of job stress. Consequently, they are able to manage their emotions, which aids in the adoption of suitable coping mechanisms to minimize job weariness. Emotional intelligence is therefore a crucial construct for teaching profession since teachers with high emotional intelligence are better able to evaluate and set their own emotions as well as the emo-

tions of their students. This contributes to the development of teacher-student relationship (Long *et al.*, 2016).

Also, emotional intelligence domains of self-awareness ($t = 0.18$), self-management ($t = -0.02$), social-awareness ($t = 0.62$) and relationship management ($t = 1.04$) do not significantly ($p > 0.05$) differ between male and female employees (Table 1).

The conjecture was that self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness and relationship management among male and female agricultural teachers do not differ. The mean scores reveal that male employees were more emotionally intelligent than female

employees in self-awareness ($\bar{x} = 16.85$), social-awareness ($\bar{x} = 19.20$) and relationship management ($\bar{x} = 20.92$). The female employees were slightly more emotionally intelligent (Figure 1) in self-management ($\bar{x} = 21.19$) than male employees ($\bar{x} = 21.18$).

The findings contradict those of Joseph and Newman (2010), who reported that women scored higher on all emotional intelligence measures than males, with effect sizes ranging from 0.29 to 0.49. It also contradicts Asmamaw and Semela (2023) who reported that female leaders scored significantly higher than their male counterparts in EI, particularly in social awareness and relationship management. However, the study also noted that males outperformed females in the domain of self-management. Likewise, Feimi and Vela (2023) found that male employees demonstrated superior performance across multiple EI dimensions, including self-awareness, self-management, social aware-

ness and relationship management relative to their female counterparts. Similarly, Nehayadav (2018) found that male employees in the IT sector scored higher overall in

Table 1: Test of Significant difference in emotional intelligence between Gender

Variables	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision on H_0
Emotional intelligence	0.59	0.56	Rejected
Self-awareness	0.18	0.86	Rejected
Self-management	-0.02	0.98	Rejected
Social-awareness	0.62	0.54	Rejected
Relationship management	1.04	0.30	Rejected

Source: Field Survey, 2024

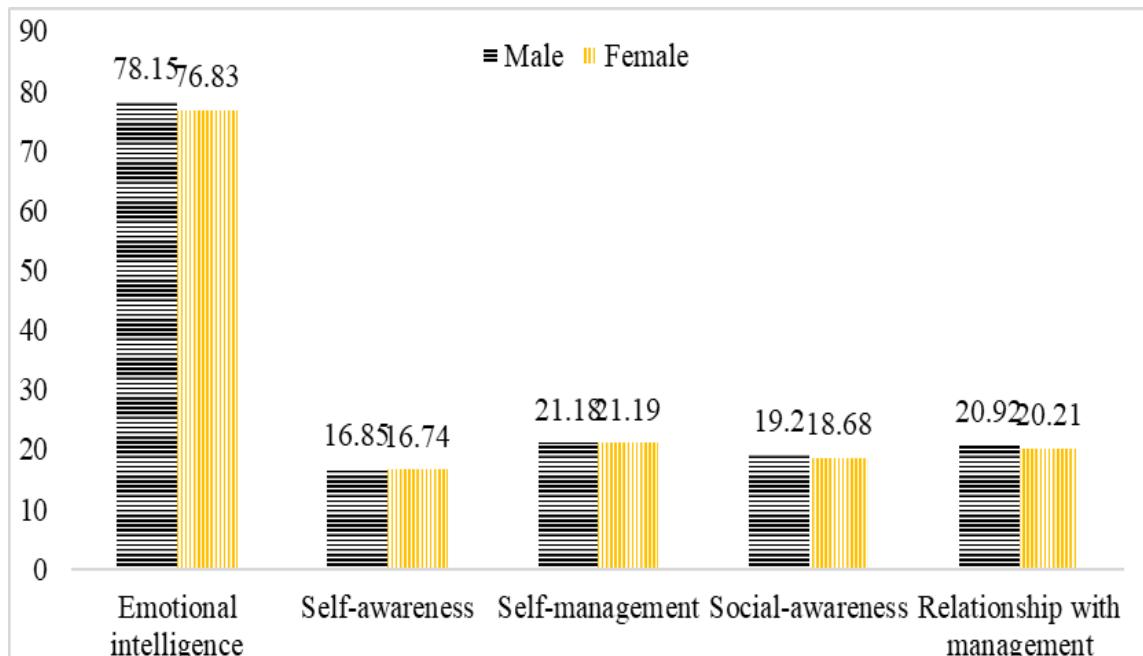


Figure 1: Means for Emotional Intelligence by their Gender

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study provides an insight about emotional intelligence across gender line. Results of the study demonstrate that there is no significant difference between emotional intelligence among male and female. As hypothesized in the research, males have high emotional intelligence self-awareness, social-awareness and relationship management when compared with females. Also, female have high self-management compared to male. Management should therefore, design an emotional intelligence programme for teachers in order to increase their competency and as a result, support students in overcoming negative personality emotions in order to improve academic achievement. The training programme should focus on improving social-awareness, empathy, social skills, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills. Emotional intelligence test can also be incorporated for promotion, staff reviews, recruitment etc.

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