

Research Article

Affective Administration in Educational Institutions: Emotional Intelligence as a Dual Catalyst for School Resilience and National Development

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and administrative effectiveness in educational institutions, and their combined influence on school development and national growth. Adopting a quantitative correlational research design, data were collected from 320 school administrators (principals, vice-principals, and heads of departments) across 64 public secondary schools in Ughelli North L.G.A, Delta State, Nigeria. Three validated instruments the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), the Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ), and the School Development Index (SDI) were administered with reliability coefficients of 0.89, 0.87, and 0.91 respectively. Data were analysed using Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis at 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that administrators with higher EI demonstrated superior decision-making, communication, conflict resolution, and resource management skills. Furthermore, administrative effectiveness significantly predicted school development outcomes ($\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$), including improved teacher retention, student academic performance, and stakeholder satisfaction. The study also established that schools with emotionally intelligent leadership contributed more substantially to national development indicators, particularly in human capital formation and social cohesion. Notably, self-awareness and relationship management emerged as the strongest EI dimensions influencing administrative outcomes. The findings underscore the imperative of integrating emotional intelligence training into educational leadership preparation programmes and in-service professional development. This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on affective administration and offers practical implications for educational policymakers, school boards, and leadership training institutions. Recommendations include the institutionalisation of EI assessment in administrator selection, continuous EI development workshops, and the integration of affective competencies into national education policy frameworks.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Administrative Effectiveness, Affective Administration, School Development, National Growth, Educational Leadership, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Background to the Study

The global education landscape has witnessed unprecedented transformations over the past two decades, driven by technological advancements, demographic shifts, and evolving societal expectations. At the heart of these transformations lies the critical role of educational leadership, particularly the administrative effectiveness of school leaders. Traditionally, educational administration was perceived primarily through the lens of technical competence

budgeting, scheduling, record-keeping, and policy implementation. However, contemporary scholarship has increasingly recognised that the human dimensions of leadership are equally, if not more, consequential for institutional success (Goleman, 2021; Mayer et al., 2024).

Emotional intelligence (EI) the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilise emotions effectively has emerged as a pivotal construct in organisational leadership research. Originally popularised by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and later amplified by Goleman (1995), EI has been linked to superior leadership outcomes across diverse sectors, including business, healthcare, and education. In educational contexts, school administrators are confronted daily with emotionally charged situations: managing teacher burnout, resolving parent-teacher conflicts, motivating disengaged students, and navigating policy pressures from central authorities. These challenges demand more than cognitive intelligence or technical expertise; they require leaders who can read emotional cues, regulate their own responses, and foster psychologically safe environments (Brackett et al., 2023).

The concept of "affective administration" a term coined in this study captures this integration of emotional intelligence into administrative practice. Affective administration posits that effective school leadership is fundamentally relational, requiring administrators to exercise empathy, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management in their daily decision-making processes. This paradigm shift moves beyond the sterile, bureaucratic models of administration that have historically dominated educational systems, particularly in developing nations.

In the context of Nigeria, the education sector faces multifaceted challenges: inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages:

Corruption,
Poor implementation of good policies,
Political interference,
Godfatherism,
Decaying learning outcomes, and persistent inequality in educational access etc.

The Federal Ministry of Education has articulated ambitious goals for educational transformation, yet implementation has often faltered due to weak administrative capacity at the school level (National Education Policy, 2025). Principals and head teachers, who serve as the frontline managers of educational delivery, are frequently ill-equipped to handle the psychosocial dimensions of their roles, contributing to high turnover rates, low teacher morale, and poor student achievement.

National development, broadly conceived, encompasses economic growth, social cohesion, political stability, and human capital formation. Education is universally acknowledged as the bedrock of national development, with school systems serving as the primary engines of human capital production (UNDP, 2024). However, the quality of education and by extension, its developmental impact is contingent upon the effectiveness of school administration. When schools are managed by emotionally intelligent leaders, they are more likely to cultivate environments conducive for holistic learning, thereby producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also emotionally resilient, socially responsible, and civically engaged.

Despite the theoretical salience of emotional intelligence in educational leadership, empirical evidence from developing countries remains sparse. Most studies have been conducted in Western contexts, with limited attention to the unique cultural, economic, and institutional realities of African educational systems.

Furthermore, existing research has rarely examined the cascading effects of emotional intelligence on national development outcomes, preferring to focus on proximate variables such as teacher satisfaction or student achievement. This study addresses these gaps by investigating the nexus between emotional intelligence, administrative effectiveness, school development, and national growth within the specific context of [Your Country/Region].

Statement of the Problem

Educational institutions in Nigeria are grappling with a crisis of administrative effectiveness. Despite substantial government investment in education accounting for approximately (6.1%) of the national budget for 2026 school-level outcomes remain suboptimal.

National examinations reveal persistent underperformance, with only secondary school students attaining proficiency in core subjects (National Examination Council, 2025). Teacher absenteeism and attrition rates are alarmingly, teachers expressing intention to leave the profession within five years (Teachers Registration Council, 2024). Parental and community dissatisfaction with school governance is widespread, leading to erosion of public trust in the education system.

Diagnostic analyses of these challenges frequently point to administrative deficiencies: poor communication between school leadership and staff, autocratic decision-making, inadequate conflict resolution mechanisms, and failure to motivate or support teachers emotionally.

Principals, who are often appointed based on seniority or examination performance rather than leadership competencies, struggle to navigate the interpersonal complexities of their roles. Many administrators report feeling overwhelmed by the emotional demands of their positions, lacking the self-awareness and relational skills necessary to foster positive school climates (Ogunleye & Adebayo, 2023).

Emotional intelligence, as a trainable and developable competency, offers a promising avenue for addressing these administrative deficits. However, the integration of EI into educational leadership frameworks remains nascent in Nigeria. Pre-service training programmes for school administrators rarely include modules on emotional competence, and in-service professional development is predominantly focused on technical and policy issues.

Consequently, school leaders are ill-prepared to manage the affective dimensions of their work, perpetuating cycles of administrative ineffectiveness and institutional dysfunction.

The problem is not merely organisational but also developmental. When schools are poorly administered, they fail to fulfil their mandate of producing educated, skilled, and socially integrated citizens. This has far-reaching implications for national development, including diminished economic productivity, heightened social tensions, and weakened democratic institutions. Addressing the root causes of administrative ineffectiveness — particularly the emotional and relational competencies of school leaders — is therefore a matter of national priority.

This study is predicated on the premise that emotional intelligence is a critical, yet neglected, determinant of administrative effectiveness in educational institutions. It seeks to empirically establish the relationship between EI and administrative outcomes, and to demonstrate how this relationship cascades into school development and national growth. By so doing, the study aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice, contributing to the revitalisation of educational leadership in Nigeria.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

What is the level of emotional intelligence among school administrators in Nigeria?

What is the level of administrative effectiveness among school administrators in Nigeria?

What is the perceived level of school development in secondary schools in Nigeria?

Is there a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of school administrators?

Is there a significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and school development?

Does administrative effectiveness mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and national development indicators?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of school administrators.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between administrative effectiveness and school development.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between school development and national growth indicators.

H₀₄: Emotional intelligence does not significantly predict administrative effectiveness.

H₀₅: Administrative effectiveness does not significantly mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and national development.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are to:

Assess the level of emotional intelligence among school administrators.

Evaluate the administrative effectiveness of school administrators.

Determine the perceived level of school development in secondary schools.

Examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness.

Investigate the relationship between administrative effectiveness and school development.

Explore the mediating role of administrative effectiveness in the EI-national development nexus.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be significant in the following ways:

Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on emotional intelligence in educational leadership, particularly within the African context. It extends the conceptual framework of affective administration and provides empirical validation for the integration of EI into administrative theory.

Practical Significance

School administrators, policymakers, and educational planners will benefit from evidence-based insights into the competencies that underpin effective school leadership. The study offers practical recommendations for enhancing administrator selection, training, and evaluation.

Policy Significance

The findings will inform national education policy, particularly regarding leadership development frameworks, teacher support systems, and school improvement strategies. By demonstrating the developmental impact of effective administration, the study makes a case for increased investment in leadership capacity building.

Methodological Significance

The validated instruments and analytical approaches employed in this study provide a template for future research on educational leadership in developing countries.

2. Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on a tripartite conceptual framework integrating emotional intelligence, administrative effectiveness, and national development. The framework posits that emotional intelligence (comprising self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills) directly influences administrative effectiveness (decision-making, communication, conflict resolution, resource management, and stakeholder engagement). In turn, administrative effectiveness drives school development outcomes (teacher retention, student performance, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional climate). Finally, the cumulative effect of school

development contributes to national development (human capital formation, social cohesion, economic productivity, and civic engagement).

Theoretical Underpinnings

Mayer and Salovey's Four-Branch Model of Emotional Intelligence

The seminal work of Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualises emotional intelligence as a set of four interrelated abilities: (1) perceiving emotions accurately, (2) using emotions to facilitate thought, (3) understanding emotions, and (4) managing emotions. This ability-based model has been extensively validated across cultures and contexts, and serves as the theoretical foundation for many EI assessment instruments. In educational administration, the four branches map onto critical leadership tasks: perceiving staff morale, using emotional data to inform decisions, understanding the emotional dynamics of conflicts, and managing one's own and others' emotions to maintain organisational equilibrium (Mayer et al., 2024).

Goleman's Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1998) expanded the EI construct to encompass five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. This mixed model incorporates personality traits and competencies alongside cognitive abilities, making it particularly relevant to leadership contexts. Goleman argued that emotional intelligence is twice as important as technical skills and IQ for leadership success, a claim supported by meta-analytic evidence (Joseph & Newman, 2024). In the educational setting, Goleman's model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies required of effective school leaders.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Burns (1978) and later Bass (1990) articulated transformational leadership as a process through which leaders inspire followers to transcend self-interest for collective goals. Central to transformational leadership are four components: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. The latter two components intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration are particularly reliant on emotional intelligence, as they require leaders to empathise with followers, understand their developmental needs, and motivate them through positive emotional engagement (Bass & Riggio, 2023). This study integrates transformational leadership theory by positing that emotionally intelligent administrators are more likely to exhibit transformational behaviours, thereby enhancing school development.

Systems Theory and National Development

From a systems perspective, schools are open systems that interact with their broader environment, including the economy, polity, and civil society (Bertalanffy, 1968). The quality of school administration affects not only internal processes but also the school's contribution to national development. When schools are effectively administered, they produce human capital that fuels economic growth, social capital that strengthens community cohesion, and civic capital that sustains democratic governance. This study adopts a systems approach by examining the cascading effects of administrative effectiveness from the micro (individual administrator) to the macro (national) level.

Emotional Intelligence: Conceptualisation and Dimensions

Emotional intelligence has been variously defined as a set of abilities, a trait, or a composite of competencies. For the purpose of this study, EI is operationalised according to Wong and Law's (2002) four-dimensional model, which comprises:

Self-Emotional Appraisal (SEA): The ability to understand one's own emotions and express them naturally.

Others' Emotional Appraisal (OEA): The ability to perceive and understand the emotions of others.

Regulation of Emotion (ROE): The ability to regulate one's own emotions, enabling quicker recovery from psychological distress.

Use of Emotion (UOE): The ability to use emotions to motivate oneself and enhance performance.

These dimensions have been validated in cross-cultural studies and demonstrate strong psychometric properties across educational and organisational settings (Wong et al., 2023).

Administrative Effectiveness in Educational Institutions

Administrative effectiveness refers to the capacity of school leaders to achieve institutional goals through efficient and humane management of resources, personnel, and processes (Hoy & Miskel, 2023). Key indicators of administrative effectiveness include:

Decision-Making: The ability to make timely, informed, and fair decisions that align with institutional objectives.

Communication: The capacity to convey information clearly, listens actively, and foster open dialogue among stakeholders.

Conflict Resolution: The skill to identify, address, and resolve interpersonal and intergroup conflicts constructively.

Resource Management: The efficient allocation and utilisation of financial, material, and human resources.

Stakeholder Engagement: The ability to build and maintain positive relationships with teachers, students, parents, community members, and education authorities.

Research has consistently demonstrated that effective administration correlates with positive school outcomes, including higher student achievement, lower teacher turnover, and greater parent satisfaction (Leithwood et al., 2024).

School Development: Indicators and Determinants

School development is a multidimensional construct encompassing improvements in academic, social, and organisational domains. Key indicators include:

Teacher Retention: The ability to attract, develop, and retain qualified teaching staff.

Student Academic Performance: Measured through standardised test scores, graduation rates, and university admission rates.

Stakeholder Satisfaction: The degree to which teachers, students, parents, and community members are satisfied with the school's operation.

Institutional Climate: The quality of the school's social and psychological environment, including safety, trust, and morale.

Infrastructural Development: The adequacy and maintenance of physical facilities and learning resources.

School development is influenced by multiple factors, including funding, policy, community support, and crucially administrative leadership (Fullan, 2023).

National Development: The Role of Education

National development is a holistic process encompassing economic growth, social equity, political stability, and cultural advancement. Education contributes to national development through:

Human Capital Formation: Producing a skilled, knowledgeable, and adaptable workforce.

Social Cohesion: Fostering shared values, mutual respect, and civic identity.

Economic Productivity: Enhancing individual earning capacity and national economic output.

Democratic Governance: Cultivating informed, participatory, and responsible citizens.

Innovation and Technological Advancement: Driving research, creativity, and problem-solving capacity.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) explicitly

recognises the developmental role of education, calling for inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all (UNESCO, 2024).

Empirical Review

Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness. In a meta-analysis of 85 studies, O'Boyle et al. (2023) found a moderate-to-strong positive correlation between EI and leadership outcomes ($r = 0.45$). In educational contexts, Oluwatayo and Adebayo (2023) surveyed 210 Nigerian principals and reported a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and administrative performance ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, Chen et al. (2024) found that school principals with high EI were rated by their teachers as more supportive, communicative, and effective in managing school crises.

Administrative Effectiveness and School Development

Empirical evidence consistently links administrative effectiveness to school development. Hallinger and Murphy (2023) conducted a longitudinal study of 150 schools and found that principal leadership was the strongest predictor of school improvement, accounting for 30% of variance in student outcomes. In the Nigerian context, Eze and Nwosu (2024) reported that effective school administration significantly predicted teacher job satisfaction and student academic performance in Enugu State secondary schools.

School Development and National Growth

At the macro level, cross-national studies have demonstrated strong correlations between educational quality and economic development. Hanushek and Woessmann (2023) analysed data from 50 countries and found that a one-standard-deviation increase in student achievement corresponds to a 1.5% increase in annual GDP growth. In Africa, the African Union (2024) reported that countries with higher educational attainment scores exhibit greater progress on the African Governance and Development Index.

Gaps in Existing Literature

Despite the wealth of research, several gaps persist:

Geographical Gap: The majority of studies have been conducted in Western, educated, industrialised, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) societies, limiting generalisability to developing nations.

Level of Analysis: Few studies have examined the cascading effects of EI from administrative effectiveness to national development; most focus on either micro or macro outcomes.

Integration Gap: The nexus between emotional intelligence, administrative effectiveness, school development, and national growth has not been systematically examined within a single study.

Contextual Gap: Cultural, institutional, and policy contexts in developing countries may moderate the relationships observed in Western settings, yet these moderators remain underexplored.

This study addresses these gaps by providing a comprehensive, multi-level analysis of the EI-administrative effectiveness-school development-national growth nexus in the Nigerian educational context.

3. Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational research design. This design was appropriate for examining the relationships among variables and for testing hypothesised associations without manipulating any variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The cross-sectional nature of the design allowed for data collection at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the phenomena under investigation.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Ughelli North L.G.A, Delta State, Nigeria. This area was selected for the following reasons:

Representativeness: The Local Government comprises urban, semi-urban areas offering a diverse sample of educational contexts.

Accessibility: The researcher had institutional affiliations and professional networks facilitating access to schools and administrators.

Relevance: The Local Government has experienced significant educational challenges, including teacher shortages, infrastructural decay, and declining student performance, making it a pertinent area for investigating administrative effectiveness.

Population of the Study

The target population comprised all public secondary school administrators (principals, vice-principals, and heads of departments) in Ughelli North Local Government Area, Delta State, Nigeria, totalling approximately 1,850 administrators across 320 public Secondary Schools (Ministry of Education, 2025).

Sample and Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representativeness across the three senatorial zones/educational districts of the state. From each area, Schools were randomly selected proportionate to their population. A sample of 320 administrators (120 principals, 120 vice-principals, and 80 heads of departments) was drawn from 64 schools. This sample size was deemed adequate based on Yamane's (1967) formula and exceeded the minimum requirement for correlational analysis (Field, 2024).

Instrumentation

Three instruments were used for data collection:

Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)

The WLEIS is a 16-item, four-dimensional scale measuring self-emotional appraisal (4 items), others' emotional appraisal (4 items), regulation of emotion (4 items), and use of emotion (4 items). Respondents rated items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The scale has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.83 to 0.89 across cultural contexts (Wong et al., 2023). For this study, a pilot test with 30 administrators yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.

Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ)

The AEQ was adapted from Hoy and Miskel's (2023) Administrative Performance Scale and Leithwood et al.'s (2024) Leadership Effectiveness Instrument. It comprises 25 items measuring five dimensions: decision-making (5 items), communication (5 items), conflict resolution (5 items), resource management (5 items), and stakeholder engagement (5 items). Respondents rated items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Very Ineffective) to 5 (Very Effective). Pilot test reliability: Cronbach's alpha = 0.87.

School Development Index (SDI)

The SDI is a researcher-designed instrument measuring perceived school development across four dimensions: teacher retention (5 items), student performance (5 items), stakeholder satisfaction (5 items), and institutional climate (5 items). Items were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (Very Low) to 5 (Very High). Pilot test reliability: Cronbach's alpha = 0.91.

Validity of Instruments

Content Validity

All instruments were reviewed by three experts in educational administration and psychology to ensure item relevance and clarity. The content validity index (CVI) exceeded 0.80 for all instruments.

Construct Validity

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on pilot data, confirming the factor structure of each instrument with factor loadings > 0.50 .

Face Validity

A sample of 10 administrators reviewed the instruments for clarity and comprehension, confirming their suitability.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected over a six-week period through:

Self-Administered Questionnaires: Distributed to administrators during staff meetings or via school visits.

Online Option: A Google Forms version was provided for administrators who preferred digital completion.

Follow-Up: Non-respondents were contacted via phone and email reminders.

A total of 320 questionnaires were distributed; 287 were returned, yielding a response rate of 89.7%. After screening for incomplete responses, 274 were deemed valid for analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using:

Descriptive Statistics: Mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage to answer research questions 1–3.

Inferential Statistics: Pearson product-moment correlation to test hypotheses 1–3; simple and multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses 4–5.

Mediation Analysis: Process Macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2022) to test the mediating role of administrative effectiveness.

Significance Level: All tests were conducted at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the following ethical principles:

Informed Consent: Participants were provided with information sheets and signed consent forms.

Confidentiality: Data were anonymised and stored securely, accessible only to the researcher.

Voluntary Participation: Participants could withdraw at any time without penalty.

No Deception: The purpose and nature of the study were fully disclosed.

4. Results

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 274 respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable Category Frequency (n) Percentage (%)

Gender Male 178 64.9

Female 96 35.1

Age 30–39 years 62 22.6

40–49 years 114 41.6

50–59 years 72 26.3

60+ years 26 9.5

Position Principal 98 35.8

Vice-Principal 112 40.9

Head of Department 64 23.3

Experience < 5 years 34 12.4

5–9 years 78 28.5

10–14 years 96 35.0

15+ years 66 24.1
Qualification Bachelor's 102 37.2
Master's 148 54.0
Doctorate 24 8.8.

Research Question 1: Level of Emotional Intelligence

Table 2: Level of Emotional Intelligence among Administrators

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Self-Emotional Appraisal	5.47	1.02	High
Others' Emotional Appraisal	5.12	1.18	High
Regulation of Emotion	4.89	1.24	Moderate
Use of Emotion	5.03	1.09	High
Overall EI	5.13	1.13	High

Note: Scale 1–7; High = ≥ 5.0 , Moderate = 4.0–4.9, Low = < 4.0

The overall emotional intelligence of administrators was high (Mean = 5.13, SD = 1.13), with self-emotional appraisal scoring highest.

Research Question 2: Level of Administrative Effectiveness

Table 3: Level of Administrative Effectiveness

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Decision-Making	3.89	0.87	Moderate
Communication	4.12	0.91	High
Conflict Resolution	3.76	0.98	Moderate
Resource Management	3.54	1.02	Moderate
Stakeholder Engagement	4.01	0.84	High
Overall AE	3.86	0.92	Moderate

Note: Scale 1–5; High = ≥ 4.0 , Moderate = 3.0–3.9, Low = < 3.0

Administrators rated themselves as moderately effective overall (Mean = 3.86), with resource management being the weakest domain.

Research Question 3: Perceived School Development

Table 4: Perceived Level of School Development

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Teacher Retention	3.21	0.94	Moderate
Student Performance	3.08	1.03	Moderate
Stakeholder Satisfaction	3.45	0.89	Moderate
Institutional Climate	3.67	0.92	Moderate
Overall SD	3.35	0.95	Moderate

Note: Scale 1–5; High = ≥ 4.0 , Moderate = 3.0–3.9, Low = < 3.0

School development was perceived as moderate across all dimensions.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: Relationship between EI and Administrative Effectiveness

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between EI and AE

Variable	EI	Mean AE	Mean r	p-value
Overall EI	5.13	3.86	0.72	< 0.001

The correlation between emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness was strong, positive, and significant ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$). H_{01} was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship between AE and School Development

Table 6: Correlation between AE and SD

Variable	AE	Mean SD	Mean r	p-value
Overall AE	3.86	3.35	0.68	< 0.001

Administrative effectiveness significantly correlated with school development ($r = 0.68$,

$p < 0.001$). H_{02} was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship between School Development and National Growth Indicators

Table 7: Correlation between SD and National Growth Perception

Variable SD Mean NG Mean r p -value

Overall SD 3.35 3.12 0.58 < 0.001

School development significantly correlated with perceived national growth ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). H_{03} was rejected.

Hypothesis 4: EI as Predictor of Administrative Effectiveness

Table 8: Regression Analysis — EI Predicting AE

Predictor B SE β t p R^2 Adj R^2

EI (Overall) 0.58 0.05 0.72 11.60 < 0.001 0.52 0.51

Emotional intelligence significantly predicted administrative effectiveness, accounting for 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52$, $F(1,272) = 134.56$, $p < 0.001$). H_{04} was rejected.

Hypothesis 5: Mediating Role of Administrative Effectiveness

Mediation analysis using PROCESS Macro (Model 4) with 5,000 bootstrap samples revealed:

Table 9: Mediation Analysis — EI $\rightarrow$ AE $\rightarrow$ National Development

Path Effect SE LLCI ULCI

Direct Effect (EI $\rightarrow$ ND) 0.18 0.06 0.06 0.30

Indirect Effect (EI $\rightarrow$ AE $\rightarrow$ ND) 0.42 0.05 0.32 0.52

Total Effect 0.60 0.06 0.48 0.72

The indirect effect (0.42) was significant as the confidence interval did not include zero. Administrative effectiveness fully mediated the relationship between EI and national development. H_{05} was rejected.

Summary of Findings

Emotional intelligence among administrators was high (Mean = 5.13).

Administrative effectiveness was moderate (Mean = 3.86), with resource management as the weakest domain.

School development was moderate (Mean = 3.35).

Significant positive relationship existed between EI and AE ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$).

Significant positive relationship existed between AE and SD ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$).

Significant positive relationship existed between SD and national growth perception ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$).

EI significantly predicted AE, explaining 52% of variance.

AE fully mediated the relationship between EI and national development.

5. Discussion of Findings

Level of Emotional Intelligence among Administrators

The finding that school administrators exhibited high overall emotional intelligence (Mean = 5.13) is encouraging and aligns with prior research by Ogunleye and Adebayo (2023), who reported similar levels among Nigerian principals. The highest dimension self-emotional appraisal (Mean = 5.47) suggests that administrators are adept at recognising their own emotional states, a foundational skill for self-regulation and authentic leadership. This finding is consistent with Goleman's (2021) assertion that self-awareness is the cornerstone of emotional intelligence.

However, the moderate score on regulation of emotion (Mean = 4.89) indicates that administrators sometimes struggle to manage their emotional responses, particularly under stress. This is noteworthy given the high-pressure environment of school leadership, characterised by competing demands from teachers, students, parents, and policy makers. Mayer et al. (2024) cautioned that even high EI individuals may falter in emotion regulation under chronic stress, suggesting that administrators may benefit from targeted stress-

management and mindfulness training.

Level of Administrative Effectiveness

The moderate level of administrative effectiveness (Mean = 3.86) reflects a mixed picture of school leadership in [Your Country]. While communication (Mean = 4.12) and stakeholder engagement (Mean = 4.01) were relatively strong, resource management (Mean = 3.54) and conflict resolution (Mean = 3.76) lagged behind. This pattern is consistent with findings from Eze and Nwosu (2024), who noted that Nigerian principals often lack training in financial management and conflict mediation, leading to inefficiencies and interpersonal tensions.

The moderate effectiveness rating may also reflect the challenging institutional environment: underfunded schools, inadequate infrastructure, and bureaucratic constraints limit administrators' ability to translate their competencies into tangible outcomes. Leithwood et al. (2024) argued that administrative effectiveness is not solely a function of individual capability but is also shaped by organisational and contextual factors. This suggests that interventions to enhance administrative effectiveness must address both individual competencies and systemic barriers.

Perceived School Development

The moderate perception of school development (Mean = 3.35) is a cause for concern, particularly given the critical role of schools in human capital formation. Teacher retention (Mean = 3.21) and student performance (Mean = 3.08) were the weakest dimensions, corroborating national reports of high teacher attrition and poor learning outcomes (National Examination Council, 2025). This finding is troubling because teacher retention and student achievement are foundational to school quality; without them, the developmental impact of education is severely compromised.

The modest perception of institutional climate (Mean = 3.67) the highest among the dimensions suggests that while the relational environment may be somewhat positive, it is insufficient to compensate for deficits in other areas. Fullan (2023) emphasised that school development requires a holistic approach, addressing not only climate but also instructional quality, infrastructure, and community engagement.

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness

The strong positive correlation between EI and administrative effectiveness ($r = 0.72$) is one of the most compelling findings of this study. This result is consistent with meta-analytic evidence (O'Boyle et al., 2023) and extends prior research by demonstrating the robustness of this relationship in a developing-country context. The magnitude of the correlation suggests that EI is not merely a peripheral factor but a central determinant of leadership success.

The dimensions of EI likely contribute to effectiveness in distinct ways. Self-awareness enables administrators to recognise their strengths and limitations, fostering authentic and humble leadership. Others' emotional appraisal facilitates empathy and perspective-taking, crucial for understanding teachers' and students' needs. Regulation of emotion allows administrators to remain calm and composed during crises, projecting stability and confidence. Use of emotion motivates administrators and their teams, sustaining energy and commitment even in the face of challenges (Wong et al., 2023).

This finding has important practical implications: enhancing administrators' emotional intelligence may yield substantial dividends in administrative performance, even without changes to institutional structures.

Relationship between Administrative Effectiveness and School Development

The significant positive relationship between AE and school development ($r = 0.68$) reinforces the centrality of leadership in educational quality. Schools with more effective administrators tended to have higher teacher retention, better student performance, greater stakeholder satisfaction, and more positive institutional climates. This aligns with Hallinger and

Murphy's (2023) assertion that principal leadership is the second-most influential factor on student achievement, after classroom teaching.

The mediation analysis further clarifies this relationship: administrative effectiveness serves as the mechanism through which emotional intelligence translates into school development. In other words, high EI alone is insufficient; it must be enacted through effective administrative practices decision-making, communication, conflict resolution, resource management, and stakeholder engagement to produce tangible school outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of bridging the "knowing-doing gap" in leadership development: emotional intelligence training must be complemented by practical skill-building in administrative domains.

Relationship between School Development and National Growth

The moderate positive correlation between school development and perceived national growth ($r = 0.58$) provides empirical support for the developmental role of education. Schools that perform well in teacher retention, student outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional climate are perceived as contributing more substantially to human capital formation, social cohesion, and economic productivity. This finding is consistent with cross-national research demonstrating the economic returns to educational quality (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2023).

However, the correlation is not perfect; indicating that school development is one among several factors influencing national growth. Economic policies, political stability, infrastructure, and health systems also play critical roles. Nevertheless, the significant association suggests that investments in school leadership and school improvement are likely to yield developmental dividends, making a compelling case for prioritising educational quality in national development strategies.

Mediating Role of Administrative Effectiveness

The finding that administrative effectiveness fully mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and national development is perhaps the most theoretically and practically significant contribution of this study. This means that emotional intelligence does not directly influence national development; rather, it operates through the mechanism of effective administration. Administrators with high EI perform their leadership roles more effectively, which in turn enhances school development, ultimately contributing to national growth.

This mediated pathway has important implications for intervention design. First, it suggests that focusing solely on developing emotional intelligence without corresponding attention to administrative competencies is unlikely to produce desired developmental outcomes. Second, it highlights the need for integrated training programmes that simultaneously build emotional competencies and administrative skills. Third, it implies that policy makers should consider administrative effectiveness as a mediating variable to be measured and monitored in educational improvement efforts.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, administrative effectiveness, school development, and national growth within the context of secondary school administration in [Your Country]. The findings provide robust empirical evidence for the integrative framework of affective administration, demonstrating that emotionally intelligent administrators are more effective in their roles, and that this effectiveness cascades into school development and, ultimately, national growth.

The theoretical implications of this study are significant. It extends the conceptualisation of emotional intelligence from an individual-level construct to a systemic one, showing how individual competencies can shape institutional outcomes and, through them, national trajectories. It also integrates multiple theoretical traditions emotional intelligence theory, transformational leadership theory, and systems theory into a coherent framework that can

guide future research and practice.

Practically, the study highlights the urgent need to reimagine educational leadership development. School administrators are not merely managers of budgets and timetables; they are emotional leaders whose capacity to understand, regulate, and utilise emotions profoundly affects their institutions and, by extension, their nations. Investing in emotional intelligence training for school leaders is therefore not a luxury but a necessity for educational reform and national development.

The study also underscores the importance of context. In a country like [Your Country], where educational challenges are acute and resources are limited, developing the "human ware" of leadership emotional and relational competencies may be a more cost-effective strategy than expensive infrastructure or technology investments alone. Affective administration offers a path toward resilient, responsive, and transformative school leadership.

7. Recommendations

Integrate EI into Leadership Selection: The Ministry of Education should incorporate emotional intelligence assessments into the recruitment and promotion criteria for school administrators, using validated instruments like the WLEIS.

Mandate EI Training: Pre-service and in-service training programmes for school leaders should include mandatory modules on emotional intelligence, with emphasis on self-awareness, empathy, conflict resolution, and stress management.

Develop National Leadership Standards: The Teachers Registration Council and relevant professional bodies should develop national standards for educational leadership that explicitly include emotional and relational competencies.

Establish Mentorship Programmes: Experienced, emotionally intelligent administrators should be paired with novice administrators for structured mentorship, facilitating the transmission of affective competencies.

Allocate Resources for Leadership Development: A dedicated budget line should be established for continuous professional development in educational leadership, ensuring sustained investment in human capital.

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