

## Do Spirituality, Personality Traits and Gender Predict Emotional Intelligence among Undergraduates?

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### Abstract

This study examined Spirituality, Personality traits, Gender as predictors of emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra. A total of 300 participants comprising 52 males and 148 females were involved in the study. Their ages ranged from 16 to 29 years, with the mean of 20.43 and standard deviation of 2.21. Standardized self report measures of Spirituality, Personality traits and Emotional Intelligence were adopted for data gathering. Spiritual Orientation Scale in (SOS) by Umeaku and Chibueze (2024) is a brief instrument with two domains (internal and external spiritual orientation); Ten- Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) by Gosling et al (2003) is a brief personality measure with five domains (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability); Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) by Schutte et al (1998) measures emotional intelligence. Survey design was utilized, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was adopted for hypotheses testing. Three hypotheses were adopted for the study. The results of the study show that spirituality and personality predicted emotional intelligence, while gender did not predict. Hypothesis one which stated that Spirituality will predict emotional intelligence was accepted at  $t(2.106)$ ,  $p < .036$ . The second hypothesis which stated that Personality will predict emotional intelligence was accepted at  $t(2.357)$ ,  $p < .019$ . The third hypothesis which stated that Gender will predict emotional intelligence was rejected at  $t(.188)$ ,  $p < .851$ . Based on findings, recommendations were made; research efforts should focus on emotional intelligence to find out the various variables influencing, deteriorating and enhancing it.

**Keywords:** *Spirituality, Personality Traits, Gender, Emotional Intelligence*

### Introduction

In our educational environment today, undergraduate students are increasingly confronted with catastrophic burst of emotions and also plagued on what and how to respond to them. Due to the scarcity and lack of attention of emotional intelligence being taught and understood, this has led to reaction and dependence on the innate sudden burst of uncontrollable malicious emotions among undergraduates and youths. The focus of most tertiary institution is to produce good and well fit candidates that would give back to the economy and community at large, while failing to pay attention to their emotional intelligence, mental health and behavioral change which are their psychological well-being. Edobor and Ebiye (2017) found that lack of emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of negative behaviours among adolescents which includes bullying, truancy, aggressiveness, fighting, and drug addictions which are detrimental to their mental well-being. To promote emotional intelligence in institutions among undergraduates' students needs thorough insights, regulation, and proper consistent check on the undergraduates' students, which can be achieved through the efficient and effective maximization of awareness on emotional intelligence, spirituality, personality trait and gender on the benefits accompanied with receptive behaviours and attitude towards their studies (Kasapoglu, 2015). One of many factors such as emotion dynamics and dependence stem up from spirituality, personality trait and gender, which affects undergraduates' students tenacity and productivity in the institution.

Emotional Intelligence is defined as "a set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotion in oneself and others, and the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve in one's life" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional Intelligence in Nigeria is currently at a compulsory need and should be a matter of concern to the federal government, local communities, society and the international community as a whole. Emotional Intelligence refers to an individual's capacity to perceive, comprehend, and manage their own emotions, as well as recognize and influence the emotions of others. It involves a set of skills that enable effective emotional expression, empathy, and interpersonal relationships. Emotionally intelligent individuals are adept at understanding the nuances of their feelings, regulating emotional responses, and navigating social situations with sensitivity. This multifaceted concept encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, collectively

contributing to an individual's ability to navigate the complexities of human emotions in both personal and social contexts. Recognized as a crucial aspect of personal and professional success, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in shaping one's behaviour, decision-making, and overall well-being (Salovey & Mayer, 2019).

Spirituality is defined as a person's relationship with the sacred or transcendent, with their ultimate values, with what purpose and meaning that relationship enables them to create in their life; the search for the sacred or transcendent (Buie, 2019). Wolman (2001) defined spiritual intelligence as "the human capacity to ask ultimate questions about the meaning of life, and to simultaneously experience the seamless connection between each of us and the world in which we live." Spirituality helps us tune our minds to the inner Self of Consciousness. Spiritual Intelligence is the capacity to integrate the body, mind and intellect and then transcending beyond them. It is about living in harmony with the universe, realizing the Supreme Oneness. Prophets from almost all societies have described other worlds and spirits that guide their lives. Because of the often ineffable nature of the spiritual experience, it has most frequently been described through metaphor, analogy or poetry. The use of metaphor, analogy or poetry to study spirituality provides sufficient polyvalence to enable each individual to find an interpretation that is relevant to her or his unique experiences. Unfortunately, these rich allegorical methods do not allow for researchers of spirituality to compare differences among groups or to correlate with any true confidence spirituality and other variables.

Personality traits reflect people's characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Personality traits imply consistency and stability—someone who scores high on a specific trait like Extraversion is expected to be sociable in different situations and over time (Diener et al., 2023). Among the problems of the urban adolescents in Nigeria are lacks of stable character traits, associated with moral laxity, greed, disrespect and violence, all which can be positively moderated through the dispositional influence of emotional intelligence that may eventually lead to positive personality stability. Feldman (2007) describes personality as the pattern of enduring characteristics that differentiates a person – the patterns of behavior that make each individual unique.

Gender is the distinction between male, female, and genders which are a combination of male and female, or neither male nor female, as reported by a respondent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Gender is a hugely important, influential and complex categorization system which has profound consequences on the lives of everyone -- those who always notice it, because they do not fit within its remit, and those who virtually never notice it, because they do. Think back to the last time you completed a form asking for personal details (e.g., for medical reasons or insurance). Chances are you were expected to mark either "male" or "female. Many of you, like us, marked one box without any thought. In contrast, some of you may have agonized over which box to tick, perhaps wishing for another option, as neither option allowed you to be true to how you see yourself. The forced choice was yet another instance reminding you that you do not "fit" within this either/or categorization system. Gender is a critical social issue because it is associated with various social inequalities, exclusions, and the experience of abuse.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria today, the recognition of a notable gap between the spirituality, personality trait and gender factors and their collective impact on emotional intelligence remains insufficiently explored in the context of the undergraduate experience. The key to the awareness of emotional intelligence among undergraduates' students and youth's lies with the education managerial sector, good understanding of spiritual influence, gender disparities and holistic welfare of what and how the students' are facing and going through socially and psychologically, but not everyone holding a managerial position or with the power have such knowledge and enthusiasm to navigate the defects in undergraduates' students' emotional behavioural patterns. The general management problems in emotional intelligence include an offensive and maladaptive behaviors exhibited by undergraduate students to lecturers due to isolation, lacking a comprehensive exploration of how spirituality, personality traits, and gender collectively predict emotional intelligence. Understanding the intertwined dynamics of these predictors is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support systems that address the multifaceted nature of emotional intelligence among undergraduates.

However, addressing these gaps in the literature is imperative for advancing our understanding of the complex interplay between spirituality, personality traits, gender, and emotional intelligence among undergraduates, thereby contributing valuable insights for educational institutions and counseling services. Despite the growing body of research on emotional intelligence, there is a gap in understanding the nuanced or subtle predictions between spirituality, personality traits, gender, and emotional intelligence among the undergraduate population. Hence, the study is therefore placed to assess factorial structure of the construct "Spirituality, personality trait and gender as predictor of emotional behaviour".

### Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

- A. Will spirituality predict emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State?
- B. Will personality traits predict emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State?
- C. Will gender predict emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State?

### Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine whether spirituality and personality will predict emotional intelligence in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. To investigate if spirituality predicts emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State.
2. To investigate if personality traits predict emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State.
3. To investigate if gender predicts emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State.

### Relevance of the Study

Theoretically, findings of this study will add to the existing body of knowledge particularly in the area of undergraduates' student emotional intelligence. It will also generate data that will support and sustain the interest of researchers across disciplines on the prediction of spirituality, personality trait and gender among undergraduate students in different tertiary institutions. It will also serve as a resource for further academic researcher on this topic. Practically, this study will be helpful to the society, educational institutions, organisations, institutions and other groups in understanding and creating an environment that will pay more attention to emotional intelligence.

### Theoretical Framework

#### The Big-Five Personality Theory

The present study aims to explore the predictive linkage of spirituality, personality traits, and gender on emotional intelligence. The study is grounded in the theoretical framework of the Big-Five Personality Theory, which posits the broad dimension of personality, influencing behavior and responses to various situations. This theory suggests that undergraduates' students' are most likely to abide by their innate, deviating from the norms and ethic of the educational settings hereby disrupting their behaviour, this affects spirituality, personality traits and gender identities. The Big-Five trait theory is a widely accepted model which includes openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (or emotional stability) also known as OCEAN. Each trait represents a broad dimension of personality, influencing behavior and responses to various situations. Research has shown that spirituality is positively predicated with emotional intelligence. Undergraduates' students' with less or no spiritual reverence are more likely to go overboard, less empathic and low on emotional intelligence, as they perceive that their actions are not being questioned. Similarly, personality traits have been found to be positively predictive to emotional intelligence. Undergraduates' students' who are knowledgeable on their personality traits are more likely to utilize or use emotional intelligence, as they perceive the benefits it has on their behaviour.

Vidhi and Saranya (2022) conducted a comprehensive study to explore the intricate relationships between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and mental well-being. Their research focused on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on college students' happiness, revealing a complex web of factors that influenced their mental health. The pandemic brought about significant changes in students' social lives, family income, and academic infrastructure, leading to a myriad of emotions that challenged their mental well-being and pursuit of happiness. In response to these challenges, students were compelled to develop their emotional management skills and explore spirituality. This led to a deeper understanding of the interplay between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and mental well-being. The study's findings highlighted the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence to mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic on mental health.

Floreset et al (2013) investigated the relationship between spirituality and emotional intelligence in leaders, shedding light on the distinct nature of these two constructs. Their study involved 159 leaders who completed the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Daily Spiritual Experiences Scale, and Spiritual Well-Being Scale. The results showed that emotional intelligence components loaded onto three separate factors, while spirituality measures loaded onto distinct factors. This supported the notion that emotional intelligence and spirituality are distinct constructs that contribute uniquely to an individual's overall well-being.

Homayouni (2011) examined the relationship between personality traits and emotional intelligence in learning English and math. The study involved 110 university students who completed the NEO-FFM PI inventory and Schutte's Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test. Results revealed that learning math was negatively correlated with neuroticism and positively correlated with extroversion and conscientiousness. In contrast, learning English was positively correlated with extroversion, openness to experience, and agreeableness. These findings highlighted the significance of personality traits and emotional intelligence in academic performance.

Agrawal (2022) conducted an empirical study on gender differences in emotional intelligence and its subscales. The study defined emotional intelligence as the capacity to process emotional information accurately and efficiently. It explored the difference in emotional states between male and female employees in the workplace, using the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) among 360 middle-level managers. The results provided empirical evidence for the impact of emotional intelligence subscales on gender differences, highlighting the need for gender-sensitive approaches to emotional intelligence development.

Ahmad (2009) investigated emotional intelligence and gender differences, reporting that males have higher emotional intelligence than females. The study involved 160 subjects, with 80 males and 80 females from N.W.F.P, using the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) to assess emotional intelligence levels. However, this finding contradicts the common assumption that females are more emotionally intelligent than males. Further research is needed to explore the nuances of gender differences in emotional intelligence.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Spirituality will positively and significantly predict Emotional intelligence among undergraduates in NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka.
2. Personality traits will positively and significantly predict Emotional intelligence among undergraduates in NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka.
3. Gender will positively and significantly predict Emotional intelligence among undergraduates in NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

Three Hundred (300) Undergraduate students in Awka South LGA Anambra, served as the participants in the study. These participants are 152 males and 148 females whose ages ranged from 16-29 years with the mean age of 20.43 and standard deviation of 2.21. The participants were selected using simple random sampling technique, which involves selecting participants randomly that is accessible and readily available, so that all will have chances to participate.

#### **Instruments**

Three sets of instruments were used for the study, namely; Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) developed by Schutte et al., (1998). Spiritual Orientation Scale (SOS) developed by Umeaku&Chibueze (2024). Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) developed by Gosling et al., (2003). In addition, the demographic variable which includes 300 was included in the overall instrument used for the study.

#### **Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)**

The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test was developed by Schutte et al (1998) which was designed to measure general Emotional intelligence (EI) based on self-report responses to items. It is a 33-item which is measured by on a 5 - point Likert format ranging from strongly disagree, 1; somewhat disagree, 2; neither agree nor disagree, 3; somewhat agree, 4; strongly agree 5. A sample item of the scale include: "I know when to speak about my personal problems to others (Item 1)", "I know when to speak about my personal problems to others (Item 33)". Convergent and Discriminant Validity was used to check the validity of this scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient value from .87 to .90 was achieved in the current study indicating good internal reliability; this was obtained by Schutte et al (1998) via their study.

#### **Spiritual Orientation Scale (SOS)**

Spiritual Orientation Scale (SOS) developed by Umeaku and Chibueze (2024) which was designed to evaluate spiritual orientation of individuals into two domains of internal and external domains. It is a 5-item instrument which is measured on a 5-point Likert format ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The items are: "Spiritual controls the physical (item 1)", "Inner voice is superior to the outer voice (item 2)", "Meditation brings solution (item 3)", "Humans are controlled by spiritual forces (item 4)" and "The five senses are not enough (item 5)"; and all the items are direct-scored. Factor analysis was used to establish the construct validity and factor loadings of the instrument. The KMO and Bartlett's test show significant

positive value at  $p < 0.000$ . It has a general Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of .87 indicating good internal reliability. The reliability of the first domain which is Internal Spiritual Orientation Scale (ISOS) is  $r = .767$ ; it is measured with items 1, 3 and 5, while the reliability of the second domain which is External Spiritual Orientation Scale (ESOS) has the reliability of  $r = .572$ , and is measured with items 2 and 4. The overall psychometric properties of the instrument established its validity and reliability using the population of undergraduates with the Norm Values (NV) of 9 and 6 for ESOS and ISOS respectively; score above the NV indicates low spiritual orientation, and the score above the NV shows high spiritual orientation.

### **Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)**

The instrument used in this study for data collection of personality traits is the ten-item personality inventory by Gosling et al (2003). The Ten Item Personality Inventory is a brief 10 item questionnaire that is used to measure the big five personality traits. The five-factor model which includes: Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism are the personality test that would be used in this study to correlate with marital satisfaction. This instrument has a Likert style response pattern ranging from 1 to 7. Where 1 = Disagree strongly 2 = Disagree moderately 3 = Disagree a little 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Agree a little 6 = Agree moderately 7 = Agree strongly. There are direct scoring and reverse scoring in this questionnaire. The direct scoring items are numbers 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 while the reverse scoring are 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. To attain the score of one's personality, you find the average of the two items that make up the said personality, by recoding the reverse score and adding it to the standard score then dividing it by two. Take for instance, using extroversion as an example: A participant has scores of 5 on item 1 (Extraverted, enthusiastic) and 2 on item 6 (Reserved, quiet). First, recode the reverse-scored item (i.e., item 6), replacing the 2 with a 6. Second, take the average of the score for item 1 and the (recoded) score for item 6. So the TIPI Extraversion scale score would be:  $(5 + 6)/2 = 5.5$ . Some of the items in this questionnaire includes: I see myself as Extraverted and enthusiastic, critical and quarrelsome, dependable and self-disciplined, anxious, easily upset, open to new experiences, complex. The norm scores for the TIPI were also reported thus; extraversion 4.44, agreeableness 5.23, conscientiousness 5.40, neuroticism 4.83, and openness to experience 5.38. Scores equal to or higher than the norms indicate that the individual manifests the specific personality trait while scores lower than the norm indicates that the individual does not manifest the specific personality trait.

Gosling et al (2003) reported that these scales showed high convergent validity with correlations with Big Five Inventory ranging from .65 (Openness), .70 (Agreeableness), .75 (Conscientiousness) to .81 (Neuroticism), and .87 (Extraversion). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained were found in the range .40 - .73 for each subscale where; Agreeableness = .40, Openness = .45, Conscientiousness = .50, Extraversion = .48, and Neuroticism = .73. Also Umeaku et al (2021), validated the ITIP in Nigeria using University Students of UNN. The results indicated that TIPI has construct validity at  $627^{**}$  ( $p < .001$ ) significant level. On concurrent validity, the five domains of TIPI concurred with the five domains of the forty-four-item Big-Five Personality Inventory at  $271^{**}$ ,  $419^{**}$ ,  $436^{**}$ ,  $163^{**}$  and  $251^{**}$  ( $p < .001$ ) significant level. On discriminant validity, the five domains of TIPI discriminated with Neuroticism domain of the SCL 90 except the Emotional Stability domain at  $-.428^{**}$ ,  $-.243^{**}$ ,  $-.047$ ,  $.447^{**}$  and  $-.505^{**}$  ( $p < 0.01$ ) significant level. Finally, on reliability, TIPI is reliable with Cronbach Alpha of  $r = .71$  and Split-Half of  $r = .76$ .

### **Procedure**

Three Instruments for assessment (Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)), (Spiritual Orientation Scale (SOS)) and (Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)) were collapsed into one questionnaire designed to measure the study variables. Demographics data such as age, gender, marital status, highest education qualification, academic year, ethnicity, religion, and department were included in the questionnaire to capture characteristics of interest of the study.

The researchers proceeded to the field for data gathering; they sought rapport with the selected sample as well as their permission to participate in the academic research work. They explained the nature and essence of the study to the respondent and assured them of confidentiality of whatever response they will provide. The researchers met the respondents in their various departments, gaining access to them. Afterwards, the researchers distributed the questionnaires stayed close for any available questions or confusion when the respondents filled the questionnaires. In an effort to encourage honest answers, respondents' names were not included in the demographical data, at the ed. The validly filled questionnaires were coded and used for analyses.

### **Inclusion Criteria**

Undergraduates

### **Exclusion Criteria**

Non-graduates and postgraduates

### Design and Statistics

The study utilized survey design, and Multiple Regression analysis was utilized for the data analysis because the study seeks to study the prediction of three independent variables on one dependent variable among the undergraduates.

### Results

The details of the results from the statistical analyses of the data obtained in the study as well as the summary of the tested hypotheses are presented below:

**Table 1:**

| Gender  | Mean    | N   | Std. Deviation |
|---------|---------|-----|----------------|
| Males   | 121.093 | 151 | 4.4352         |
| Females | 121.121 | 149 | 4.3557         |
| Total   | 121.107 | 300 | 4.3886         |

The table above shows the mean (x) scores of males and females on emotional intelligence (males are more emotionally intelligent than females at 4.4352 and 4.3557 respectively).

**Table 2:**

| Model      | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients<br>Beta | t      | Sig. |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|--------|------|
|            | B                           | Std. Error |                                   |        |      |
| (Constant) | 114.331                     | 3.545      |                                   | 32.253 | .000 |
| ISOS       | .591                        | .373       | .093                              | 1.587  | .114 |
| ESOS       | .642                        | .305       | .123                              | 2.106  | .036 |
| EX         | -.137                       | .496       | -.019                             | -.276  | .782 |
| AG         | -.139                       | .523       | -.016                             | -.265  | .791 |
| CON        | -.516                       | .614       | -.061                             | -.840  | .401 |
| ES         | 1.539                       | .653       | .149                              | 2.357  | .019 |
| OP         | -.150                       | .371       | -.027                             | -.404  | .686 |
| Gender     | .096                        | .508       | .011                              | .188   | .851 |

The table above shows that Spirituality positively and significantly predicted emotional intelligence at,  $t(2.106)$ ,  $p < .036$ ; Personality positively and significantly predict emotional intelligence was accepted at,  $t(2.357)$ ,  $p < .019$ ; but Gender did not predict emotional intelligence was rejected at  $t(.188)$ ,  $p < .851$  among the undergraduates

### Summary of Results

- i. Spirituality (ESOS) positively and significantly predicted emotional intelligence among undergraduate students.
- ii. Personality trait (ES) positively and significantly predicted emotional intelligence among undergraduate students.
- iii. Gender did not significantly predict emotional intelligence among undergraduate students.

### Discussion

Fundamentally, the main aim of the research was to investigate the predictive strength of spirituality, personality traits, gender on emotional intelligence among Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduate students in Awka, Anambra State. Three hypotheses were tested; hence the discussion is based on the outcome of the study. The first hypothesis which states that there would be a significant positive prediction of spirituality and emotional intelligence among Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduate students in Awka, Anambra State was accepted. This finding indicates that spirituality predicts emotional intelligence. This finding is in support of Ibrahim et al (2022), they investigated Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being: Impact on society. They reported that mental health issues are frequently ignored and overlooked by society because they cannot be physically expressed. Furthermore, this perception has long been entrenched in the Malaysian society as the stigma against individuals who suffer from this problem remains at the same level even though awareness about mental health issues has spread significantly. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being among counseling clients in one of the government agencies in Pahang, Malaysia, during the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of 157

counseling clients answered the questionnaire. SmartPLS was used to evaluate the data content of the questionnaire and test the research hypotheses. The results of the analysis yielded several significant findings. First, there was a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence (i.e., self-awareness, social awareness and emotional receptivity) and spiritual intelligence. Second, there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Third, there is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. Fourth, there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and psychological well-being. The findings of this study confirmed the important role of spiritual intelligence as a mediating variable in the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Furthermore, the findings of this study can be used as essential recommendations to help practitioners understand the diversity of perspectives on the construct of emotional intelligence and develop a spiritual intelligence management plan in counseling sessions to help those with mental issues achieve and maintain their emotional wellbeing in daily life. Sodhi (2016), who examined Emotional Intelligence and Spirituality: A Review. He reported that it is generally believed that people with high I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) better accomplish in life. But some recent researches indicate that people's EI (emotional intelligence) and SI (spiritual intelligence) might be greater predictors of success than their I.Q. (Goleman, 1995). 'EI' is the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. 'Spirituality' is the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others, and the entire universe. This study reviewed the previous researches which explored association between emotional intelligence and spirituality. Sample size is 40 published articles, over the period 1998-2012. Findings of this study are EI and SI is associated with lower level of stress and better health outcomes and has a positive impact on psychological as well as physical health functioning, and also plays a better role in context of education and organization.

The second hypothesis which states that there would be a significant positive prediction of personality traits and emotional intelligence among Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduate students in Awka, Anambra State was accepted. This finding was supported by Dhani and Shama (2017) investigated Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Personality: A Study in Indian Context. They reported the objective of this study is to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Personality among middle level management in India. For this purpose, data was collected from 200 randomly selected managers both male and female from various organizations in India. An 18 items questionnaire DKEIT, concerning EI and 50 items questionnaire MPI, concerning personality was used to collect the data for the study. The findings of the study suggest that empathetic and self-confident individuals are more emotionally intelligent than the introverts, pessimists, neurotics and dominant individuals.

Kant (2014) investigated Interrelationship between Personality Traits and Emotional Intelligence of Secondary Teachers in India. He reported that Emotional intelligence is an ability to control our emotions in abnormal situations. Now it is widely accepted that emotional intelligence also a key determinant for success and also in development in personality. Personality is a sum total of emotions. By taking a sample of 200 secondary school teachers an attempt has made to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and different factors of personality of secondary school teachers. Results indicated that there was no significant difference between emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers in relation to gender and stream in which they are teaching. Further, a positive relationship found in the emotional intelligence and some of personality factors but many personality factors were negatively related to emotional intelligence of different groups of secondary school teachers but most type of relationship was not significant.

The third hypothesis which states that there would be a significant positive prediction of gender and emotional intelligence among Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduate students in Awka, Anambra State was rejected. This finding indicates that gender does not predict emotional intelligence. This finding is in support of Mokhlesi and Chidannand (2019), investigated A Study of Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Learning Behaviour among Children. They reported the outcome on gender differences in emotional intelligence and learning behaviour among children. Taken into consideration the purpose of the study, 100 children (50 boys and 50 girls) studying in secondary school especially, 5th and 6th grade located in Kolhapur district were selected randomly as a sample. The age range of the selected sample was 11 to 12 years. Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale – 2004 (MEIS) of Shanwal was used to measure emotional intelligence. Learning behaviour is measured to by Students Learning Behaviour Scale (2002). Data analysis was done by using various statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation and t test of significance through SPSS. Results show that boys tend to be significantly higher score in learning behaviour than that of girls. However, study fails to show any significant gender differences with respect to emotional intelligence and its all dimensions (Identification of emotions, Assimilation of Emotions, Understanding of Emotions and Regulations of Emotions). This Study will encourage the students

to improve their own emotions in sound direction and will help to manage their behavior so that better adjustment may take place. Study also will help to children to develop the learning strategies among them.

### **Implication of the Study**

Understanding the concept of spirituality, personality traits, gender and emotional intelligence among undergraduate students will enable our educational sector in various ways. It explains the underling environmental factors such values, belief and norms behind undergraduate students' actions and behaviours, as well as the effects it has on their academic performances. Also, the society will gain more enlightenment from the research findings; this will motivate other researchers to carry out further studies. This will allow the literature to be generated from which other studies would be initiated in the area of emotional intelligence, spirituality, personality traits and gender.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were included; research efforts should focus in-depth on the issue of emotional intelligence to find out the various variables inherent, influencing, deteriorating and enhancing it. Researchers should not fail to make their findings open to the public through the media and journals, as this will help educate the public more on some of their shortcomings that tend to worsen or deteriorate emotional intelligence in undergraduate students' on educational sector and to establish more cause-and-effect prediction between emotional intelligence and variables that is assumed in it. Experimentation practices should be given more attention; these will at the end point out that those variables actually caused changes in undergraduates' behaviour.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The size of the population may be considered small for this study which may have limited the generalization of the result.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

The researchers suggest that the future study should be widened beyond the scope of this study, hence should be replicated in other bank workers in different states. Future research should create awareness of such research before it is carried out to the minds of the participants and to clarify the issue of confidentiality.

### **Conclusion**

The present study investigated if spirituality, personality traits and gender predict emotional intelligence. The findings of the study revealed that spirituality did predict emotional intelligence among Nnamdi Azikiwe University undergraduates students', it revealed that personality traits did predict emotional intelligence among NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates' students', and also revealed that gender does not predict emotional intelligence among NnamdiAzikiwe University undergraduates' students' through the results in the analysis. Hence, it becomes necessary that tertiary institutions or educational sectors should not only look at these variables, but to also concentrate on environmental factors that can enhance emotional intelligence especially the spiritual orientation and emotional stability of the students.

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