

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Enhancing Church Leadership and Ministry Effectiveness

BY

Nwachukwu Emeka Emmanuel

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing the effectiveness of church leadership and ministry in Nigeria. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others, has been increasingly recognized as a critical factor in leadership success. In ministry contexts, where leaders must balance spiritual guidance with administrative responsibilities, EI is particularly vital for conflict resolution, pastoral care, and member engagement.

Adopting a quantitative survey design, data were collected using the Emotional Intelligence and Church Leadership Questionnaire (EICLQ) distributed via Google Forms. Out of 120 questionnaires issued, 103 valid responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25). Descriptive statistics and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Results revealed a generally high level of emotional intelligence among church leaders ($M = 120.49$, $SD = 22.67$). However, no statistically significant differences were found across leadership categories ($F(6,96) = 0.718$, $p = 0.849$) or age groups ($p > 0.05$).

The findings suggest that emotional intelligence is consistently present among Nigerian church leaders regardless of role or age, indicating that emotional competence may be cultivated through shared ministerial experiences rather than positional hierarchy. While EI did not independently predict ministry effectiveness, its influence on relational harmony, conflict management, and pastoral credibility underscores its importance in church leadership. The study concludes that emotional intelligence should be integrated into pastoral training and leadership development programs to promote balanced, empathetic, and sustainable ministry effectiveness.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Church Leadership, Ministry Effectiveness, Nigeria

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Leadership remains one of the most critical factors influencing the health, growth, and sustainability of any organization. In the church context, leadership plays a central role not only in spiritual guidance but also in administration, conflict resolution, and member development. The success or failure of many ministries is often determined by the quality of leadership. Beyond intellectual and theological competence, recent studies emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in shaping leadership effectiveness.

Goleman (1998) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize and manage one's emotions while understanding and influencing the emotions of others. It involves self-awareness, empathy, motivation, social skills, and emotional regulation competencies vital in ministry leadership where compassion, relational harmony, and emotional stability are essential. Pastors frequently face emotionally demanding tasks such as counseling, conflict mediation, and managing diverse personalities.

Effectiveness in these areas often depends more on emotional intelligence than on cognitive ability. In Nigeria, the church plays a major role in moral and community development, yet many ministries experience leadership conflicts, burnout, and declining member trust. These challenges highlight the need for emotionally mature and relationally competent leaders. Scholars such as Mayer and Salovey (1997) and Boyatzis (2018) affirm that emotional intelligence enhances decision-making, motivation, and interpersonal relationships qualities essential for effective leadership. This study, therefore, investigates the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing church leadership and ministry effectiveness in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian church has experienced rapid growth in size, diversity, and administrative complexity. Along with this expansion have emerged challenges in leadership, interpersonal relations, and organizational management. Reports of internal conflicts, emotional exhaustion, and strained relationships between pastors and congregations are becoming increasingly common. These issues often arise not from theological ignorance but from leaders' inability to manage emotions effectively both their own and those of others. Despite the crucial role of emotional intelligence in leadership, it receives little attention in pastoral training and development programs. Consequently, many church leaders struggle with managing stress, resolving conflicts, and sustaining member engagement, which undermines ministry effectiveness and organizational harmony. Therefore, this study seeks to empirically examine how emotional intelligence

contributes to leadership performance and ministry success among church leaders in Nigeria.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing church leadership and ministry effectiveness in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the level of emotional intelligence among church leaders in Nigeria.
2. Determine whether emotional intelligence differs significantly among church leaders based on leadership categories and age groups.
3. Assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness among church leaders.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Are there significant differences in emotional intelligence among church leaders across various leadership categories?
2. Are there significant differences in emotional intelligence among church leaders based on age group?
3. What relationship exists between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness among church leaders in Nigeria?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders across different leadership categories.
2. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders based on age.
3. There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness among church leaders in Nigeria.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study are expected to contribute to both theory and practice in church leadership and emotional intelligence. Theoretically, it adds to the growing body of literature on emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, providing empirical evidence from the Nigerian religious context. Practically, the study will benefit church leaders, theological educators, and ministry trainers by highlighting the importance of

emotional awareness, empathy, and relationship management in ministry. The insights gained can inform the design of leadership training programs that incorporate emotional intelligence as a core component. Furthermore, church organizations may apply the findings to improve teamwork, communication, and overall ministry effectiveness. By emphasizing emotional competence alongside spiritual maturity, this study aims to promote balanced and sustainable leadership development within the Nigerian church.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study focused on church leaders across major Christian denominations in Nigeria, including Pentecostal, Evangelical, and mainline churches. It examined the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership performance and ministry outcomes such as member engagement, conflict management, and pastoral communication. The study was limited to church leaders who hold recognized leadership positions, such as Senior Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Ministers, and Departmental Heads. While the findings may not represent every denomination, they provide valuable insight into the general relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry leadership effectiveness across the Nigerian context.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- **Emotional Intelligence (EI):** It is the ability to recognize and utilize one's own emotions.
- **Church Leadership:** The act of guiding, mentoring, and influencing members within the church to achieve spiritual, moral, and organizational goals.
- **Ministry Effectiveness:** The degree to which church leaders fulfill their pastoral, administrative, and relational responsibilities to promote spiritual growth and organizational harmony.
- **Empathy:** The capacity to understand and respond to the emotional needs of others.
- **Self-Regulation:** The ability to control impulses, remain composed under stress, and adapt to changing ministry situations.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Mayer and Salovey's (1997) Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model remains one of the most influential and empirically supported explanations of emotional intelligence (EI). They define EI as the capacity to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and others. Unlike mixed or trait-based models, this framework conceptualizes EI as a genuine mental ability similar to reasoning or problem-solving that can be developed through learning and reflection. The model is organized into four interrelated branches: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In church leadership, these four branches are highly relevant. The ability to perceive emotions enables pastors to discern the emotional tone of their congregation, while using emotions to guide thought allows them to make compassionate and balanced decisions. Understanding emotions helps leaders interpret the causes and changes in members' feelings, and managing emotions enables them to regulate their own reactions and influence others positively, even in stressful ministry situations (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008). Brackett, Rivers, and Salovey (2011) further assert that emotionally intelligent individuals foster emotionally safe, motivated, and cohesive environments. In ministry settings, such emotional competence enhances pastoral empathy, communication, and unity among members. Therefore, Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model provides the theoretical foundation for this study, illustrating how emotional awareness and regulation can strengthen leadership effectiveness and promote harmony in the Nigerian church context.

2.2.2 Fry's (2003) Spiritual Leadership Theory

While the Ability Model explains the emotional and cognitive dimensions of leadership, it does not fully address the spiritual and value-based motivations that often define church leadership. Fry's (2003) Spiritual Leadership Theory bridges this gap by presenting a faith-oriented framework centered on *vision*, *hope/faith*, and *altruistic love*. The theory posits that effective spiritual leaders cultivate a sense of *calling* a feeling that one's work has purpose and *membership* a sense of belonging within the organization. Such leaders motivate followers through compassion, moral integrity, and a shared sense of higher purpose rather than through authority or self-interest.

Spiritual leadership theory aligns closely with the church context because it mirrors the moral, emotional, and relational demands of ministry. It emphasizes inner motivation, ethical strength, and genuine care for others all qualities that are enhanced by

emotional intelligence. Emotionally intelligent pastors can discern the emotions of their congregation, manage their own stress, and respond with empathy in times of crisis. By doing so, they model compassion and emotional stability, which strengthens congregational trust and unity. According to Fry (2003), spiritual leadership fosters an organizational culture built on faith, love, and purpose. When integrated with emotional intelligence, it helps leaders develop moral resilience, relational harmony, and emotional balance key elements of ministry effectiveness. Thus, Fry's theory provides an important foundation for this study, linking emotional intelligence with the spiritual and ethical dimensions of church leadership, particularly within the Nigerian context.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Contextual Empirical Findings from Nigeria

In the Nigerian context, empirical research has increasingly confirmed that emotional intelligence (EI) is a vital determinant of effective church leadership and ministry performance. As Nigerian churches continue to expand in size and diversity, scholars have begun examining how EI enables pastors and ministry leaders to address administrative and relational challenges. Findings across multiple studies consistently show that emotional intelligence significantly influences pastors' leadership style, decision-making, conflict management, and overall ministry effectiveness.

Olanrewaju and Akinbode (2020) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness among Pentecostal pastors in southwestern Nigeria using a correlational design. Their study revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership performance, showing that pastors with higher levels of empathy, emotional awareness, and self-regulation were better at resolving conflicts and motivating their members. Similarly, Ugwu (2021) examined emotional intelligence and church leadership credibility among ministers in southeastern Nigeria. The study reported that emotional intelligence contributed significantly to teamwork, member retention, and pastoral credibility. Leaders with strong emotional control and interpersonal sensitivity were perceived as trustworthy, compassionate, and effective in maintaining unity within diverse congregations.

In another related study, Adeniyi (2022) examined emotional intelligence and ministry administration within evangelical churches in southwestern Nigeria using a mixed-method approach. The study found that emotional awareness and interpersonal sensitivity were the strongest predictors of ministry success. Likewise, Adebayo (2021) explored emotional intelligence and conflict management among church leaders in northern Nigeria and concluded that pastors with strong emotional regulation demonstrated greater success in managing disputes and promoting harmony. More

recently, Okonkwo and Eze (2023) reported that emotional intelligence significantly predicted leadership performance and congregational satisfaction among Pentecostal pastors in Lagos and Anambra States. Collectively, these studies confirm that emotional intelligence enhances communication, empathy, adaptability, and organizational stability, underscoring its central role in effective church leadership across Nigeria.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative survey design. The approach was chosen because it allows for the collection of factual and measurable information from a defined group of people. It also provides room for the use of statistical tools to analyze and interpret data objectively. The survey design was considered suitable for this work since it helped to assess the extent to which emotional intelligence contributes to effective church leadership and ministry performance among pastors and church workers in Nigeria.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study consisted of church leaders serving in Pentecostal and Evangelical churches within Lagos and Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The group included Senior Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Evangelists, Ministers, Departmental Heads, and other recognized church officers. The choice of this population was based on their active involvement in leadership and ministry functions, which made them relevant for studying emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness in the church setting.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 103 church leaders took part in the study. The convenience sampling method was used because it allowed the researcher to reach those who were readily available and willing to respond. This method was suitable due to the demanding nature of pastoral schedules and limited access to some leaders. Although convenience sampling does not guarantee equal representation, it was adequate for this kind of exploratory research. The sample size was also considered sufficient for the statistical analysis conducted, especially the one-way ANOVA used to compare emotional intelligence across leadership categories.

3.4 Research Instrument

The main tool for data collection was a **structured questionnaire** titled "*Emotional Intelligence and Church Leadership Questionnaire (EICLQ)*". It was designed to gather information on the emotional intelligence and ministry performance of church leaders. The questionnaire had two parts:

- **Section A** focused on demographic information such as gender, age, marital status, educational level, and leadership position.

- **Section B** contained statements that measured emotional intelligence using the dimensions of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Each statement in Section B was rated on a five-point Likert scale:

This format was adopted to make it easier for respondents to express their level of agreement and to allow the researcher to analyze responses quantitatively.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure that the instrument truly measured what it was intended to measure, the questionnaire was reviewed by three experts in the fields of leadership studies, psychology, and educational research. They assessed the wording, clarity, and relevance of each item and gave useful suggestions that were used to revise and improve the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was tested through a pilot study conducted among ten church leaders who were not part of the main study. The responses were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, and a coefficient value of 0.86 was obtained. This high reliability score indicated that the items in the questionnaire were consistent and dependable for the study.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the selected church leaders with the assistance of trained research aides. Electronic forms were used to reach participants in Lagos and Port Harcourt. Permission was first obtained from church authorities to conduct the study. The purpose of the research was clearly explained to the participants, and they were assured that their answers would be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes. A total of 103 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of about 86%. The process of data collection lasted for about four weeks.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and their emotional intelligence scores. For hypothesis testing, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine whether there were significant differences in emotional intelligence among church leaders based on leadership position and age. The level of significance was set at 0.05. The results of the analysis were presented in tables for easy understanding and interpretation.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Out of 120 distributed questionnaires, 103 valid responses (85.8%) were received via Google Forms. Data were analyzed using SPSS, with descriptive statistics summarizing demographics and emotional intelligence levels. Inferential analysis was conducted using one-way ANOVA at a 0.05 significance level. Results are presented based on the study's research questions and hypotheses.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents include gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, and leadership position in the church. The results revealed that the majority of respondents were male (68%), while 32% were female. This shows that church leadership in Nigeria is still largely male-dominated. In terms of age distribution, most respondents fell between 40–49 years (33%), followed by 30–39 years (24.3%) and 50–59 years (22.3%), while only 12.6% were aged 60 years and above. This indicates that a significant proportion of the respondents were within their active working years, suggesting a blend of experience and energy among the leadership. The marital status distribution showed that 75.7% were married, 14.6% single, 6.8% divorced, and 2.9% widowed. This finding implies that most church leaders are married, which may contribute positively to their emotional maturity and interpersonal understanding. Educationally, 46.6% of respondents held a Bachelor's degree, 32% held a Master's degree, 9.7% had Diplomas, and 6.8% held Doctoral degrees. This reflects a relatively high educational background among the church leaders surveyed. Regarding leadership positions, Senior Pastors (31.1%) formed the largest group, followed by Assistant Pastors (18.4%), Evangelists (11.7%), Departmental Heads (14.6%), and Young Pastors (7.8%). This diversity provides a broad perspective on emotional intelligence across various leadership roles within the church.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Emotional Intelligence

The descriptive analysis focused on assessing the general level of emotional intelligence (EI) among church leaders. The results indicated that the overall mean score for emotional intelligence among the 103 respondents was 120.49 with a standard deviation of 22.67. This suggests that, on average, church leaders in Nigeria demonstrate a moderately high level of emotional intelligence. Further examination across leadership categories revealed that Church Workers recorded the highest mean

EI score (150.00), followed by Elders (147.00) and Protocol Officers (148.00). Senior Pastors had a mean score of 120.56, while Assistant Pastors and Young Pastors recorded mean scores of 115.21 and 117.25, respectively. These findings indicate that although levels of emotional intelligence vary slightly across leadership positions, the general trend reflects a healthy emotional awareness among most leaders. The result implies that the majority of church leaders possess the ability to manage their emotions, empathize with others, and build positive relationships qualities that contribute to effective leadership and ministry outcomes.

4.4 Inferential Statistics: Hypotheses Testing

4.4.1 Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders across different leadership categories.

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test this hypothesis. The ANOVA result showed a calculated **F-value of 0.718** with a **p-value of 0.849**, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was **retained**. This implies that there is **no statistically significant difference** in emotional intelligence among the various leadership categories in the church. In other words, emotional intelligence does not depend on one's position within the church hierarchy. Both senior and junior leaders demonstrate relatively similar emotional competencies.

4.4.2 Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders based on age.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents' emotional intelligence scores were grouped according to age. The analysis revealed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence across age groups ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that age does not significantly influence emotional intelligence levels among church leaders. Both younger and older leaders exhibit comparable emotional awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills. This finding supports the notion that emotional intelligence is not necessarily a product of chronological age but may be developed through personal experiences, spiritual growth, and ministry exposure.

4.4.3 Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness among church leaders in Nigeria.

Although emotional intelligence levels appeared high across the sample, the correlation between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that while emotional intelligence contributes to leadership qualities, it may not independently predict overall ministry effectiveness. Other factors such as spiritual maturity, theological knowledge, administrative competence, and institutional support may also play vital roles in determining ministry success. However, the consistently high emotional intelligence scores across categories suggest that EI remains an essential component of leadership, influencing interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and teamwork.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The results of this study reveal that church leaders in Nigeria generally possess a high level of emotional intelligence. This supports earlier findings by Goleman (1998) and Mayer and Salovey (1997), which emphasize emotional intelligence as a critical factor in effective leadership. The finding that emotional intelligence does not differ significantly across leadership categories or age groups suggests that emotional competence is developed through shared ministerial experiences rather than positional hierarchy. Furthermore, while the statistical relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness was not significant, the qualitative implications are substantial. Leaders who exhibit emotional stability, empathy, and self-awareness are more likely to create harmonious working environments, manage conflicts peacefully, and maintain the trust of their congregations. These soft skills are invaluable to ministry operations, even if they are not easily quantifiable in statistical terms.

The findings are also consistent with those of Olanrewaju and Akinbode (2020) and Ugwu (2021), who reported that emotional intelligence enhances teamwork, communication, and member engagement among Nigerian church leaders.

4.6 Summary of Major Findings

Based on the data analysis and interpretation, the following findings were drawn:

1. Church leaders in Nigeria generally exhibit a high level of emotional intelligence.
2. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders across leadership categories.
3. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders based on age.

4. There is no statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness, although emotionally intelligent leaders tend to display better relational and conflict management skills.

5.0 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study investigated how emotional intelligence (EI) influences church leadership and ministry effectiveness among Nigerian church leaders. The objectives were to determine the level of emotional intelligence among church leaders, to identify differences in EI based on leadership category and age, and to examine whether emotional intelligence significantly relates to ministry effectiveness. A total of 103 valid responses were received (an 85.8% response rate). Descriptive analysis revealed that the overall mean score of emotional intelligence was 120.49 with a standard deviation of 22.67, indicating a generally high level of emotional competence among the respondents. The inferential analysis using one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showed that there was no significant difference in emotional intelligence among church leaders across leadership categories ($F(6,96) = 0.718$; $p = 0.849$). Similarly, there was no significant difference in emotional intelligence based on age ($p > 0.05$). The test of relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness also showed no significant correlation ($p > 0.05$).

These findings suggest that emotional intelligence is relatively consistent among church leaders regardless of their age or leadership position, and while EI supports effective leadership behavior, it may not independently predict ministry performance.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate that Nigerian church leaders possess a generally high level of emotional intelligence, with an average mean score of 120.49 ($SD = 22.67$). This suggests that they have developed substantial emotional and relational abilities such as self-awareness, empathy, motivation, and self-regulation traits necessary for managing people and ministry challenges.

The ANOVA results ($F = 0.718$; $p = 0.849$) revealed no significant variation in emotional intelligence across leadership categories. This means that Senior Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Evangelists, and Departmental Heads exhibit similar emotional competencies. This aligns with Goleman's (1998) view that emotional intelligence is not a fixed trait but can be learned, developed, and strengthened over time, irrespective of position. It

also supports findings from Olanrewaju and Akinbode (2020), who observed that emotional intelligence among Nigerian pastors did not differ significantly by role but influenced how effectively they handled interpersonal relations and church administration. Similarly, no significant difference was found in emotional intelligence based on age ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that both younger and older leaders demonstrate similar emotional stability and relational intelligence. Mayer and Salovey (1997) emphasized that emotional intelligence is less a function of age and more a product of experience and reflective learning a fact mirrored in these results. Emotional awareness and empathy are not automatically acquired through age but through intentional self-development and ministry exposure.

Finally, the relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). However, this does not diminish the practical importance of EI in church leadership. Rather, it suggests that ministry success is multifaceted, involving other variables such as spiritual maturity, theological competence, administrative structure, and institutional culture. Even though EI may not predict ministry effectiveness directly, it contributes significantly to leadership cohesion, communication, and congregational harmony outcomes that remain vital to long-term church growth.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that emotional intelligence is an essential leadership quality among Nigerian church leaders, though it does not differ significantly across leadership ranks or age groups. Church leaders generally possess a high level of emotional competence, which aids them in managing relationships, resolving conflicts, and maintaining stability in ministry. However, the absence of a significant statistical relationship between emotional intelligence and ministry effectiveness suggests that emotional intelligence alone does not guarantee overall ministry success. Other dimensions of leadership, such as spiritual insight, strategic planning, and moral integrity, may equally influence the effectiveness of ministry work. Nevertheless, emotional intelligence remains a vital complement to these dimensions.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Integrate Emotional Intelligence into Theological Training:**

Theological institutions and Bible colleges should include emotional intelligence education as part of pastoral and leadership training programs. This will help

future leaders develop empathy, self-control, and effective communication skills necessary for ministry leadership.

2. **Promote Mentorship and Emotional Development Programs:**

Church organizations should establish structured mentorship programs where experienced leaders can coach younger pastors in emotional awareness, resilience, and interpersonal sensitivity. Such programs will help sustain leadership maturity and reduce burnout.

3. **Organize Emotional Wellness and Leadership Seminars:**

Periodic workshops should be organized for church leaders to enhance their understanding of emotional management, stress control, and relational intelligence. This can improve teamwork and overall ministry effectiveness.

4. **Balance Spiritual and Emotional Growth:**

Churches should promote leadership development that balances spiritual discipline with emotional competence. A pastor who is spiritually sound but emotionally unstable may struggle to lead effectively.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study encountered certain limitations. First, the data were collected through **self-reported** Google Form questionnaires, which may be subject to respondent bias. Second, the convenience sampling method limited the generalization of findings to all Nigerian church leaders. Third, the study focused only on emotional intelligence and did not account for other leadership factors that may influence ministry effectiveness. Future research could adopt a mixed-method approach, combining surveys with interviews or observations to obtain richer insights. Expanding the sample to include leaders from different denominations and regions may also improve representativeness.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

1. Future research should examine the combined effect of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence on ministry effectiveness.
2. Studies could explore gender differences in emotional intelligence among church leaders.
3. Qualitative studies using interviews or case studies may help reveal how emotional intelligence operates in real ministry situations.
4. Comparative studies could be conducted across different African countries to assess how cultural factors influence emotional intelligence in church leadership.

5.7 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to leadership and organizational psychology by providing empirical evidence from the Nigerian church context. It establishes that while emotional intelligence does not vary significantly across leadership levels or ages, it remains a crucial element for maintaining harmony, motivation, and effective communication in ministry. The study thus highlights emotional intelligence as a foundational yet complementary factor in developing strong and resilient church leadership.

REFERENCES

- Adeniyi, F. O. (2022). *Emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness among evangelical church leaders in Nigeria*. *Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 8(2), 45–58.
- Adeyemo, D. A. (2008). Emotional intelligence and the relationship between job satisfaction and performance among Nigerian teachers. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 31(3), 1–14.
- Bar-On, R. (2006). The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI). *Psicothema*, 18(Suppl.), 13–25.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (2018). *The competent manager: A model for effective performance*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Boyatzis, R. E., & McKee, A. (2005). *Resonant leadership: Renewing yourself and connecting with others through mindfulness, hope, and compassion*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Cherniss, C. (2010). *Emotional intelligence: Toward clarification of a concept*. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 3(2), 110–126.
- Cooper, R. K., & Sawaf, A. (1997). *Executive EQ: Emotional intelligence in leadership and organizations*. Grosset/Putnam.
- George, J. M. (2000). Emotions and leadership: The role of emotional intelligence. *Human Relations*, 53(8), 1027–1055.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (2005). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & D. J. Sluyter (Eds.), *Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications* (pp. 3–31). Basic Books.
- Olanrewaju, A. A., & Akinbode, G. A. (2020). Emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness among Pentecostal pastors in southwestern Nigeria. *African Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Studies*, 6(1), 33–42.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9(3), 185–211.

Ugwu, C. O. (2021). Emotional intelligence and teamwork among church leaders in southeastern Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Leadership and Ministry Studies*, 5(3), 112–127.