

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY: A FOCUS ON FEMALE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS IN ABUJA

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### ABSTRACT

*The growing need for efficiency in the workplace, especially in professional services like accounting, underlines the necessity to explore the dynamics that determine the performance of organisations. Workplace efficiency, often described as the ability to maximize output while minimizing waste, is a crucial element of organisational success. The focus of this research was to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on workplace efficiency with emphasis on female professional Accountants in Abuja; while considering the moderating role of the work environment. The theoretical framework used was Trait Emotional Intelligence Model. Data used were obtained from primary source, precisely structured questionnaire. The data's dependability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which was then confirmed by expert opinion. The study made use of descriptive research design to analyse data and evaluate findings. Correlation and multiple linear regression models were used as the statistical tool of analysis and test of hypotheses. Results of this research confirmed that the four dimensions of emotional intelligence (self-regulation, self-awareness, self-motivation and social-awareness) used as proxies for emotional intelligence, all have significant and positive relationship with workplace efficiency, because of their ability to improve task completion rates, enhance time management, and ensure overall better performance. Findings also revealed that workplace environment significantly moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency. Female Accountants are therefore advised to constantly assess their emotional quotient and identify the issues that easily trigger their different emotions, as well as that of their colleagues, client and associates, build on their strong spots and improve on weak areas; in other to improve their workplace efficiency.*

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, workplace environment, workplace efficiency

### INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence can impact key workplace outcomes, including decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and stress management all of which are integral to workplace efficiency. Because work situations are dynamic, high emotional intelligence is key for effective professional interactions and increased proficiency as well as productivity. Emotional intelligence and intellectual capacity are closely related and are both required to ensure happiness and success in life. The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) was introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as cited by Lima et al. (2022). (Jasleen & Anupam 2022; Mayer & Salovey 1997) defined EI as the ability to observe, evaluate, express, understand and control feelings. The Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EIQ) refers to a pool of talents that reflect a person's capacity to understand his or her own behaviour, emotions, and drives and manage them in a manner that is most appropriate for the given context (Sakshee & Manoj 2024). It is a newly developing field of social science that has implications for society, business, and academia. Beyond cognitive intelligent, emotional awareness and abilities to manage feelings play a great role in determining performance in all aspects of life; and is central

to improving workplace efficiency. Being able to reorganise, manage emotions and handle pressure is an aspect of emotional intelligence that has proved to be very vital for achieving success. Also, management of emotions is as important in emotional intelligence as knowing when and how to express them (Cary 2000). EI has been described by many writers including (Jasleen & Anupam 2022; Goleman ,1998) as a multi-dimensional concept and proposed five dimensions which helped in evaluation of EI levels at workplaces. They include self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness and social skills; and act as tools for handling feelings through self-consciousness and inherent possibility to perceived strengths, emotions, abilities, capabilities and weaknesses

All over the world, every workplace has goals and objectives and it takes resourcefulness, innovation and high level of efficiency and proficiency to attain them. Efficiency is evaluated by performance standards in the areas of adoption of workable procedures for timely and resourceful accomplishment of assigned task. Workplace efficiency could be described as the ability to maximize output while minimizing waste and is a critical determinant of organisational success. According to Shalaka (2020), efficiency is carefulness orchestrated by solicitous, proficient and self-disciplined employees and partners who are determined to make a positive impact. Matthew et al. (2020), therefore stated that proactive businesses actively search for collaborators who share their zeal and commitment to help them actualize their goals and targets. Professional accountants as one of these collaborators experience intense pressure due to the demand for increased efficiency and productivity. The pressure is even more for the female professional accountant whose performance is not only critical for individual career advancement but also for the overall competitiveness of the firm she represents and yet battles with family and societal issues; underscoring the need to explore the factors that drive their performance or non-performance.

Until recently, organizations, workplace owners and even institutions have placed so much emphasis on Intelligent Quotient (IQ) as a basis for engagement, assessment for promotions and even admission of members to professional bodies, thereby making them go through very rigorous examinations and certifications. However, recent researches have demonstrated that academic proficiency, grades, and rankings alone do not always accurately reflect a person's likelihood of success in the workplace or in life; instead, a particular set of traits and competencies, such as compassion, self-control, and creativity, can set successful people apart from their colleagues or mates (Eka, 2022; Goleman, 2009).

Globally, the relationship between workplace efficiency and the female folk has been explored in various contexts. According to Kaul & Sollito (2020), United Nations Women have used elements from Strategic Plans and the accompanying Integrated Results and Resources Framework to create pathways of progress on organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Despite the importance attached to this, and all the initiatives of the United Nations and other local and international organizations, achieving and sustaining high levels of efficiency remains a persistent challenge, influenced by various personal and organizational factors. Within the Asian and middle East, Alhamoudi (2024) stated that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is aimed at bringing about changes that would improve the Kingdom's ranking internationally, focusing on the fifth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals, which is achievement of gender equality. He stressed that, notwithstanding the Kingdom's efforts to improve the ratings and welfare of women, their representation in Board membership remains below expectations citing experience and training, social factors and scarcity of

female competencies in general as top on the reasons women do not achieve great heights like their male counterparts.

Down to Nigeria and indeed many other African nations, Accounting was not a professional field traditional populated with women. However, the last few decades have seen a dramatic increase in the number of female accounting graduates who made very excellent results, making their entry into the practice of the profession. It is therefore, a cause for concern that irrespective of the undisputable high intelligent quotient and the increased number of women in the Accounting profession today, only a very negligible number make it to the top. From 1960 to 2024 only 8 women out of 63 have been able to make it to the presidency of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN 2024). Also, only 2 women out of 13 have served as president of Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) since inception. Their presence on the Board of different organizations and accounting firms have also not been very encouraging.

It therefore becomes obvious that the female accountant needs more than just cognitive intelligence and gender based support programmes to achieve the level of efficiency that will position her well enough to effectively compete with her male counterparts. Emotional intelligence (EI) may be the much-needed additional competence to achieve enhanced efficiency in her workplace and consequently successful career.

However, while emotional intelligence may play a central role in work proficiency, there could also be other factors such as workplace culture and system support (Hasnun et al., 2020). The physical and behavioral aspects are the two facets of a healthy working climate. The physical aspect denotes the factors which are related to the convenience with which people remain physically connected to their workplaces, while the protocols of office holders are influenced by the behavioral characteristics of the environment. The workplace environment is very important in modelling behaviors of employees (Zhenjing 2022) and collectively.

This research therefore sought to examine the effect of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence (self-regulation, self-awareness, self-motivation and social awareness) on workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja. It also considered the moderating effect of workplace environment on emotional intelligence.

In as much as the number of women in the accounting profession have been on the increase over the past few decades, they face unique challenges that are capable of hindering their ability to maintain successful clientele and advance in their careers. While women are generally recognized for their dedication, ethical decision-making, they struggle with client retention, capacity building and career success which are to a great extent driven by professional excellence. The efficiency of female professional accountants in Abuja may have been significantly influenced by their level of Emotional Intelligence (EI) competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation and social awareness skills. These competencies are critical in managing workplace challenges and fostering success.

The constant balancing of work and family obligations could result in lack of self-awareness, which is the appreciation of one's own feeling and its effect on one's performance at work. In the same way, the demands of society and the male-dominated systems that are common in the workplace is capable of impairing self-

regulation, or the capacity to control emotions and handle stress among female professional accountants. Similarly, self-motivation can also be affected, by demoralizing factors like limited career progression opportunities, cultural biases, and high expectations to balance work with domestic roles. Strong social awareness skills, which are essential for understanding workplace dynamics and critical for maintaining relationships and building networks are often compromised due to time constraints; and emotional and mental toll of managing multiple roles, which characterizes the life of a female professional. These barriers to the development of EI competencies may have contributed a lot to the deficiencies in workplace efficiency and career progression for female professional accountants in Abuja, requiring targeted strategies to address these emotional, social, and cultural challenges. Beyond these competences, the workplace environment is also vital. A toxic environment can make the most emotionally balanced worker perform sub-optimally.

This research therefore, investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency, considering the moderating role of the work environment among female professional Accountants in Abuja.

In a bid to achieve above objectives, the following questions come to mind.

- i) To what extent does self-awareness affect the workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja?
- ii) To what degree does self-regulation, affect the workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja?
- iii) To what extent does self-motivation, affect the workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja?
- iv) To what degree does workplace environment moderate the relationship between EI and workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja?

The general objective therefore is to identify the extent to which key EI competencies influence the workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja within the contest of the workplace environment. The specific objectives are to:

- i) Ascertain whether self-awareness significantly affect the workplace efficiency of female professional accountants in Abuja.
- ii) Examine the extent to which self-regulation affect the workplace efficiency of female professional accountants in Abuja.
- iii) Investigate the extent to which self-motivation affect the workplace efficiency of female professional accountants in Abuja.
- (iv) Analyze the extent to which workplace environment moderate the relationship between EI and workplace efficiency of female professional accountants in Abuja.

The study has the following hypotheses:

Ho1) Self-awareness has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja.

Ho2) Self-regulation has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja

Ho3) Self-motivation has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja

Ho4) The relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency of female Professional Accountants in Abuja is not significantly moderated by workplace environment.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Conceptual Review

#### Concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI)

One of the most active and researched fields of behavioral study is Emotional intelligence (EI), thanks to global media awareness (Duong & Nguyen 2023). According to them as cited in (Goleman, 1998), EI refers to the ability to recognize and express feelings, interpret emotions, assimilate them, and be able to control both positive and negative aspects of self and others. It is also described as Emotional Quotient (EQ). In accounting, where accuracy and effective communication are essential, EI plays a crucial role in decision-making, teamwork and stress management. (Duong & Nguyen, 2023) noted that EI has provoked a deep interest among experts, academia and professionals, because of its wide applicability to various workplace matters including job satisfaction, truancy, organisational loyalty, and organisational responsibility. They stressed that female accountants are always faced by unique issues and challenges, such as gender biases and work-life balance, capable of affecting their job performance and efficiency in the workplace.

It can influence how well workers interact with their colleagues at work. Matthew et al (1999), as cited in Indu et al (2019) stressed that, there is economic gain in hiring employees based on their emotional intelligence as lack of EI may lead to ineffective communication and lower productivity and efficiency in the workplace. Lima et al. (2022), are of the opinion that those with low levels of EI show signs of isolation, nervousness, frustration, culpability, blankness, disgruntlement, bitterness, resentment, dependency, oppression, and sense of failure.

Matthew et al., (2020) proposed self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as dimensions of EI.

#### Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

##### Self-Awareness

Jasleen and Anupam (2019) defined self-awareness as the ability to understand one's emotions, feelings, strengths, weaknesses and goals and decisions as well as their impact on others. It is a conscious focus on

oneself and how ones actions or inactions align with others. Emotional intelligence in the workplace begins with the individual becoming self-aware. It involves continuous self-assessment and examination.

### **Self-Regulation**

Self-regulation relates to the process of monitoring, directing, or redirecting one's disruptive emotions and adjusting effectively to unfavorable or challenging conditions (Jasleen & Anupam, 2019). It involves being aware of one's emotional responses, exercising control over impulsive reactions, and managing negative feelings in a way that promotes stability and resilience. Good self-regulation means the ability to adapt constructively to changing situations, maintaining composure, and making thoughtful decisions even under pressure. Individuals who demonstrate strong self-regulation skills are capable of adjusting their behavior and mindset to suit new realities, turning potential setbacks into opportunities for growth and maintaining focus on long-term goals despite temporary obstacles. Ultimately, effective self-regulation enhances emotional well-being, improves interpersonal relationships, and contributes significantly to personal and professional success.

### **Self-Motivation**

Self-motivation consists of the emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals (Erin, 2020). He stated that there are four specific competencies associated with self-motivation: achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism. Self-motivation stimulates efficiency in job performance and organisational sustainability (Syeda & Ali, 2023; Andreas, 2022). Goleman (1998) as expressed in Ismail et al., (2022) opined that self-motivation is a key aspect of EI, and it is asserted that self-motivation is interrelated with the efficiency of employees. They observed that the real driving force people is self-motivation, which inspires an individual to persist irrespective of the length of time it takes to complete a task without external motivators (Ismail et al., 2022; Dhiman, 2017)

### **Workplace Efficiency**

The desire of every organisation is to have very efficient and proficient team that will help to achieve the corporate goals and objectives. The philosophy of efficiency could be perceived as well as applied in different areas such as methodological efficiency, allocative efficiency, and overall efficiency (Appiah, 2019; Worthington & Dollery, 2000). Internal, external, human and material factors are used in the effective and efficient implementation of operational systems. Work place efficiency has a substantial influence on an organisation's wellbeing (Duong & Nguyen 2023; Benvan, 2022). The organisation is termed effective and efficient when the goals and objectives of the organisation are achieved (Abdurachman et al., 2021). According to them, efficiency is the process of saving human, monetary, material, machines, procedures, time and information by doing the job correctly.

The concept of efficiency, generally deals with how well resources are used in the production process to attain anticipated results. Pranee, (2021) cited Wanwijit and Kongchan (2017) as enumerating knowledge of accounting principles and financial reporting; the ability to apply the principles; good knowledge of business environment as variables that can impact an accountant's efficiency and consequently productivity at work.

Peterson & Plowman (1989) as cited by Pranee (2021), set-out features of efficiency in accounting profession as task completion terms of both quantity and quality, time management and cost used to carry out the work.

### **EI and Workplace Efficiency**

Task performance includes the degree to which employees meet the standards of core and technical tasks and duties (Dogru 2022) and emotional intelligence very well describes employees' performance. Emotional intelligence has been identified as measure of efficiency, blueprint to outstanding performance and a yard stick for identifying people who are successful in life. EI is the ability to identify, comprehend, and manage emotions with the intention of improving job performance and interpersonal interactions. Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy influence employee performance (Syeda 2023). Emotional intelligence promotes personal creativity thereby contributing to workplace efficiency. Success of an organisation is driven not only by the efficiency of individuals but also by the proficiency of work teams. Team work can be quite challenging as it can lead to conflict between group members; effective communication, sharing of ideas and resources promoted by emotional intelligence increases overall workplace efficiency (Deepesh et al., 2021).

### **Workplace Environment**

The word "work environment" refers to the natural setting, social characteristics, and any other element that either directly or indirectly influences an employee's performance at work including the entire organisation. (Mohamad 2021). They cited Awan (2015) as positing that the components of workplace environment can effect in numerous ways the welfare of an individual, how they relate with colleagues at work, cooperation for optimal efficiency, health of employee and more. Employees spend a considerable amount of time at work, and their working environment has an impact on their performance in many ways (Zhenjing et al., 2022 & Christensen-Salem et al., 2021). Organisational culture, support systems and physical working conditions are basics aspects of the work environment at any organisation (Mohamad, 2021; Ali, 2016). Salient hostilities and unconscious prejudice can obvious in subtle ways, such as exclusion from vital meetings or being ignored for major projects. These daily challenges contribute to a toxic workplace environment, affecting women's confidence and professional satisfaction (Ebirim et al., 2024).

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Trait Emotional Intelligent model**

This study was based on the Trait EI model. According to Ikiroma et al. (2017), the trait theory of emotional intelligence was developed by Konstantin Vasily Petrides in 2001, and it has to do with natural behaviour and self-perceived capabilities. They further stated that, Trait EI theory was also based on four structures namely: well-being, self-control, emotionality and sociability. Trait theories makes use of self-report items to measure overall EI and its sub dimensions (O'Connor et al., 2019). Questions are structured as a scale with no right or wrong answers, but respondents are expected to choose items that are more or less related to their behavior. Because they measure typical behavior, they are good predictor of actual behaviors in different situations. Both Emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency derive a lot of impetus from the Trait

Emotional Intelligence model. The Trait Emotional Intelligence (Trait EI) model conceptualizes emotional intelligence as a personality trait, focusing on individuals’ self-perceptions of their emotional abilities rather than their actual abilities. The study leaned on this model to establish the respondent’s perception of their capabilities on the different dimensions of emotional intelligence and assessment of their workplace environment.

The Model is hinged on some assumptions which include:

- i) Emotional intelligence is a personality trait that can be learned or developed.
- ii) Self-reporting is an accurate measure of emotional intelligence.
- iii) Inclusion of a wide range of personality traits and self-perceived abilities such as self-confidence, empathy, emotional regulate on, and stress management.

However, Shadia et al (2024) cited Petrides & Furnham (2001) as criticising trait emotional intelligence model as belonging to the inferior stages of personality, and Linden et al. (2017) as claiming that the theory showed significant overlap with broader established personality traits and limited in developmental potential.

The choice of this model is based on its suitability in situations characterised by stressors in the workplace, and because it works well with questionnaires. It also offers valuable insights into the role of emotional self-perception in personality and behavioural traits.

**Conceptual Framework**

This paper's conceptual model demonstrates how the nature of Workplace Environment influences the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Workplace Efficiency.

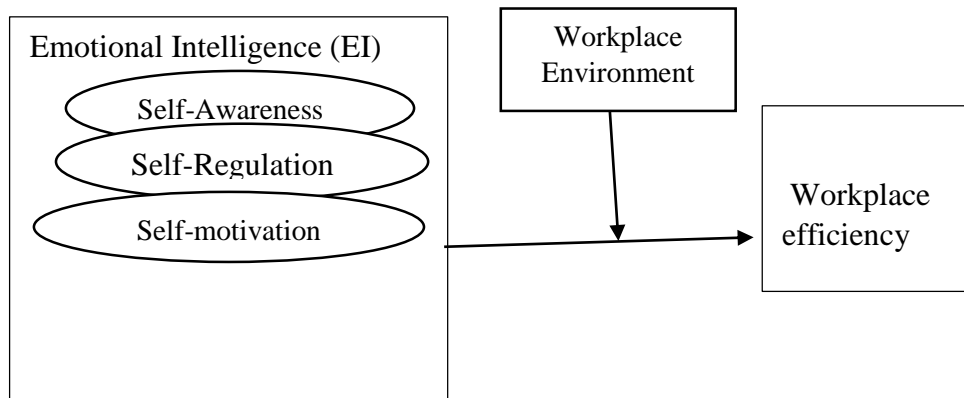


Fig.1- Relationship between the components of the dependent variable (workplace efficiency), independent variable (emotional intelligence) and moderator (workplace environment).

Source: Author’s review 2024

**Empirical Review**

Rastogi and Agarwal (2024) examined Emotional Intelligence among Banking Professionals in India. The study set out determine the influence that emotional intelligence has on the behaviour and performance of

employees in the workplace. They used survey method and questionnaire was employed. The statistical tool used was Chi-square test and the ANOVA. Their conclusion was that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and work experience, and that emotional intelligence can explain almost all of the change in work experience.

Salwa (2024) did a study on Women on Boards of Directors. The study which was based in in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had the objective of assessing the current gender representation in membership of boards of directors, and the factors affecting their presence on the Boards. It was a quantitative study, and adopted a descriptive and comparative method of analyzing data. The findings of the research revealed that lack of experience and training, scarcity of female competencies in general, the lack of women occupying leadership positions and other social factors, are the most critical reasons for the existence of a gap in women's membership in boards of directors in the three sectors. The disagreed with writers like Duong and Nguyen (2023) and Ismail et al. (2022) that women's personality skills represent a reason for their achievements.

Duong and Nguyen (2023) investigated the relationships between five dimensions of emotional intelligence namely: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills of employees to their job performance in the information technology industry. The objective was to examine how EI effects employees' work performance in the information technology industry through a case study of FPT Telecom Joint Stock Company in Vietnam. It was a quantitative study and the mixed- model of EI was adopted. Regression analysis was adopted to test the hypothesis. The findings of their study showed that the positive influence of employees' EI constitutes the most important determinant of their workplace performance and efficiency. On the scale of effect on work place performance and efficiency, empathy and motivation ranked highest followed by self-regulation and social skills, and lastly self-awareness; a slight deviation from the results of Ismail et al. (2022).

Ismail et al. (2022) researched on Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Organisational Success in the Banking Sector in an Emerging Market focusing on State Commercial Banks' employees in Sri Lanka. The paper was motivated by the fact that knowledge of what motivates workers to perform well is essential for development of scientific discipline and organisational success. The study was quantitative and they used self-control, self-regulation, social understanding, empathy and motivation as dimensions of EI. Their hypotheses were tested by regression analysis. They concluded that all the dimensions adopted for emotional intelligence have substantial positive relationship with employee success but Self-motivation and Self-awareness influenced employee performance to a greater extent. This result agrees with that of Hasnun et al (2020) even though no moderator was considered.

Lima et al. (2022) worked on Managing of Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace with the objective of identifying how it can be used to improve employee performance; focusing on companies in Kosovo. They made use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysed data with Chi square test of independence. The research revealed that the higher levels of Emotional Intelligence is capable of increasing the workplace performance. The results corroborated the findings of Ismail et al. (2022) and Hasnun et al (2020).

Zhenjing et al. (2022) investigated the influence of workplace environment on workers task performance under the mediating role of employee commitment and achievement-striving ability. They used cross-sectional research design, and convenience sampling technique. Data was analysed through structural equation modeling (SEM) of using Smart PLS 3. The findings showed employee performance, commitment level and achievement-striving ability can be improved by a friendly work environment. Both employee commitment and achievement-striving ability also can improve employee performance. For mediation, they also observed that workplace environment led to employee commitment and employee achievement-striving ability which further enhanced employee performance.

Mohamad (2021), studied the Impact of work environment on employees' performance. The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between, as well as impact of the employee performance on work environment. The study was both quantitative and qualitative using cross sectional approach. Pearson's Correlation Analysis was used ascertain the relationship between the variables while regression was used to test the hypotheses.

Hatta & Abdullah (2020), examined The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Work Stress and Work Performance. They used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 25. Statistical tools adopted were Pearson's correlation analysis and hierarchical regression to analyse their data. The findings of their study indicate that emotional intelligence is significant moderator in the relationship between work stress and job performance among respondents in this research. They recommended diverse initiatives that can be used to advance teachers' emotional intelligence levels.

Hasnun et al (2020), did a study on how effective of EI influence is on job performance if moderated by perceived organisational support from the shift employee perspective. They used self-administered questionnaire and purposive sampling technique. The software used was SmartPLS 3.0. The methods used for data analysis were Path coefficient and two Stage Approach. Their study concluded that emotional intelligence impacts job performance and the effect made stronger by perceived organisational support. Typical of many studies on the subject matter of EI emphasis was on organisational performance not efficiency.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Research design adopted was a survey research design approach. The population consist of 250 female Professional Accountants who belong to the Society of Women Accountants of Nigeria (SWAN) Abuja as at March 2024. The sampling technique was census. The goal was to gather data from every member of the population, because the population is not large. This technique was suggested by Ouedraogo (2020) for cases where the area of investigation is not very big and greater degree of accuracy required. As a result, 250 copies of the questionnaire were produced and distributed. The study collected data from primary sources by use of structured questionnaire.

The statistical package used was IBM SPSS statistics 20 while the statistical tool was Multiple Linear Regression. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to re-affirm relationship between the

dependent and independent variables; while regression analysis was used to analyze their effect and test the hypotheses.

**Model Specification**

The model used in this study is as follows:

$$WEff = \beta_0 + \beta_1SeA + \beta_2SR + \beta_3SM + \beta_4SoA + e \dots (1)$$

$$WEff = \beta_0 + \beta_1SeA + \beta_2SR + \beta_3SM + \beta_4SoA + \beta_5(\beta_1SeA + \beta_2SR + \beta_3SM + \beta_4SoA) * WEnv + e \dots (2)$$

Dependent variable - (WEff)

Independent variable: Emotional Intelligence (EI) - measured by Self-Awareness (SeA), Self-Regulation (SR), Self-Motivation (SM), Social-Awareness (SoA)

Moderator- Workplace Environment (WEnv);  $\beta_0$  = Intercept, e = Degree of error.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 196 representing 78.4% were returned and correctly completed and used. 5 questionnaires representing 2% though filled and returned could not be used because of various defects. 49 representing 19.6% were not returned.

**Test of Hypotheses / Interpretation**

The values of the correlation coefficient (r) range from -1 to +1. The confidence interval is 95%. The hypothesis test was conducted at 0.05 level of significance or margin of error.

**Decision Rule:** Reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis if the Emotional Intelligence coefficient estimates have a positive sign and a probability less than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis is supported and the alternative hypothesis is rejected if the Emotional Intelligence coefficient estimate has a negative sign and a probability larger than 0.05. A positive coefficient suggests that the mean of the dependent variable will rise if the independent variable rises. A negative coefficient indicates that a rise in the independent variable will lead to a decrease in the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) is used to measure the model's goodness of fit.

**Test of Hypothesis one (Ho1): Self-Awareness (SeA) has no significant effect Workplace Efficiency (WEff).**

**Table 1: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) & Regression statistics for Self-awareness (SeA).**

Model Summary	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error	P. value
Self-Awareness	.784	.615	.613	2.98	.000

The result of the correlation on table 1 shows that Self-awareness has positive r value of .784. This indicates that SeA has a significant positive relationship with workplace efficiency. The coefficient of determination  $r^2$  for SeA is .615. This implies that 61.5% of the variation of WEff is accounted for by Self-awareness. The

Adjusted  $r^2$  of .613 moderated the result for other factors not considered in the model. The standard error or standard deviation of 2.98 pre-supposes that, on average, the observed values deviate from the predicted values by about 2.68 unit, which indicates a good fit of the model to the data. The P value of positive 0.000 is less than .05.

Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_01$ ) - SeA has no significant effect on WEff of Female Professional Accountants in Abuja is rejected; while the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a1$ ) SeA has effect on WEff of Female Professional Accountants in Abuja is accepted.

**Test of  $H_02$ : Self-Regulation (SR) has no significant effect on Workplace Efficiency.**

Table 2-Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) & Regression statistics for Self-Regulation (SR)

Model Summary	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	P. Value
<b>Self-Regulation</b>	.925	.856	.855	1.825	.000

Source: Author’s computation 2024 (IBM SPSS statistics 20).

From table 2, Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.925 which signifies very significant positive relationship. Coefficient of Determination ( $r^2$ ) of 0.856 means that 85.6% of the variance in the dependent variable (Workplace Efficiency) is explained by the independent variable (Self-Regulation). Adjusted  $r^2$  of .855 moderates for the number of predictors in the model and is a good indicator of the model's explanatory power. Here, it shows that 85.5% of the variance is explained by self-regulation while 14.5% is explained by other variables. The small Standard Error of 1.82 suggests that the model fits the data very closely. The P value is 0.00 positive; which is less than .05.

Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_02$ )- Self-Regulation (SR) has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is rejected; while the ( $H_a2$ ) Self-Regulation (SR) has significant effect on Workplace Efficiency is accepted.

**Test of Hypothesis ( $H_03$ ):** Self-Motivation (SM) has no significant effect on Workplace Efficiency (WEff) of female professional Accountants in Abuja.

**Table 3- PPM Correlation & Regression statistics for Self-Motivation (SM)**

Model Summary	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	P. Value
<b>Self-Motivation</b>	.902	.814	.814	2.07	.000

Source: Author’s computation 2024 (IBM SPSS statistics 20).

From table 3, SM has positive  $r$  value of .902. This is an indication that SM has a significant positive relationship with workplace efficiency. The coefficient of determination  $r^2$  for SM is 81.4%. This implies that 81.4% of the variation of Workplace Efficiency are affected by SM. The Adjusted  $r^2$  .814 which is the same with  $r^2$ , and small standard error of 2.07 indicates a good fit of the model to the data. The P value is 0.00,

positive and less than .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho3) SM has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is rejected while (Ha3): SM has significant effect on workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is accepted.

**Test of Hypothesis (Ho4):** Social Awareness (SoA) has no significant effect on Workplace Efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja.

**Table 4- PPM Correlation & Regression statistics for Social Awareness (SoA)**

Model summary	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	P. Value
Social Awareness	.848	.720	.718	2.546	.000

Source: Author’s computation 2024 (IBM SPSS statistics 20)

From table 4, SoA has positive r value of .848. This is an indication that Social Awareness has a significant positive relationship with workplace efficiency. The coefficient of determination  $r^2$  for SoA is .848. This implies that 84.8% of the variation of workplace efficiency are affected by SoA. The R Square is .72 meaning that 72% of variations in workplace efficiency are influenced by Social Awareness, while 22% are caused by other factors. Adjusted  $r^2$  .718 moderated the result. Also, small Standard Error of 2.54 indicates that the model is a good fit for the data. P value is 0.00, and less than .05. Therefore Ho4-SoA has no significant effect on workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is rejected; while Ha4: SoA has significant effect on workplace efficiency is accepted.

**Test of Hypothesis (Ho5):** The relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is not significantly moderated by Workplace Environment (WEnv). The result of the moderating effect on the Process Macros indicates as follows:

**Model Coefficients**

**Constant:** 26.8976 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) showing the expected value of WEff when both EI and WEnv are zero. The EI Coefficient is -0.0224 ( $p = 0.7493$ -more than .05). This means that the main effect of EI on WEff is not significant, when treated in isolation. However, the interaction term (EI \* WEnv) has a Coefficient of 0.0254 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) which is significant, suggesting that the effect of EI on WEff depends on the level of WEnv.

**Conditional Effects of EI at Different Levels of (Workplace Environment) WEnv-** When:

WEnv = effect of EI on WEff is 0.3337 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) – A significant positive effect.

WEnv = effect of EI on WEff is 0.3846 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) – The positive effect increases.

WEnv = effect of EI on WEff is 0.4355 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) – Positive effect further increases.

These results show that as WEnv (Workplace Environment) increases, the positive impact of EI on WEff becomes stronger, suggesting that a supportive workplace environment amplifies the beneficial effects of emotional intelligence on workplace efficiency.

Therefore, we reject **Ho5:** The effect of Emotional intelligence and Workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is not significantly moderated by Workplace Environment (WEnv), and accept **Ha5:** The relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace efficiency of female professional Accountants in Abuja is significantly moderated by Workplace Environment (WEnv).

Results of the study indicate that all the dimensions of Emotional intelligence tested, individually showed significant positive relationships with workplace efficiency. From the regression analysis result, self-regulation followed by self-motivation proved to be the strongest predictors. The results also revealed that while the combined competencies of EI was a less significant predictor, the effect became more significant when considered in conjunction with WEnv and improved with higher levels.

The study confirms a significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and workplace efficiency and the moderating abilities of the environment. All four dimensions of EI examined demonstrated significant predictive influence on workplace efficiency. The study agrees with the result of Ismail et al. (2022) who concluded that all the dimensions adopted for emotional intelligence have substantial positive relationship with the success of commercial bank employee in Siri Lanka. However, contrary to their assertion that self-motivation and self-Awareness influence employee performance to a greater extent, this study found out that self-regulation and self-motivation are stronger predictors. Finally, the result agrees with that of Hasnun et al (2020) which states that even though emotional intelligence plays a role in job performance, there are other factors such as workplace culture and organisational support that strengthen the effect; and with Zhenjing et al (2022) who concluded that a positive work environment had the power to improve employee performance

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The choice of EI as a concept for predicting efficiency at workplace is fast gaining popularity. Awareness of the predictive abilities of the dimensions of EI on performance in the workplace is also increasing. In today's challenging business environment and life, it is important for individuals to be aware of themselves and also understand the behaviour of other people they relate with. Emotional quotient is as vital if not more than cognitive intelligence in influencing workplace efficiency. However, it may not be out of place to say that the impact of emotional intelligence on workplace efficiency depends largely on the state of workplace environment. Favorable and supportive working environment, amplifies the benefits of EI, improves dedication to assigned duties and these have the potency to improve efficiency and general performance. In a supportive and friendly environment, the relationship is likely to be stronger, while in a hostile and aggressive environment, the relationship tends to weaken.

In line with the finding of the study the following recommendations were made:

- i) At the institutional level SWAN as an umbrella organisation for female Accountant in Nigeria and precisely Abuja should encourage interventions aimed at boosting self-awareness, such as reflective exercises and workshops on self-assessment. At the individual level, female accountants should always take steps to identify the things that easily trigger their emotions; and develop policies and training that emphasize emotional self-regulation, such as stress management techniques and self-control practices. This will improve relationship with colleagues, clients or other associates.
- ii) Professional female Accountants should constantly display an intrinsic motivation to complete all daily tasks successfully as a way of fulfilling their own inner needs and goals. They should promote self-motivation through goal-setting workshops and reward programs for personal achievements.
- iii) They should endeavor to enhance their social awareness skills by organizing training programs that include empathy-building exercises, diversity trainings, and team projects.

iv) Finally, the need for all round continuous assessment and improvement of the workplace environment to identify changes that enhance emotional well-being cannot be over emphasised. Flexible work arrangements, open communication channels, and supportive leadership create a conducive workplace, capable of strengthening the impact of EI on workplace efficiency

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