



## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENT, CRITICAL THINKING AND COUNSELLING ON MENTAL HEALTH IN CALABAR SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

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**Abstract:** This Study Examine Emotional intelligence or EI as an ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people. Though there is overlap between emotional awareness and critical thinking, there are skills involved with critical thinking that differ from those of emotional awareness. Specifically, the ability to access an emotion on demand to better understand a person or situation, and the ability to regulate emotions for growth. The four domains of Emotional Intelligence — self awareness, self -management, social awareness, and relationship management — each can help a leader face any crisis with lower levels of stress, less emotional reactivity and fewer unintended consequences. mental health needs among adolescents and young adults, there is a paucity of evidence regarding use of mental health services in young adulthood. This study look at mental health counseling between adolescents and young adults, examines characteristics and predictors of counseling of young adults, and identifies reasons for foregone care among those with mental health needs in young adulthood. Among individuals with depressive symptomology, young adults reported significantly lower rates of counseling use compared with adolescents. When taking into account the severity of mental health problems, female gender, high maternal education, school attendance, and receipt of routine physical examinations were significantly predictive of counseling use among young adults.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligent, Critical Thinking, Counselling, Youth , Mental Health

### Introduction

According to Prof. Rowland Alam Eke Iheanacho in his 98<sup>th</sup> inaugural lecture, he says that Emotional intelligence (EI) is an aspect of social intelligence that focuses on the ability to perceive, understand, manage and use emotions for guiding thought and action thought and actions. Emotional intelligence is made up of four abilities (Gazzaniga ,et al, 2010). To manage one's own emotions and those of others. You can calm yourself down when

angry. You are equally capable of calming down others who are angry. To use one's emotions to facilitate activities such as using their feelings in enhancing thinking and decision making including improving in future reactions. Personal growth and relationship with other or sharing the news of any good fortunes one experiences, which strengthens relationships and wellbeing. To perceives others emotions and in yourself, intelligent people can easily recognize when they are angry,

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depressed, envious and so on some people cannot do this they also have empathy. they can read other's body language. They can understand themselves and others. They easily associate anxiety with uncertainty, excitement with enthusiasm and so forth. they are aware of the causes and consequences of any emotion on behavior. Mental health is the state of well – being where a person recognizes his or her potential. The person can work fruitfully, contribute to the community and be able to handle and cope with the stress life, in order for us to function well, our body as well as our mind should both be healthy, our body and mind as function as one if one of them is not healthy, the rest will not be working as effectively. Mental health counselors are trained to do several things. They talk to clients about their symptoms and discuss treatment options .in some state, licensed professional counsellors have the authority to diagnose. mental health conditions. other states require a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist to make a diagnosis.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

All emotional reactions are useful in one way or the other. However, positive emotional reaction such as love, interest, excitement are pleasant, rewarding and boarding focus, while negative one can facilities escape, fighting and other survival strategies, but may generate ideas for possible reaction. Positive emotion helps cultivate happy in and for with the strength of kindness, humor, generosity among others, leading to more genuine happy life (Ong, Zautra & Reid, 2010).

Coleman (2015) identified five component of emotional intelligence. These are:

1. **Self- awareness:** In which one is able to know his emotion, strengths, weakness and drives. Other include, his values and goals, including their impact on others. Such a person has deprecating sense of humor, and thirst for constructive criticism. If a leader he does everything possible to overcome an upsetting habit.

**Self – regulation:** This involve control and redirection of disruptive emotion and impulses. An example is when

leader summons up the courage to explain the possible reasons and consequences of a team's failure, to members, instead of an exclamation; then explores solution together with them. Effiom, Maria, & Elizabeth (2022) regulatory bodies should be charged with the responsibility of setting standards and checking excess on the part of student.

Goleman and Boyatzis (2015) believe that executive emotional intelligence is associated with their performance. However, it is now know that a leader's emotional style can determine every other person's moods and behavior. This is through a neurological process that is called mood contagion. It is like saying when the leader smile with him.

2. **Motivation:** Is when ones is driven to achieve for sole aim of achievement. This is mainly for person that has the passion for the work itself and other challenge that may surface. It also includes unflagging energy to improve as well as being optimistic in the face of failure. An example is a leader deciding to learn from his experience by engineering a turn- around when his company's fund tumbles. He does not blame external factors.

3. **Empathy:** Is when one considers the feeling of others mostly in time of decision – making. Such a person has expertise in attracting and retaining talent, has the ability to develop others, and is sensitive to cross – culture differences. An example is a leader who overcomes culture differences through efficient reading of body language.

4. **Social skill:** This involves managing relationship in order to move people in desired direction. Such a person is effective in terms of leading change, he is persuading get involved in extensive networking and is an expert in building and leading teams. An example is a manager assembling a team to create an improved prototype website of an internet strategy, after persuading allies in other divisions of fund the company's participation in a relevant convention. He became the leader after the formation of the internet divisions.

Emotional intelligence specific skill can be strengthened when a leader uses practices and feedback. The leader may



roll-pay the specific skill. A coach or colleges could be request to provides the feedback. The leader can even imitate skilled executive.

The emotional intelligence spreads like electricity travelling over a telephone wire. When a leader is depressed and ruthless, he creates a toxic organization that overflows with negative underachievers. This does not apply to leader that is inspirational whose employees have become positive, embracing and surmounting the toughest challenges. An emotionally intelligent leader constantly adjusts his style to suit his understanding of the impact he had on others. This is an essential process in order to deal with the leadership responsibility.

So, emotional are crucial in a work – setting such as the University. The leaders at all levels needs to displayed positive emotions for an intellectual stimulating environment. This is necessary for academic achievement especially when sufficiently emotionally aroused (Iheanacho, 2002; 2005, 2017). Every teacher in the school system, and indeed every leader should undergo periodic intelligence testing to ascertain their suitability.

### **Critical Thinking as Defined by the National Council for Excellence.**

#### **Defining Critical Thinking**

Critical Thinking is rich concept that has been developing throughout the past 2,500 years. The term “critical thinking” has its roots in the mid late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

A statement by Michael sciven & Richard Paul, presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annua International conference on critical thinking and Education reform, Summer 1987.

Critical thinking is the Intellectually discipline process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, Synthesizing and / or evaluating information gathered form, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection reasoning or communication, as guide to brief and action. In it exemplary from, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter division: clarity accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reason, depth, breadth, and fairness.

It entails the examination of those structure or element of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem or question – at – issues; assumption ; Concept; empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions; implication and consequences; objective form alternative view point and frame work being responsive to variable subject matter, issues and purpose – is incorporated in a family of interwoven modes of thinking, among them; scientific thinking ,mathematics thinking, historical thinking, anthropological thinking, economic thinking , moral thinking and philosophical thinking.

### **Critical thinking can be seen as having two components:**

1. A set of information and belief generating and processing skills.
2. The habit, based on intellectual commitment, of using those skills to guide behavior it is thus to be contrasted with: the mere acquisition and **retention** of information alone, because it involves a particular way in which information is sought and treated; the mere possession of a set of skill, because it involves the continual use to them.
3. The mere use skills (as an exercise) without acceptance of their result. Critical thinking varies according to the motivation underlying it.

### **Why Critical Thinking**

#### **Definition**

Critical thinking is that mode of thinking – about any subject, content or problem – in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charges of the structure inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standard upon them. Everyone thinks; it is our nature to do so. But much of our thinking, left to itself, is Based, distorted, partial, uniformed or downright prejudiced. Yet the quality of our life and that of what we produce, make or build, depends precisely on the quality of our thought. Shoddy thinking is costly, both in money and quality of life. Excellence in thought, however must be systematically cultivated.



A well Cultivated Critical Thinker:

1. Raises vital question and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely;
2. Gather and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively come to well – reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards.
3. Thinks open mindedly within alternative system of thought, recognizing and assessing as need be, their assumption, implication and practical consequences.
4. Communication effectively with others in figuring out solution to complex problems.

Critical thinking is, in short self – directed, self – disciplined, self-monitored and self – corrective thinking. It presupposes assent to rigorous standard of excellence and mindful command of their use.

#### **Critical Thinking Defined by Edward Gasler**

In a seminar study on critical thinking and education in 1941, Edward Glaser defines critical thinking as follows the ability to think critically as conceived in this volume involve three things:

1. An attitude of being disposed to consider in a thoughtful way the problems and subject that come within range of one's experiences.
2. Knowledge of the mention of logical inquiry and reasoning.
3. Some skills in applying those Methods. Critical thinking calls for persistent effort to examine any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the evidence that support it, and the further conclusion to which it trends it also generally required ability to recognized problems, to find workable means for meeting those problems, to gather and marshal pertinent information, to recognize unstated assumption and values to comprehend and use language with accuracy, clarity and discrimination, to interpret, data, to appraise evidence and evaluate argument, to recognized the existence(or non-existences) of logical relationship between proposition, to draw warranted conclusion and generalization at which one arrives. To reconstruct one's

patterns of belief on the basis of wider experiences and to render accurate judgement about specific things and qualities in everyday life.

#### **Brief Conceptualization of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is self-guided, self – disciplined thinking which attempt to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair- minded way. People who think critically consistently attempt to live rationally, reasonably, empathically. They are keenly aware of the inherently flawed nature of human thinking when left unchecked. They strive to diminish the power of their critical thinking offers- concept and principle that enable them to analyze, assess and improve thinking. They work diligently to develop the intellectual virtues of intellectual integrity, intellectual humility, intellectual civility, intellectual empathy, intellectual sense of justice and confidence in reason. They realized that no matter how skill they are as thinkers, they can always improve their reasoning abilities and the will at times fall prey to mistake in reasoning human irrationality, prejudice, biases, distortion, uncritically accepted social rules and taboos, self-interest and vested interest. They strive to improve the world in whatever way they can and contribute to a more rational, civilized society, at the same time, they recognized the complexities often inherent in doing so. They avoid thinking simplistically about complicated issues and strive to appropriately consider the right and need relevant others. The recognized the complexes in developing as thinker and commit themselves to lifelong practice toward Self- improvement. They embody the Socratic principle: the unexamined life together results in an uncritical, Unjust, dangerous world. According to Effiom, Godwin, & Florence(2022) education shapes human being's lives in positive ways. Education is a human right that should bestowed on human being .

#### **Counselling Youth on Mental health**

Youth mental health support and services vary across . It is important to capture the perspectives of youth with lived experiences for planning needs-led interventions and services. Youth mental health support and services vary



across sociocultural contexts. It is important to capture the perspectives of youth with lived experiences for planning needs-led interventions and services. This gap is accentuated by socioeconomic disadvantage, stigma of mental illness, and lack of culturally appropriate interventions (Cullins and Mian, 2015, Getanda et al., 2017). Mental health support, however, can be extended beyond specialist services to family and community networks, schools, religious groups and social activities, which are often more readily available. As youth with mental health difficulties are increasingly at the center of service design and delivery, it is important to capture their lived experiences of support across different sociocultural contexts and systems. Most evidence in the studies help in self seeking. Youth have been shown to value ease of access, age-friendly approaches and environments, flexibility, building a relationship with professionals, being listened to, receiving individualized care plans, and being empowered as active agents in decisions about their care (Frauenholtz and Menderhall, 2020, Loughhead et al., 2018). Youth usually feel more comfortable in first seeking informal support such as talking to family, friends and teachers, and/or looking for information by themselves (Heerde & Hemphill, 2018). These preferences Centre on their understanding of mental health, fears of being judged, need for confidentiality, and a wish to be self-reliant (Del Mauro & Jackson-Williams, 2013).

In contrast, attributing mental health difficulties to personal causes, structural barriers and negative beliefs of professional sources can act as deterrents to help-seeking (Velasco et al., 2020). Other negative mental health experiences include lack of information on how to access services, being compelled to attend therapy by parents and teachers, lengthy waiting times, poor communication, and staff changes (Persson et al., 2017).

There is less evidence on youth perspectives of mental health support systems in GSC. Available evidence suggests that conceptualization of mental health or illness (Tamburrino et al., 2020) and fears of negative societal

attitudes (Khalil et al., 2020) are prominent barriers to help-seeking. This evidence also shows that available informal and formal support usually consist of extended family, community forums and networks, schools, primary health clinics, social and sports activities (Clark et al., 2018, Panigrani et al., 2018). Indeed, youth in four GSC were found to utilize internal and informal rather than formal and structural resources when faced with trauma-inducing scenarios (Vostanis et al., 2020). If services are to engage and actively involve youth, their perspectives need to be understood in conjunction with those of professionals and other providers across a range of cultures and systems.

Social connections, especially with peers but also neighbors, were highlighted by all groups. Youth mentioned several mechanisms such as sense of belonging, offloading, listening, sharing, problem-solving, and caring for others; most of which are non-specific therapeutic factors in different modalities. Some youth participants made a distinction between being able to connect (or re-connect) rather than merely interacting or mixing socially. Professionals focused more on outcomes rather than ‘ingredients’ of social connections such as reducing isolation, learning how to build relationships and how to manage their ‘social capital’. Potential counter-productive effects were raised such as being exposed to ‘negativity’, feeling intimidated or hurt, and drawing comparisons with peers. According to Effiom, Cyril & Brenda (2020) some people will not publicly express their willingness to see a psychotherapist or counsellor and have more to do with understanding of not feeling the need to disclose personal information. Effiom, Lucy & Elizabeth, Otu(2022) Teachers should pay special attention to identify forms for abuse and support abused learners. Upon identification of the abused learners, teachers should report such case to the police.

#### **What is Mental Health Counselling?**

Mental health counselors are licensed professionals who treat the cognitive, behavioral ,and emotional aspects of



mental health and substance use conditions they work with individuals, families, couples, and groups in variety of settings.

Mental health counselors use a variety of techniques to:

- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Identify personal stressors and levels of functioning
- Preserve or restore mental health

#### **Psychotherapy Counselling:**

Depending on the type of help and assistance an individual needs and the illness and they are struggling with, psychotherapy session can be conducted in a variety of formats. The therapist along with the patient will decide on the format best suited to the patient's needs.

#### **Individual therapy:**

A patient receives individual one-on-one counselling with his/her therapist to overcome and treat mental illness, a disorder or a personal obstacle. Therapy and counselling aren't just used to treat mental illness; people often get professional help to deal with grief, the end of a relationship, help with self-esteem or any number of things. This type of therapy has proven to be very successful as it allows the patients to confront their issues and develop healthy coping mechanisms.

#### **Group therapy:**

Therapy that is conducted in a group setting with anywhere from three, four members to more group therapy creates a safe, judgement free environment where people can share common experience and thus have a better understanding of their struggles. There can draw strength for each others success and know they are not alone in what there are going through. It is a particularly successful form of therapy for people struggling with an addiction or coping with grief.

#### **Couples therapy:**

It is mainly designed as a therapy session for two people who are in relationship and who going through some conflict or problems. Traditionally it has been used by married people or couples. Therapy is evolving to include any two people in a relationship of some sort who are

experiencing interpersonal problems, for example, a mother and daughter, two friends, etc. The focus in this type of therapy is improving communication between the two individuals allowing them to see and understand things from different viewpoints.

#### **Family therapy:**

The concept of family therapy is based on the beliefs that having family support and understanding increases the effectiveness and success of a patient's ability to openly discuss the struggles they are going through or experiencing as a result of the issue at hand. This type of therapy can be especially useful if there is abuse in the family or if someone is struggling with a mental disorder or addiction as this can have an effect on everyone involved.

#### **Fact about Mental Health**

Mental health is more than just being free from any type of mental disorder. It is an important aspect of a person's overall well-being because if your mind is unhealthy, the rest of the body will not be able to function well.

The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that it is important to take care of our mental health because it is an important part of our human condition.

#### **Factors affecting mental health**

Significant life events can affect mental health. A sudden passing of a loved one can trigger mental health deterioration. Socioeconomic factors such as social exclusion, alienation and the like are also mental health risks.

Too much stress, a poor and unhealthy lifestyle negatively in the surroundings could also contribute to the mind's health deterioration.

#### **Mental health disorders**

Over 450 million individuals are suffering from mental disorders. One in four individuals have the risk of being affected by a mental health disorder. Today, mental illness affects more and more people, but help is limited. There are still those, especially people who do not understand, who have doubts about mental health disorders and stigmatize those that suffer from them.



### Types of Counselling:

Counselling has many types. the key to successful counselling is to know which type you are comfortable with:

**Cognitive therapy**-this therapy is based on the theory that your actions and feelings are often due to the way you think this form of therapy enables psychiatrist to help you change the way you are thinking in other to feel or behave better.

**Behavior therapy**-this kind of therapy focuses on the modification of unwanted as well as unhealthy behaviors. Healthy habits and behavior are enforced through the use of rewards .

**Groups therapy** – some experienced personnel leads a group therapy session. it is a confidential environment where people with the same mental health issues get share their feelings, members support one another when there need it.

**Psychoanalysis** –this type of counselling lets you think about your past, an experienced counsellors will help you understand the reasons behind the way you act, behave and think today .

### How to address mental health issues

Mental health disorders are sometimes trickish to solve rather than physical injuries or conditions. Early detection is the key to addressing mental disorders .

Counselling is one of the best ways to address the main cause of the problem of mental disorders.

Therapy sessions with psychologists can help in finding the main cause of the problem and find ways for the patients to deal with it naturally.

Therapy or counselling session can treat various mental health problems such as;

- Depression
- Eating disorder
- Anger
- Anxiety problems
- Grief and loss
- Addictions

- Compulsive disorder
- Abuse, and more

### Counseling helps mental issues by helping you:

1. **Understand your condition:** your therapist can help you understand you mental condition .as you talk, he or she can help you comprehend the reasons behind your illness.
2. **Face challenges:** counselling enables you to face the different challenges in your life, your therapist can help you determine the reasons behind your mental illness and help you face them in a heathy way.
3. **Change current behavior:** your therapist can help you determine your current habit that alleviate your mental illness. he or she can help you create ways to change your current behaviors that contribute to your mental health issues.
4. **Give room for healing:** accepting your mental health issues is the way to healing . let go of the past in other to make room for the present and future, counselling can show you ways to let go of what triggers your condition and help you have the solution you need to become better.
5. **Alleviate your stress:** talking to someone who has a empathy or someone who knows how to understand you can help alleviate you from the stress you are feeling .this way , you can air out what you are feeling before been judged. As a result you get to feel better and can understand how to cope with what you are going through .Counseling for mental health step by step process that requires time. consistency is needed in order for the therapy to work. if one does not follow through with the treatment sessions, the patient will simply revert to his previous condition.

### Conclusion

Therefore, there is an urgent need for medical educators to understand the causes of student’s distress, potential adverse personal and professional consequences and institutional factors that can positively or negatively influence student’s health which is what this study would reveal. This study would provide insight into the psychosocial problems these students face in the course of



their training. The aim of this study therefore was to assess the mental health status of the medical students in the University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Mental Illness is a clinically significant psychological or behavioral disorder associated with distress, disability or a significantly increased risk of suffering pain, disability, death or important loss of freedom (American Psychiatric Association, 2005). Mental disorders are the leading cause of years lived with disability (YLDs) worldwide, accounting for 37% of all healthy life years lost through disease and 14% of the global burden of disease (Vos et al. 2012). They constitute risk factors for many health problems (Prince et al., 2007) and create substantial personal burden for affected individuals in terms of personal suffering, their families in terms of crippling burden of care and life-time lost productivity, and the society at large in terms of a drain on national resource

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