



Business Administration and Business Economics

Entrepreneurs' Emotional Intelligence and Sustainability of Livestock Businesses in Nigeria

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Abstract: Sustainability of livestock businesses in Nigeria and beyond have attracted views of researchers, as many livestock businesses have failed because of the inability of entrepreneurs to apply the right entrepreneurial mindset in their respective businesses. The paper examined the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on sustainability of entrepreneur's livestock business in Nigeria. The study utilises the quantitative research approach. The study population consist of all employers and employees of registered livestock firms in Anambra State, Nigeria, as 363 staff and employers were sampled. Multiple regression analysis was utilised to analyse the data. The research found that EI has significant effect on sustainability of livestock business. Based on the foregoing, the study recommended that to enhance the rapid attainment of organisational objectives, the organisation should establish a conducive environment that promotes the development of cognitive ability among all staff in the organisation.

Keywords: Entrepreneur; emotional intelligence; sustainability; livestock business; Nigeria

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a rapidly evolving and influential factor in the economy, driving innovation and the expansion of emerging markets. The entrepreneurial business

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plays an essential role in fostering economic growth and prosperity in advanced nations and emerging economies (Oriarewo, Ofobruku & Tor, 2019). The economic growth can be attributed directly to the expansion of established businesses and the establishment of new businesses. The establishment of new financial entities, also known as entrepreneurship, is crucial for the advancement of organisations and economies. It stimulates innovation, facilitates the creation of jobs, and enhances the global competitiveness of both companies and countries.

The prevailing economic conditions have led to workforce reduction and frequent spells of joblessness, prompting a rising number of individuals to seek more frequent opportunities for self-employment. Notwithstanding the financial, personal and managerial obstacles linked to entrepreneurial professions, there is an increasing inclination of persons to pursue such careers at an accelerated rate (Zimmerer, Scarborough & Wilson, 2017). From an individual's standpoint, establishing a new company is frequently conceived as a component of the entrepreneur's personal life strategy to generate income. For numerous individuals, self-employment offers a means to break free from the constraints of traditional bureaucratic organisations and a chance to create substantial and reputable personal wealth (Walker & Webster, 2017). Self-employment provides individuals with the chance to have a flexible schedule, be independent, earn profits, and receive distinctive recognition. Therefore, contemporary entrepreneurship is determined by the proficiency with which entrepreneurs effectively oversee both themselves and others. Contemporary entrepreneurs must possess the capacity to be versatile and adjust to an incessantly evolving business milieu.

The correlation between entrepreneurial success and sustainability has been attributed to cognitive abilities. These skills encompass the ability to accurately perceive others, create favourable initial impressions, and effectively persuade or influence others during interpersonal interactions (Nwankwo & Kanyangale, 2020). Emotional intelligence (EI) includes a range of social and cognitive abilities. It defined as the ability to recognise, promote, comprehend, and manage a person's emotions and that of the others. Although entrepreneurship research has examined various skills and abilities associated with success, there has been limited investigation into the effect of EI on the sustainability of businesses.

The EI concept has garnered the interest of both practitioners and scholars. The latter adopted the concept of EI due to its correlation with vital organisational outcomes such as effectiveness, productivity, sales, revenues, service quality, and customer loyalty. While the former recognised that employees cannot be viewed solely as biological or physical machines, and that they cannot separate their emotions, values, and beliefs from their work. Krishnan, GoelRicha, Gurinder, Malik & Sahai (2017) states that EI has significant implications for entrepreneurial and social activities, including negotiation, resource acquisition and organisation, opportunity

identification and exploitation, stress management, customer acquisition and retention, and leadership. Rhee and White conducted a study on the EI of entrepreneurs and discovered that those with high EI exhibited elevated levels of self-assurance, reliability, goal-driven behaviour, customer-focused mindset, ability to initiate change, and aptitude for teamwork and collaboration. The imperative for success and competitiveness imposes greater demands for enhanced entrepreneurial performance in order to satisfy the needs of business clients, fulfil delivery expectations, and simultaneously identify and capitalise on opportunities. EI is an essential indicator of entrepreneurial performance (Munira, Rahman & Akhter, 2022).

The competition in the business arena is expanding at an accelerated rate, surpassing initial expectations. Therefore, companies globally are seeking solutions that will provide them with a competitive edge. According to a literature review, entrepreneur emotional intelligence (EEI) is crucial in effectively managing team relationships to create a supportive environment for creativity and innovation, leading to enhanced business performance (Lopes, Salovey, Cote & Beers, 2016). However, the EEI goes beyond just having a likeable personality. It necessitates a strong mental fortitude and emotional stability for entrepreneurs to confront and overcome competition (Ghorbani, Johari & Moghadam, 2012). Currently, eEI affects all aspects of human lives, including personal and professional relationships with others (Modassir & Singh, 2008). Entrepreneurs who are unable to effectively utilise EI will reduce their ability to innovate and, as a result, experience a decline in business performance and poor sustainability (Ghorbani et al., 2012).

An analysis of Nigeria's business environment reveals that the majority of business establishments encounter difficulties related to entrepreneurial performance and sustainability. Oriarewo, Ofobruku, and Tor (2019) found that the performance of entrepreneurs in the majority of organisations falls below the industry average. A number of management experts in Nigeria express concern regarding the performance of business owners. What factors contribute to the varying levels of success among different entrepreneurial ventures? Almost every entrepreneur embarks on their new venture with aspirations of remarkable success, yet approximately half of all newly established businesses cease operations within the initial twelve months. An analysis of these remarkable figures reveals that merely one-third of start-up enterprises in Nigeria manage to endure for a minimum of two years, while less than half of the enterprises that do survive are able to reach the four-year milestone (Ofobruku & Ezeah, 2019). Therefore, it is clear that comprehending the factors associated with entrepreneurial success is crucial for entrepreneurship, specifically for the entrepreneur, the stakeholders, and the overall economic well-being. The study examined the effect of EEI on the sustainability of livestock business in Nigeria. The operational dimensions addressed in this paper include self-awareness, motivation, empathy, and relationship management.

The findings of this research will provide important insights for entrepreneurs, investors, and managers regarding the significance of EI in their interactions with stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and government agencies. This is particularly important for ensuring the long-term viability of the business venture. The findings of this research will provide both theoretical and empirical support for researchers and students investigating titles related to EEI and the sustainability of businesses.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Entrepreneur Emotional Intelligence (EEI)

Entrepreneurship is the act of creating economic value by assuming risks and cultivating a unique set of resources to take advantage of market business opportunities and generate profits. (Ofobruku & Ezeah, 2019). Entrepreneurs are people who identify, create, and develop new markets. They are able to spot market gaps and spot opportunities when they arise. To put it another way, entrepreneurship is more than just seeing opportunities and seizing them (Rohana & Zarina, 2015); rather, it also entails applying behavioural intelligence to the process of carrying out the predetermined goals. According to research, managers who are successful are those who can outperform their competitors both now and in the future, effectively communicate with their human resources, and create the environment needed for their staff to be creative and innovative (Nwankwo & Kanyangale, 2023). Emotional intelligence (EI) is a necessary and inevitable component of any organisation, and it can have a significant impact on the relationship between entrepreneurs and their employees (Oriarewo, 2018).

Emotions refer to specific feelings, thoughts, psychological states, or biological conditions that influence an individual's mood and behaviour (Goleman, 2015). EI is a form of social intelligence that enables recognition of one's own emotions and emotions of others, as well as regulation of emotions in interpersonal interactions and at an individual level (Goleman, 2015). Emotions encompass feelings, moods, affects, emotional intensity, and the inclination towards improved performance in behaviour. Therefore, this study centres on EI to gain a deeper understanding of the function emotion plays in entrepreneurship. According to Sistas (2020), EI is the capacity to recognise and articulate emotions, integrate emotions into cognitive processes, comprehend and rationalise emotions, and manage emotions in oneself and others, as delineated by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008). Also, EI is characterised by Rohana and Zarina (2015) as "the accurate assessment and expression of emotions in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotions in oneself and others, and the application of emotions to motivate, strategise, and achieve objectives in one's life". Pirvu (2020) defined EI as the capacity to recognise

and articulate emotions, along with the ability to regulate emotions and leverage them to inspire both oneself and others. In this study, EI is defined as the capacity to comprehend and regulate one's own emotions, in addition to recognising and affecting the emotions of others. Thus, an entrepreneur with a significant level of emotional intelligence possesses the ability to identify and understand both their own emotions and those of others. The individuals can proficiently employ emotional information to direct their thoughts and actions, distinguish between different emotions and precisely categorise them, and adjust their emotions to accommodate different environments.

The current scientific literature presents three noteworthy and mutually reinforcing approaches to the construct: the integrative approach, the specific-ability approach, and the mixed model (Fernandez-Berrocal & Extremera, 2016). Mayer et al. (2008) define specific-ability as the emphasis on particular elements of emotional intelligence skills and capabilities. Cartwright & Pappas (2008) and Mayer et al. (2008) delineate essential skills encompassing emotional perception and identification, the application of emotional information in cognitive processes related to emotions—specifically the assessment, classification, and categorisation of emotions—linguistic capabilities for articulating these emotions, and the management of emotions in oneself and others, facilitating the experience, amplification, or disengagement from emotional states, as well as the monitoring, reflection on feelings, and modification of situational perceptions.

Scholars possess particular skills that correspond to the four main branches of the Salovey and Mayer (1990) model. The approach is integrative as it incorporates all domains to form a comprehensive EI. From the early stages of childhood, each area is considered to be fully developed (Mayer et al., 2008). The four branches are organised hierarchically, with the lowest level of emotion perception being succeeded by the highest and most intricate level of emotion control. Therefore, the capacity to control one's own and others' emotions relies on the skills of these three different branches (Fernandez-Berrocal & Extremera, 2006).

The Mixed-Model is another approach to EI that is named for its focus on mixed qualities. The concept was initially proposed by Bar-On (1997), who defined EI as a collection of non-cognitive abilities, competencies and skills that impact an individual's ability to effectively handle stress and requirements in the environment. Similar to Goleman's model, Cartwright and Pappas (2008) observed that this one consisted of five major categories: general mood, stress management, adaptability, intra-personal emotional skills, and interpersonal emotion skills. However, for the purpose of this study, Goleman's EI dimensions were adapted. They are self-awareness, empathy, motivation, self-regulation, and relationship management.

Self-awareness: Emotional self-awareness is a fundamental component of EI, which pertains to the capacity to identify and comprehend one's own emotions. Self-

awareness is defined as recognising one's emotions, understanding their underlying causes, and acknowledging their potential impact on one's thoughts and actions (MacCann, Jiang, Brown, Double, Bucich & Minbashian, 2020). Cultivating emotional self-awareness can enhance the ability to regulate emotions, facilitate more discerning decision-making, and enhance interpersonal connections. Self-awareness is crucial for recognising whether the perspective of the world is accurate or distorted. This requires understanding the tendencies, biases, strengths, and limitations. Self-deception, rationalisation, and illogical thinking are prevalent factors that distort one's ability to perceive the world accurately and can hinder a person's capacity to support others and form relationships built on strong trust. Developing a strong sense of self-awareness is crucial for cultivating a healthy personal identity and is an essential component of emotional intelligence (Caldwell, 2020).

Emotional intelligence is a newly developed concept that gained popularity in the business world thanks to Goleman (2015). Goleman suggests that emotional intelligence may be more advantageous for managing business matters compared to cognitive abilities. Self-awareness encompasses emotional competencies that enhance one's effectiveness and foster exceptional workplace relationships. Research indicates that individuals who possess emotional self-awareness demonstrate higher levels of job performance (MacCann et al., 2020). Emotional self-awareness in this study refers to the capacity to identify and comprehend one's own emotions and their influence on one's behaviour. This entails individuals who possess the ability to acknowledge and comprehend their own moods, emotions, and needs, and are capable of perceiving and predicting the impact of their actions on others.

Self-regulation: self-regulation is an important component of EI and it involves being conscientious and able to delay immediate gratification in order to work towards long-term goals. Additionally, it involves being able to recover effectively from emotional distress. Baumeister and Vohs (2013) refers to self-regulation as the capacity to modify one's actions or conduct. Self-regulation entails the deliberate act of pausing between experiencing a feeling and engaging in an action (Antonopoulou, 2024). This pause allows for thoughtful consideration, strategic planning, and the cultivation of patience. Essentially, maturity is demonstrated by the capacity to confront emotional, social, and cognitive challenges in the surroundings with composure and contemplation. If this description evokes thoughts of mindfulness, it is not coincidental - mindfulness is indeed connected to the capacity for self-regulation. Self-regulation, also known as self-management, is the process of controlling internal states, impulses, and resources (Reed, Combs & Segerstrom, 2020). Self-regulation is a concept that includes five specific competencies: trustworthiness, self-control, conscientiousness, adaptability, and innovation. According to Goleman (2001), individuals who possess high self-management skills

are capable of effectively managing their disruptive emotions and impulses. They are able to remain calm and composed even in highly stressful situations or during a crisis. Additionally, they demonstrate transparency by aligning their actions with their values, openly acknowledging their mistakes or flaws, and confronting unethical behaviour instead of ignoring it. Moreover, they exhibit adaptability in successfully adjusting to new challenges. Having understood the concept of self-regulation from diverse context, this study described it as the ability to manage emotions in a way that helps rather than hinders one's ability to complete a task.

Motivation: Motivation, as a component of emotional intelligence, refers to the utilisation of one's innermost preferences to drive and direct oneself towards desired objectives (Antonopoulou, 2024). It involves taking initiative, striving for improvement, and persisting in the face of obstacles and disappointment (Baumeister & Vohs, 2013). Another crucial emotional intelligence skill is intrinsic motivation. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are driven by factors that go beyond external incentives such as fame, wealth, acknowledgement, and praise. On the contrary, they possess a strong desire to satisfy their personal internal desires and objectives. They strive for intrinsic rewards, achieve a state of flow by being completely attuned to an activity, and actively pursue moments of peak experiences. Self-motivation encompasses the emotional inclinations that direct or facilitate the achievement of objectives. Self-motivation encompasses four distinct competencies: achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism. Goleman (2015) proposes that these individuals possess the ability to establish ambitious performance benchmarks for themselves and others, establish measurable yet demanding objectives, consistently acquire knowledge and concentrate on enhancing performance, take advantage of or generate opportunities, and perceive setbacks as chances for growth rather than as threats, adopting an optimistic perspective. The present study provided a definition of motivation as an inherent state that compels individuals to engage in actions with the purpose of attaining particular goals.

Empathy: This refers to the ability to perceive and understand the emotions of others, adopt their point of view, and establish a connection and harmony with a wide range of individuals (Antonopoulou, 2024). Empathy, the capacity to comprehend and share the emotions of others, is undeniably vital to emotional intelligence. However, it encompasses more than simply having the ability to identify the emotional states of others. Having empathy also enables individuals to comprehend the power dynamics that frequently impact social relationships, particularly in professional environments. This is crucial for directing the interactions individuals have with various individuals they come across on a daily basis (Rahman, Ferdousy, Al-Amin & Akter, 2020). Individuals proficient in this domain have the ability to discern the individuals who hold authority in various relationships. They possess a comprehension of how these forces exert an impact on emotions and actions. As a result, they are able to accurately analyse various situations that depend on these

power dynamics. Empathy is linked to five distinct competencies: comprehension of others, cultivation of others, service orientation, utilisation of diversity and political awareness (Goleman, 2015). Here, empathy is defined as the cognitive recognition and understanding of the desires, emotions, and worries of other individuals. Therefore, individuals who possess these competencies have the ability to effectively interact with people from different backgrounds, possess political acumen to identify important social networks and understand key power dynamics, and diligently monitor customer satisfaction to ensure their needs are met.

Relationship Management: Relationship management is an essential component of EI used by entrepreneurs in achieving their goals. According to Ndubisi, Anyanwu and Nwankwo (2016), relationship management refers to the skill of eliciting favourable reactions from others. The domain of relationship management encompasses eight distinct competencies: influence, communication, conflict resolution, leadership, catalysing change, fostering connections, collaboration/cooperation, and team proficiency (Ndubisi & Nwankwo, 2012). Goleman (2015) proposes that individuals who possess these competencies will possess the ability to: effectively persuade and captivate an audience when speaking to a group; provide timely and constructive feedback and possess a natural inclination towards coaching and mentoring; serve as strong proponents for change, even in the presence of resistance; resolve conflicts by actively involving all parties, comprehending their differing viewpoints, and identifying a shared objective; and inspire others to actively and enthusiastically commit to the collective endeavour, fostering team unity and identity. Effectively managing relationships entails adeptly managing the emotions of others (Goleman, 2004). Acquiring social skills, which are parts of EI, is not as effortless as it may initially appear. The skill of effectively managing relationships starts with authenticity, which involves behaving in accordance with one's true emotions (Goleman, 2015). In this study, relationship management aspect of EI involves comprehending the developmental requirements of others and assisting them in attaining them.

2.2. Sustainability of Business

Sustainability has emerged as a prominent concept and is now more prevalent across various organisations. There are numerous definitions of sustainability, but according to Martin and Schouten (2012), it refers to the capacity of a system to sustain or regenerate itself indefinitely. This is the way in which all of the earth's natural systems operate. The concept of sustainability is inherent to the earth, but humans do not possess the same innate inclination towards it. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), defined it as the balanced integration of economic, social, and environmental goals within societies. It involves considering the long-term impacts of current activities and ensuring that decision-

making processes are transparent and accountable to the public. Business activities encompass the utilisation of natural resources and the proper handling of waste. From a sustainable standpoint, it is preferable for businesses to not only use resources, but also actively encourage the efficient consumption and replacement of resources (Nwankwo & Kanyangale, 2022). Nwankwo and Kanyangale (2023) opined that businesses can implement strategies to enhance resource efficiency and replace materials, as well as reuse and recycle materials. They can also effectively manage waste by reducing and treating residuals. Additionally, businesses can take measures to prevent and treat pollution of water, soil, and air. Opting for energetically efficient policies and adopting green processes and products, which have a lower environmental impact, are also viable options. Therefore, businesses can promote and implement sustainable practices both within their organisation and externally. However, the factors that motivate firms to do so actually vary. Business sustainability is frequently misconstrued as primarily referring to financial sustainability. The misconception arises from the fact that when an organisation becomes unviable, the signs of this issue become evident in its financial situation. Nevertheless, the long-term viability and success of a business, commonly referred to as business sustainability, rely on factors beyond the efficient management of its financial resources. For the purpose of this study, sustainability is defined business sustainability as conducting business operations in a manner that does not have adverse effects on the environment, community, or society at large. so within an organisation, there exist several key dimensions like product sustainability, strategic sustainability, personnel sustainability and financial sustainability that, when effectively managed, guarantee the business sustainability.

3. Methodology

The study focused on livestock farmers in Anambra State, Nigeria. These farmers comprise of both employers and employees of livestock farms. The study utilised a stratified random sampling technique to choose 326 registered livestock farmers in Anambra State, Nigeria. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire following a preliminary study. The study measured the dimensions of EI as follows: self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship management. These instrument was designed using a Five-Likert rating scale. The questionnaire underwent a pre-testing phase on a small group that closely resembled the participants in the study. This was done to assess the questionnaire's validity and reliability. The instrument underwent both face and content validation, and demonstrated an internal consistency of 0.716, indicating its suitability for the study. The study employed the test-retest method to assess the reliability of the research instruments, while the data were analysed using Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA).

4. Data Analysis

This study utilised multiple regression analysis to examine the effect of independent or explanatory variable (entrepreneur's emotional intelligence) on the dependent variable (sustainability of livestock business). To examine this, the study formulated the hypothesis below:

Ho: Entrepreneur's emotional intelligence (EEI) has no significant effect on sustainability of livestock business.

The stated hypothesis presented above is analysed in the tables below.

Table 1. Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.240a	.0576	.224	4.568	2.037

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, relationship management, empathy

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Source: SPSS 29.0

Table 1 demonstrates that R², which examines the effect of EEI on business sustainability, has a value of 0.0576. This indicates that 5.76% of the variability in the sustainability of livestock enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria, is accounted for by variability in self-awareness, empathy, motivation, self-regulation, and relationship management. This was supported by an adjusted R² value of 0.224. The Durbin-Watson statistics were used to assess autocorrelation in the model. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.037 indicates that there is no autocorrelation among the variables in the model, suggesting that the model is dependable for making predictions.

Table 2. Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	474.920	7	67.846	21.142	.002 ^a
	Residual	7740.252	319	24.264		
	Total	8215.172	326			

a. Predictors: (Constant), self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, relationship management, empathy.

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Source: SPSS 29.0

Table 2 which shows the value of f-statistics (21.142) and a with corresponding p-value of 0.002 shows that the independent variables (self-awareness, self-regulation,

motivation, empathy and relationship management) have significant effect on dependent variable (sustainability of livestock business).

Table 3. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.211	2.688		5.288	.000
	Self-awareness	.197	.045	.121	2.387	.001
	Motivation	.057	.050	.062	2.146	.000
	Self regulation	.221	.057	.178	3.376	.003
	Relationship Management	.167	.051	.072	3.251	.001
	Empathy	.080	.049	.083	2.628	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Source: SPSS 29.0

5. Discussion of Results

The primary objective of this paper was to investigate the impact of EEI on the viability of livestock enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. When evaluating self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship management as the operational and independent variables for EEI. The research indicated that the EEI substantially influences the sustainability of the livestock sector in Anambra State, Nigeria. The analysis demonstrates that all dimensions of the EEI—self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship management—exert a statistically significant and positive effect on the sustainability of livestock enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. The results of the present study correspond with previous research that investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on organisational functions. The cited studies acknowledge that the amalgamation of explicit knowledge and implicit emotional competencies enhances achievement and performance (Omoankhanlen et al., 2018; Oriarewo et al., 2019).

To further analyse the outcome of the research, the study found that self-awareness and self-regulation are the major contributing dimensions of EEI to the sustainability of livestock ventures in Anambra State, Nigeria. By implication, the understanding of one's thoughts, feelings, and emotions creates opportunity and enhances the sustainability of livestock business. It is also evident that regulating interactions with others in the organisation enhance the sustainability of the livestock business in Nigeria and beyond. These findings align with the conclusions of Pirvu (2020), Olatide and Abiola (2017), and Amy and Whitney (2016), which state that the EI of

entrepreneurs has a dual impact on the firm. Firstly, it affects the internal processes involved in managing emotions and solving various problems within the venture. Again, it facilitates the necessary social processes of the entrepreneur, potentially influencing nearly every aspect of the venture. EI facilitates the management of emotions when dealing with uncertainties that trigger emotional responses. Consequently, this process of self-regulation is expected to result in a more equitable and logical strategy towards the difficulties faced in the endeavour, such as making decisions and engaging in social interactions. These improvements are anticipated to positively impact performance (Amy & Whitney, 2016). Researchers in the field of entrepreneurship have observed that entrepreneurs need to effectively handle their own emotions while evaluating and influencing the emotions of others. This ability has a significant impact on various aspects of the business venture and, consequently, its performance (Pirvu, 2020). This is significant because entrepreneurship is an intrinsically emotional process that can influence various aspects of entrepreneurial activity and the performance of the venture (Oriarewo et al., 2019). EI aids in developing the ability to start and sustain entrepreneurial ventures, leading to long-term success. Amy and Whitney (2016) observed that EI plays a crucial role in the performance of ventures. This is because emotional intelligence affects an individual's inclination to participate in a startup and influences their determined pursuit of opportunities.

In addition, Oriarewo et al. (2019) highlights the importance of an entrepreneur's capacity to recognise and control the emotions of others in order to convince potential investors and partners to back their ventures. This ultimately enables them to obtain the essential resources and capabilities needed for long-term viability. Social interaction is contingent upon an individual's ability to self-regulate and exercise impulse control (Oriarewo et al., 2019). They additionally expressed the view that self-regulation and impulse control encompass the management of personal objectives, the formulation of strategies to achieve those objectives, and the handling of obstacles that arise during the process, including one's emotional response. EI has a significant impact on the way entrepreneurs interact with others and the variety of social abilities that are crucial for their success.

On the other hand, the study also found that motivation, empathy and relationship management are veritable tools of EEI and have contributed positively to the sustainability of livestock business in Anambra State, Nigeria. This collaborate with the findings of Munira et al. (2022), Pirvu (2020), Rangarajan, Jayamale and Lakshii (2014) that strong and positive significant effect of motivation, empathy and relationship management on sustainability of organisation. It is important to note that several studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurial activity is crucial for the growth and survival of organisations (Oriarewo et al., 2019; Nwankwo & Kanyangale, 2020). However, the entrepreneurial success of these individuals has

been partially attributed to cognitive abilities such as motivation, empathy, relationship management, and other attributes.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined the effect of EEI on the sustainability of livestock businesses in Anambra State. The findings suggest that the various aspects of EEI, including self-awareness, empathy, motivation, self-regulation, and relationship management, have a significant effect on the long-term sustainability of livestock businesses in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study concluded that EEI has a significant effect on the sustainability of livestock business in Anambra State, as indicated by the previous findings.

The growing entrepreneurial endeavours are crucial for a robust economy and can serve as a significant driver of sustainability within an organisation. Entrepreneurs are not just employees of companies; they are integral members of the organisation who invest significant time and energy into guiding the venture, making daily operational decisions, and demonstrating overall commitment to the organisation. Entrepreneurs, due to their strong dedication, may also experience heightened emotions in relation to the tasks involved in their venture. In light of the research results, the subsequent suggestions are proposed:

1. Organisations should prioritise the development of their employees' EI, particularly in terms of self-awareness. By fostering a high level of employee awareness, the organisation will be able to attain business sustainability;
2. The organisation should establish a conducive environment to enhance cognitive ability and self-regulation, thereby facilitating the efficient attainment of organisational objectives;
3. The management of the livestock business should establish an efficient incentive system to motivate and direct employees towards desired objectives;
4. Training and development should be offered to both the management and employees of the livestock business to enhance their comprehension of others' emotions and improve their ability to establish positive relationships with the organization's stakeholders;
5. Training should be provided on effectively managing relationships with the public, including handling emotions in relationships and accurately interpreting social situations to promote effective cooperation and teamwork.

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