

EXPLORING THE EFFECT OF LEADER EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON FOLLOWER  
SELF-EFFICACY DURING CHANGE MANAGEMENT

by

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Business Administration

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Liberty University, School of Business

May 2021

### **Abstract**

The problem under study was the lack of scholarly research on the effect leader emotional intelligence (EI) has on follower self-efficacy during change management. This study provided findings on the three overarching themes of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each theme was examined individually and then how they are interrelated. The researcher provided a detailed overview of how the interviews were conducted then subsequently coded and analyzed. The researcher then provided an interpretation of the findings through visualization of the data. As a support to the research, a detailed explanation of the research questions was provided along with participant vignettes to help the reader understand the researcher's methods. These questions were then viewed against the research's conceptual framework to support or refute the earlier assumptions. The findings were reviewed against the current literature for confirmation or possible conflicts with other research. This case study confirmed much of the existing research on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Recommendations for action and further study were suggested, along with the biblical foundations supporting this research. Finally, this research study advanced the understanding of the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during organizational change.

*Keywords:* emotional intelligence, organizational change, self-efficacy, leadership

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### **Dedication**

This study is dedicated to my Mom in heaven who always had faith in me when others did not, I miss her every day. I also dedicate this to my Dad and all the teachers who taught me the value of doing things well. Last, I want to dedicate this to my Savior by quoting my mother's favorite hymn, "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch; like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see."

## **Acknowledgments**

There were many people who kept me going throughout my dissertation journey. First, I want to thank my awesome wife, Kelly for her patience and support as I spent hours locked away writing paper after paper and finally, this dissertation. I would also like to thank Dr. David Duby for the time he spent working with me over the past year and a half as my dissertation chair along with Dr. Carle Hunt and Dr. Nicole Lowes for their insightful input to this dissertation. I would like to thank all the professors and staff members of Liberty University who got me to this point. Additionally, I want to thank the participants of this study who made this dissertation possible. Last, my deepest thanks to my family and friends who encouraged me to keep going, despite severe misgivings over the almost three years it took to make it here, and finish. You kept me going and without you, I would not be where I am today, dissertation complete!

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## **Section 1: Foundation of the Study**

This qualitative single-case study explored the effect of leaders' emotional intelligence on employee self-efficacy during organizational change. To explore this question, this proposal provided the purpose and nature of the study against a problem statement. The foundation of the study includes research questions, which allowed the researcher to explore the emotional intelligence of leaders and self-efficacy in followers, all within the context of organizational change.

This proposal also included a conceptual framework of the theory to explore these phenomena, as well as other research theories and why they were rejected for this study. Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for the study were also included for review and definitions of terms used in this study. This research proposal is related to the leadership cognate in many ways, as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and organizational change are significant research trends within leadership literature. The study included a review of academic and professional literature on emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and organizational change theory.

The study was conducted by interviewing two leaders and 15 followers. During the study, the researcher's role was to conduct interviews, record, and then transcribe each participant's responses to the interview questions. The researcher coded the transcribed interviews. The researcher used the NVivo 12 qualitative research software to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions and aid the researcher in determining data saturation. The results addressed the research questions related to the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management.

The findings from the interviews revealed three overarching themes of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each theme was examined individually and then how they are interrelated. The dissertation contains a detailed overview of how the interviews were conducted, subsequently coded, and then analyzed. A detailed explanation of the research questions is provided with participant vignettes to aid in understanding the research methodology. Additionally, the findings were reviewed against the current literature for confirmation or possible conflicts with other research. This case study confirmed much of the existing research on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy.

As a final step, the research was compared against the original problem statement, the lack of scholarly research on the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change. The study showed positive connections to leader EI and self-efficacy, especially during organizational change. Last, the research provides recommendations for application to the industry, recommendations for further study, biblical themes, and personal reflections.

### **Background of the Problem**

The need for adaptation in today's fast-paced marketplace demands flexibility among industry leaders and the need for near-constant change within organizations (van der Voet & Vermeeren, 2017). This need for constant change puts stress on employees, which requires leaders to understand employee motivation and be aware of how their actions affect subordinates (Kragt & Guenter, 2017). Lee et al. (2017) noted the inability of leaders to successfully engage employees directly contributes to the high failure rate of organizational change. The fate of an organization can depend on its ability to rapidly pivot to a new product line or policy, which

means leaders must understand how they can successfully implement needed change when and where required.

Understanding what motivates employees and how to reach them emotionally is critical for any leader (Feldman & Mulle, 2007). Goleman (2006) noted in his groundbreaking work the need to understand both yourself and others emotionally as the foundation for any relationship. Jiménez (2018) noted the success of an organization and the confidence of its employees could be affected by the emotional intelligence (EI) of an organization's leaders. Additionally, leaders need to understand what are the causes of self-efficacy in the workforce. Self-efficacy among employees, which can be defined as an understanding that an employee is empowered to solve problems as they arise and has the confidence to do so, is key to implementing any change (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). Black et al. (2019) noted the lack of scholarly literature regarding leader EI, change management, and follower self-efficacy. Given the large number of failures in industry when attempting change, an in-depth study of EI among leaders and how it affects employee self-efficacy is required.

### **Problem Statement**

The general problem to be addressed was the lack of scholarly research on the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change. This results in a gap in the understanding leaders have regarding the influence their actions exert on follower self-efficacy during change. There is scarce literature seeking to define the importance of a leader's EI during change management and how both critical factors affect self-efficacy or the workforce during change. Black et al. (2019) noted in their study how self-efficacy among subordinates and team members is an "under-studied" trait and warrants further research (p. 101). Murdock (2015) indicated the lack of scholarly literature on leader EI related to follower EI and performance.

Petrides et al. (2016) noted the need for focused EI research as it relates to actual situations, such as leader-follower interactions during change. Akhtar et al. (2015) also noted in their study of EI and employee engagement that more research is required on vertical relationships or how leader EI impacts subordinate behaviors. An extensive search of online scholarly databases resulted in no relevant studies or dissertations addressing EI, change management, and self-efficacy among subordinates. The specific problem to be addressed was the gap in the literature of the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change, resulting in a lack of understanding leaders have regarding the influence of their actions on follower self-efficacy among Department of Defense (DoD) employees during change management.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management. The challenge to DoD leaders, depending upon their EI quotient, is to understand the impact change has on follower self-efficacy. DoD organizations are subject to frequent management changes as each new leader attempts to put his or her stamp on the organization, which in turn leads to frequent changes in policies and procedures. Low EI DoD leaders have often forced change without understanding the impact on the workforce morale or self-efficacy and then are surprised at the negative results (Allen, 2015; Williams, 2018).

The findings of this study can serve as a foundation for future research on EI among leaders who are looking to implement change within their organization. This study can also assist DoD to focus training as it examines the effectiveness of leadership programs. The study results

may also contribute to better hiring practices by providing context in which hiring and training managers can evaluate potential employees.

### **Nature of the Study**

The three most commonly used types of research examined for this study were qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The qualitative research method is used to answer why questions that have an inherent human dimension (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research is typically characterized by open-ended questions, which allow the researcher freedom to explore the human condition. Creswell and Creswell (2018) characterized quantitative studies as an instrument or statistically driven with a predetermined methodology. The mixed-methods approach combines elements of both quantitative and qualitative to explain and explore phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **Discussion of Method**

The qualitative method was selected because the use of surveys and interviews is the best way to gather multiple viewpoints and the emotions associated with change and self-efficacy into one cohesive case study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The qualitative method also answers “how” and “why” questions, which are the primary type of research questions of this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Also, the qualitative method looks at the views and experiences of individuals, which is the foundation of this study (Stake, 2010).

Quantitative research was not chosen for this study because this method is primarily concerned with correlational relationships between known variables (Stake, 2010). Additionally, quantitative research is focused on closed-ended questions, which produce analyzed data using statistical programs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study requires the researcher to ask open-

ended questions to explore the lived experiences of study participants; therefore quantitative research is inappropriate for this study.

Mixed methods research was examined as the method uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative components (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Mixed methods research can be useful when the researcher requires both types of methods and neither qualitative nor quantitative are appropriate (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To use mixed methods research, the study should have a strong combination of qualitative or open-ended questions and quantitative or closed-ended questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Mixed methods research was not used because the research questions in this study are open-ended and exploratory in nature.

The primary qualitative research designs are phenomenological, ethnographical, narrative, grounded theory, and case study (Creswell, 2014). Once each was examined, the researcher decided on the case study design. The case study research design focuses on research situations where the question of how or why a phenomenon occurs (Yin, 2014).

Case study research can be one of the most challenging of the research designs, but also versatile as the method lacks established norms and procedures, unlike other research designs (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) noted that case study research could include both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Another distinctive feature of case study research is the idea the research can be used to simply “enlighten” an audience to a phenomenon without providing a clear reason as to why the phenomenon occurred or a set outcome resulting from the phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p.19).

The phenomenological design allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of the researched population (Wertz, 2011). The need for an unstructured approach offered by interviews allows the researcher to explore and expand, as needed, each participant’s lived

experiences in dealing with the phenomenon to be studied (van Manen, 2017). The phenomenological design was not chosen because the research involves more than stories of a lived experience and requires the researcher to ask more guiding questions than is normally found in phenomenological research (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethnographic research differs from other types of research in both the scope and focus as the research focuses on shared values or beliefs of groups or individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) noted ethnographic research could also be delineated by language or culture. Ethnographic research is based on patterns that differentiate a group from others by beliefs, language, or culture (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This type of research is not appropriate because of the varied beliefs, cultures, and behaviors of the research group.

The next design examined was the narrative research design. This design can be useful when the experiences of a group or individual play a central role in exploring the questions provided in the problem statement (Creswell, 2016). Narrative research is particularly valuable when exploring problems that are current to society and expand on individual experiences or the experiences of small groups in a linear manner (Creswell 2014). This is inappropriate for this study due to the non-linear manner of organizational change and the number of individuals involved.

Last, grounded theory design was examined and is useful when a researcher needs to create a theory to explain a particular phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Kempster and Parry (2011) postulated that the grounded theory allows the researcher to explain the actions of the research participants by providing research data. Creswell (2014) examined the advantages of grounded theory research, particularly when research data leads the researcher to seek additional information from research participants. Grounded theory was not chosen because the

theories of change, EI, and self-efficacy have sufficient research associated with them individually and in pairs.

### **Discussion of Design**

This qualitative case study explored the linkage between leader EI and change management as it relates to employee self-efficacy among employees within the Department of Defense (DoD) at a large East Coast DoD agency. This design first collected data using the Schutte Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to supplement interviews of leaders as to their perceptions of their EI and EI in general. Only one leader returned their SSEIT, but this was of use as it was the primary leader of the change studied in this dissertation. This data was compared to the qualitative data gathered during leader and follower interviews which explored change management and self-efficacy. The study targeted leaders and how they implement change within the organization. Leaders were also being interviewed regarding their understanding of EI and how they believe their implementation of change has affected the employees.

The leaders, as well as a representative sample of the workforce, were interviewed about their understanding of change management. Choi and Rouna (2010) noted how studies of organizational change and management have concentrated on how management theory and practice are indifferent to the experiences and objectives, as well as the motivation behind leaders and employees involved in initiating change. Balogun and Johnson (2004) noted a scarcity in the literature regarding the opinions, experiences, feelings, and contributions of those employees subjected to change.

### **Summary of the nature of the study.**

According to Bandura (2012), self-efficacy is the belief in self as the driving force behind motivation, happiness, and achieving goals (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997, 2012) insisted that a person's beliefs regarding their capabilities could be better predictors of performance than their existing knowledge and skills, as most employees would have little incentive to persist in the face of difficult circumstances unless they understood their actions to produce the desired outcome. Participants were interviewed regarding their understanding of self-efficacy and whether their leaders enabled change within the organization in an effective manner. The interviews explored their perceptions of their leaders and if they thought they could achieve the goals under a change management construct.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions explored their and leader's understanding of EI and whether they understood how personal EI affects subordinate behaviors. Additionally, the research questions investigated the self-efficacy of employees who had undergone change within the previous year and whether they felt their leaders had empowered them during that change. Another area explored was whether employees felt the leader had exhibited the EI qualities of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman 2006). Finally, the questions explored how their leaders' EI was evident during organizational change.

RQ1. How do managers within the DoD describe EI and their understanding of self-efficacy?

RQ2. How do managers within the DoD characterize follower self-efficacy during change within their organizations?

RQ3. How are DoD employees affected by change in their organization in regards to self-efficacy?

RQ4. How do DoD employees describe EI among their leaders and does this influence their self-efficacy?

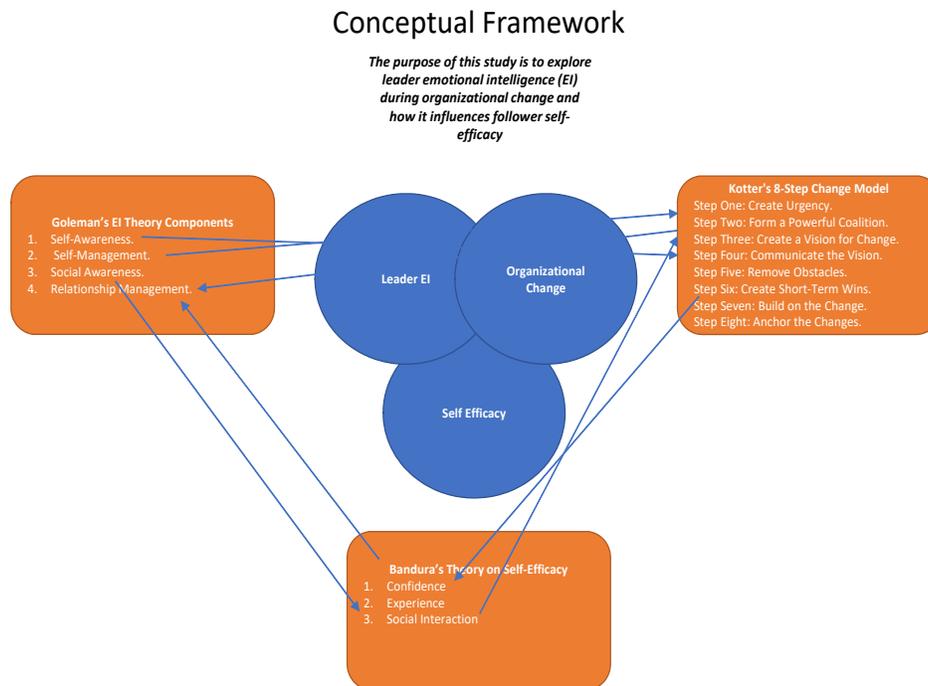
RQ5. How do DoD employees understand the link between EI, self-efficacy and organizational change?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The framework of this research is based on established EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy theories. Figure 1 shows the elements of the three theories and the relationship between the differing elements within the theories. Within that framework, the linkage of all three theories were explored. The researcher found the conceptual framework and the themes associated with the framework to be very helpful. The conceptual framework explored a leader's EI coefficient, especially during organizational change management, and how a leader's high or low EI coefficient can influence follower self-efficacy. The success or failure of organizational change is usually predicated on how well the leader sells the change and the extent to which employees embrace that change. A person's self-efficacy directly contributes to the success or failure of their endeavors, to include organizational change (Bandura, 2018).

A connection between a leader's self-awareness and self-management, as described by Goldman (2014), can be linked to their ability to create a sense of urgency and communicate a vision within Kotter's (2012) 8-step change model, as illustrated in Figure 1. The link between Kotter's (2012) 8-step model, creating short-term wins, can be linked to Bandura's (2012) theory on self-efficacy as the leader successfully creates a feeling or sense within the follower of confidence. Additionally, the link between EI and self-efficacy is illustrated as the leader

interacts with followers within the construct of Bandura's (2012) social interaction theory and Goldman's (2014) social awareness theory. There would be an exchange of positive and negative feedback within that construct, which would influence how Kotter's (2012) model is implemented. The relationship between the three theories would continually change, depending on the point at which the organization is located within Kotter's (2012) model, and as the leader's EI and the follower's self-efficacy are improved or degraded within a feedback loop.



**Figure 1.** Relationship between concepts.

### **Discussion of emotional intelligence theory.**

There have been many variations in emotional intelligence theory. Salovey and Mayer (1990) were the first to adopt the term in an attempt to create a framework to organize the study of emotions. Salovey and Grewal (2005) refined the initial theory to four abilities or branches of emotional intelligence: perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and

managing emotions. Goleman (2014) described those emotions and organized them within a framework for leadership evaluation. The framework included four components, which Goleman (2014) considered crucial qualities for a good leader. These were self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skill (Goleman, 2014). Goleman's (1995, 2014) theory was the primary source used in this conceptual framework as the research questions can be closely tied to the four elements of his theory. The researcher used Annex E during coding, which details the concepts explained here. The four components in Goleman's (1995, 2014) theory were explored to create an understanding of how leaders and followers perceive EI and the effect on follower self-efficacy.

#### **Discussion of change management theory.**

Kotter's (2012) eight-stage process for change management was the primary process used for this conceptual framework, and the researcher used Annex F as the framework for coding interviews. Kotter's (2012) change process has been recognized as one of the most widely used and successful approaches to organizational transformation (Mento et al., 2002; Phelan, 2005; Pollack & Pollack, 2015). The eight steps in Kotter's (2012) model can be explored against EI theory and how self-efficacy is affected within the framework. Other change processes were reviewed, such as Lewin's (1951) unfreeze, change, and refreeze theory and the McKinsey 7-s process (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Each was explored against the research questions and usage within the DoD. The organization examined implemented change loosely based on Kotter's eight-step process and was most appropriate within this conceptual framework.

#### **Discussion of self-efficacy theory.**

Efficacy refers to the ability to perform a task, usually inherent to a person's ability from birth. For example, unless a person has a physical limitation, they can run a 5-kilometer race but

may not believe they can. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their ability to successfully perform an action (Chesnut & Burley, 2015). Research shows that self-belief can be influenced by others. Tannenbaum et al. (1991) noted a significant increase in self-efficacy before and after in recruits who successfully completed basic military training. Tannenbaum et al. (1991) especially called out the increase in self-efficacy regarding physical abilities among recruits who successfully completed the training. Studies have also noted the correlation between self-confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012, 2018). Bandura (2012) indicated that individuals who exhibited high self-efficacy are more likely to view themselves as change agents.

The example from Tannenbaum et al. (1991) indicates self-efficacy can be improved by positive experiences and interactions. Social interaction with positive feedback can also increase a person's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Organizational change usually requires a certain amount of social interaction, which has been shown to influence self-efficacy. The research questions explored high self-efficacy within organizational change and how a leader's EI influences follower confidence in change and the leader. The researcher used Annex F as a framework to code the interviews of this study.

### **Discussion of relationships between theories and concepts.**

The ability of managers to influence self-efficacy, which can have a positive impact on change was explored as part of the framework of this study. Figure 5 shows the linkages within the framework of this study. For example, social awareness as part of Goleman et al.'s (2017) EI theory intersects with social interaction as part of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. Both of which intersect with Kotter's (2012) second step, which creates a powerful coalition. As all three theories are explored using the research questions, it is anticipated that additional linkages will be discovered and expanded.

### **Summary of the conceptual framework.**

The research questions expand on the relationship between the three theories and will guide the researcher as the experiences of the subjects are explored and examined. As illustrated in Figure 1, the researcher assumed there would be a strong connection between each of the theories and that each could have a significant impact on the lived experiences of both leaders and followers.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined to provide context for this study.

*Agency.* The amount of freedom to act within an organization or framework (Shapiro, 2005).

*Efficacy.* A person's physical or mental ability to act and produce a result (Bandura, 1977).

*Emotional intelligence (EI).* The ability to distinguish and regulate emotions in social and work situations (Goleman, 1995).

*Self-Efficacy.* The belief a person has to perform a mental or physical act that produces a result (Bandura, 2012).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations**

It is important for the researcher to understand and list the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations before the study. The assumptions provide a road map to the researcher as a means to anticipate and avoid potential obstacles. The limitations assist the researcher in understanding what can be accomplished within the scope of the research. The delimitations identify what factors were not included in the study, which may aid future researchers who may want to

expand the research and provide readers an idea of the scope of research. It is vital that these parameters are identified and explained before research starts.

### **Assumptions**

Three primary assumptions were made in this research study. First, the researcher would have access to leaders willing to be interviewed, who have recently directed an organizational change, and are willing to take the SSEIT. Second, the researcher would have access to followers who have recently undergone an organizational change and are willing to be interviewed. Finally, the central assumption of this study is that follower self-efficacy can be positively influenced during organizational change by high-EI leaders. The research touches on this assumption as Black et al. (2109) noted the connection between team EI and individual self-efficacy. Regarding the mechanics of the study, it was also assumed the sample size would be adequate to draw conclusions. It is also assumed that researcher bias will be minimized by member checking and validating results (Creswell, 2016).

### **Limitations**

This qualitative case study will sample Department of Defense employees and leaders within one organization and may not represent the larger DoD or U.S. government population. Because of the varied experiences and ages of the workforce to be sampled, it can be assumed the study provided a fair representation of DoD agencies of similar size as the selected DoD agency. Additionally, personal bias towards leaders may have prevented employees from answering honestly regarding self-efficacy and evaluating a leader's EI. Finally, the sample size was limited due to time and resource constraints and may not be applicable to organizations outside the DoD.

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations prescribe the scope of a study. The scope of this study is an office within the East coast DoD agency, which contained approximately 137 employees. This office recently underwent a yearlong organizational change in which every employee was affected.

Additionally, this organization was chosen because the office management recently underwent senior leader training, which included EI training based on Goleman et al's (2017) theories. The study focused solely on this office and its employees.

### **Significance of the Study**

The focus of this study is how leader EI during organizational change influences follower self-efficacy. The topic was chosen because of a gap in the literature regarding how these three important business and leadership topics intersect. Jiménez (2018) noted how high EI among leaders has a positive effect on change because they are in tune with the affective responses among employees. Nguyen et al. (2019) also noted the importance of high leader EI and how it influences communication to and from the workforce. What is lacking in Jiménez's (2018), Nguyen et al. (2019), and other similar studies is how self-efficacy is impacted by high EI of leadership during change. The study has practical application to the theories of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy.

### **Reduction of Gaps**

Much has been written on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, but a review of the literature revealed a gap regarding how the three theories interact. Lone and Lone (2018) underlined that high EI among leaders enables them to recognize organizational problems and subsequently are better at change management. However, Lone and Lone (2018) did not address how high leader EI influences employee self-efficacy. Additionally, Black et al. (2019), in their

study of EI and self-efficacy, suggested further study on EI and self-efficacy on team efficacy and cohesion. Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) recommended further research in the additional variables that affect organizational change management and self-efficacy. Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) did note in their study that individuals with optimism and high self-efficacy positively impact organizational change but did not address leadership EI or the effect of leadership on follower self-efficacy.

The nexus of the three theories was the focus of this study. The study explored the perspective of both the leaders and followers and provided fresh insight into EI, change management and follower self-efficacy. The study provided leaders and researchers insight into effective traits and clues on how to implement organizational change and how change can be furthered by the workforce. The study added to the body of knowledge on EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy as well as addressing a gap in the literature regarding leadership theory.

### **Implications for Biblical Integration**

By looking at the theories examined in this study, one can see implications for Christians and how each can be viewed through a Biblical lens. For example, EI for Christians is as simple as the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12 (English Standard Version) “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them....” EI is the fundamental understanding that everyone has a need to be treated with dignity and respect. Their feelings and aspirations are important to them, and as such, should be important to leaders. Empathy is a central theme in EI and is important to understanding how others wish to be treated. Goleman (1995) discussed a natural empathy in infants and toddlers as viewed in their behaviors and theorized as we mature our experiences at home can have a strong influence on whether that empathy is positively or

negatively reinforced. EI among leaders means having empathy for those around them and understanding the need to be heard and understood. Communication breakdowns in organizations most frequently occur when one side refuses to listen or is emotionally tone-deaf to the other.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:3 (English Standard Version) “I can do all things through him that strengthens me.” This is the essence of self-efficacy. The belief that a person can do something beyond their supposed physical or mental abilities. Goleman et al., (2013) noted the strength of mirroring or the phenomenon where people can take on feelings of others, regardless of whether they are good or bad. An anecdotal example of self-efficacy is when a new coach takes over an underperforming team in any sport. That team subsequently plays beyond its ability because of the enthusiasm created by the new coach. The same phenomenon is created when a person accepts Christ as their savior and develops a new enthusiasm for life and self-confidence. The new person believes in themselves because of the act of redemption. Hope is found where none existed.

Self-efficacy and high EI demonstrate how Christians who live in God become a beacon or an oasis to those who do not know Him and have lost faith. The mirror effect created when a person interacts with others who are self-confident, emotionally intelligent, and compassionate is compelling (Goleman et al., 2013). Christ encourages his followers in Matthew 5:15 (English Standard Version), “Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.” Using this analogy, a light does not have to shout, “Look over here, I am a light!” It is evident to all that it is a light. The same should be true for Christians. It should be evident to all when they are in the company of Christians by their mannerisms, by their kindness, and by their love.

Embracing change, particularly in the way Kotter (1996) describes the process, is reflected in 2 Corinthians 5:17 (English Standard Version) “therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” The new creation has embraced change and delights in improvement. Change is often hard for an organization because the individuals within that organization have become comfortable in the status quo. Hebrews 10:24-25 (English Standard Version) reads “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Making positive change sometimes means “stirring up” emotions so the organization can move forward. Fisher and Shapiro (2005) noted how emotions can become contagious, both good and bad.

All of these theories come to together in the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:8 (English Standard Version) “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy should bring truth, excellence, and honor to an organization and all those in it. Organizations are a reflection of the values of its leaders and workforce (Bourne et al., 2019). If the organization has truly internalized positive values and leaders have high EI, then an organization should outwardly reflect those values. Proverbs 4:7 (English Standard Version) admonishes readers, “The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight.” This study will provide insight into the theories presented.

### **Relationship to Field of Study**

Leadership that involves high EI addresses organizational change, and follower self-efficacy is directly related to the leadership cognate. This study explored the desirable traits and

methodologies industry, and government is seeking in managers and leaders. This research contributed to the body of literature on EI and leader development. It identifies areas, such as change management, where high EI leaders understand the effect change has on individuals. Training leaders in EI strategies have lasting and positive implications for organizations (Goleman, 2014). Nichols (2016) noted the need for further study on specific leadership traits that serve as predictors for success or failure in leaders and which can be improved through training.

Determining what motivates employees to achieve greater results also has direct implications for leadership. Bandura (2012) asserted that a person's self-efficacy could vary according to the situation and context. This means that self-efficacy is subject to outside influence and thus can be improved or degraded based on managerial performance (Bandura, 2012). The interviews showed that followers responded with positive self-efficacy based on leader input. Goleman (1995) argued that self-efficacy could be improved by leaders who provide hope and optimism to followers; this research affirmed that assertion. This study added to the body of work and provided additional frameworks in which to view self-efficacy, particularly organizational change.

Leadership is an evolving science, especially as challenges such as multiple generations working together with technological gaps in understanding separating the generations (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Examining the relationship between leader EI and follower self-efficacy, particularly during organizational change, can lead to training programs and success strategies for companies looking to implement change but are unsure of success. This study examined EI and self-efficacy theories under an overarching theme of organizational management and

leadership. This research will provide future researchers and leaders with a clearer idea on the nexus of EI, organizational change, and follower self-efficacy.

### **Summary of the significance of the study.**

The study explored the gap of how leader EI, change management, and follower self-efficacy add to the body of research. Research shows the need for high-EI leaders to understand the generational gaps present in today's workforce. The literature has a substantial gap in research on how high EI leaders influence follower self-efficacy during organizational change. Organizations must remain flexible because of the fast-paced business environment and the rapid pace of change within industries. This study provided vignettes that will assist in organizational change management and how EI leaders need to market change, as well as followers to embrace change and become self-efficacious.

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

A review of professional and academic literature is essential to any original research. This section will address the literature related to emotional intelligence, organizational change management, and self-efficacy theories. This research sought to discover the relationship in the literature regarding an understanding of leader emotional intelligence (EI) and its effect on follower self-efficacy during organizational change. The review examined each theory, EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy in kind. George (2000) noted the need for additional research into leadership and the role of emotional intelligence. This dissertation closed the gap in understanding EI and leadership, along with the subsequent effect on follower self-efficacy during organizational change. Pickering and Byrne (2014) noted the benefits from an exhaustive review of relevant literature as it allows the researcher to become familiar with the

current status of their chosen topic, understand gaps, and craft a narrative of their analysis of the topic.

The review and the relevant material are organized thematically as it will examine EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. The review also examined linkages between the concepts and seeks to understand the human element present in leadership research. This review also briefly reviewed the psychology of leadership influence on employee performance and change leadership theory. The goal of this review was to present an overview of current thinking and literature which underpins the research.

### **Emotional intelligence.**

Thorndike and Stein (1937) first theorized the nature of social intelligence, or EI as we know it today, as a way of understanding human interaction in the workplace. Since then, EI has undergone many studies and attempts to understand how emotions influence an individual's interaction with their environment. Research has shown that higher levels of EI have been found to help an individual manage environmental challenges (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1995). The history of how EI evolved from the 1920s until now will be explored below.

### **History of emotional intelligence (EI).**

Thorndike (1920) first touched on the idea of EI as he explored the gaps in how intelligence was measured. Thorndike was interested in the emotional side of intelligence and the influence of emotions on rational thought or traditional measures of intelligence. Thorndike and Stein (1937) further describe nascent attempts to measure social or EI and correlate this to executive leadership. This was the first mention in the literature of EI and leadership. Wechsler (1943) explored other factors in intelligence, which are not correlated to intelligence tests. Wechsler speculated intellectual tests were inadequate in measuring the abstract factors which

allow for an individual to cope with stress in an intelligent manner. After decades of theoretical debate, the Ohio State Studies (Webb, 2009) conducted direct research into the influence of emotions in overall intelligence and how emotions affected leadership.

Webb (2009) further described how the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), used non-cognitive abilities or social intelligence factors when evaluating future leaders. Fleishman and Harris (1962) explored the relationship between leadership behaviors or emotions and employee turnover and found those leaders who showed consideration for the feelings of others, i.e., high EI, had the lowest turnover ratios. The nature of the emotional interaction between subordinate and supervisor, as much as supervisor competence, played a significant role in employee retention (Fleishman & Harris, 1962).

The first occurrence of the term “emotional intelligence” in the researched literature was in a dissertation written by Payne (1985, p.165). Payne notes in his dissertation EI is developed over time, like physical prowess or intellectual intelligence. Payne also suggested further research on EI be pursued at the conclusion of his dissertation. EI was further explored, but under the term emotional quotient (EQ), by Beasley (1987) as a complementary measure to intelligence quotient (IQ). Beasley (1987) went as far as to assert that EQ can be more important than IQ in most social situations. Webb (2009) referenced ground-breaking research in the 1980s regarding multiple types of intelligence and noted the existence of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence as equally important to understand a person’s overall intelligence.

Serious research into EI is prevalent in the literature starting with Bar-On (1997), as he introduced the first measurement of emotional intelligence to be widely recognized in academia: the Emotional Quotient-inventory (EQ-i) measurement test (Bar-On, 2006; Webb, 2009). Salovey and Mayer (1990) built upon Bar-On’s research and developed an EI theory, which

described EI as the awareness of individual and other's emotional states and the ability to use that information to make decisions. Salovey and Mayer (1990) also theorized EI as a subset of social intelligence and touched on what would become the backbone of Goleman's (1995) book and theory on EI.

Goleman (1995) posited EI had five traits, self-awareness, self-management, motivation, social-awareness, and relationship management. Goleman (2000) would later revise the list to four traits, dropping motivation as a separate and distinct trait. Thi Lam and Kirby (2002) examined how EI complements and enhances those with an overall high IG. The research into IQ and EQ provided showed a correlation between higher cognitive scores among those individuals who exhibited high EQ as well as high IQ (Thi Lam & Kirby, 2002).

Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) noted employees with high EI adapted well to workplace stress and were able to work with low EI bosses to compensate for uncomfortable behaviors. Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) also mentioned the significance of EI as it correlates to organizational commitment. EI was mentioned multiple times in the literature in relation to organizational commitment. Khalili (2012) noted the workplace as an "incubator" of emotions, and therefore, it is vitally important to understand EI and the role EI plays in the workplace (p. 355). Khalili (2012) also noted the evolution of Goleman's (2000) EI theory, which will be the foundational EI theory for this dissertation.

### **Goleman's theory of EI**

Goleman (2000) described EI as having four primary traits: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Goleman et al., (2017) further defined his theory of EI and leadership in *Primal Leadership*, which expounded on the traits

listed below. Each of the traits has a specific set of competencies associated with them. The first trait to be explored is self-awareness.

***Self-awareness.*** Goleman (2014) described self-awareness as knowing your strengths and weaknesses. Gill et al. (2015) noted in their study that self-awareness could be considered one of the most important traits because without self-awareness, it is difficult for a person to internalize or recognize the other three traits. Bagshaw (2000) commented self-awareness is being able to consult feelings honestly and accurately. Cherniss and Goleman (2001) noted that self-awareness could be considered as a person's understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Salovey and Mayer (1990) wrote in their ground-breaking research on EI that self-awareness provides the holder a basis for perceiving, understanding, and enabling emotions correctly. Goleman (2007) also defined self-awareness as a person's ability to understand their emotions.

Feize and Faver (2019) looked at other criteria for measuring self-awareness, which includes mindfulness and the ability to understand how a person's actions are perceived by others. Pienaar and Nel (2017) commented the total picture of emotions an individual gathers from self-awareness and the ability to predict how others perceive their actions can enable effective interactions with those around them. Pienaar and Nel (2017) noted that self-aware leaders who attend to how others react to one's behaviors, words, actions and adjusting their actions are the most effective. Self-awareness includes the ability to read and understand one's own emotions, recognize their impact on work performance and relationships, and accurately self-assess a realistic evaluation of one's strengths and limitations, which are the elements of self-management (Feize & Faver, 2019).

***Self-management.*** The trait of self-management consists of emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism (Khalili, 2012; Webb, 2009).

Self-management is having the ability to manage emotions and control negative impulses in unhealthy interactions (Ikpesu, 2017). Self-management has also been defined as the awareness of a personal emotional state and the ability to remain positive in the face of adversity (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Having the ability to manage emotions during stressful situations by recognizing how a person is affected by their emotions is foundational to self-management.

Bradberry and Greaves (2009) described the implications of poor self-management and how those with high EI quotients are keenly aware of their own emotional limits and choose situations where they are best able to manage and control their emotions. As mentioned earlier, a person must be self-aware in order to effectively self-manage. The two traits of self-awareness and self-management go hand-in-hand (Khalil, 2012). Goleman (2007) noted another crucial element to emotional intelligence is social-awareness.

***Social-awareness.*** Social-awareness encompasses the personal skills of empathy, listening, and sensing others' emotions (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Nguyen et al. (2019) described social-awareness as recognizing the emotions in social situations and be aware of your body language or visual cues, which can aid or hinder communication. Nguyen et al. (2019) wrote body language can say more than words in social situations. Day (2014) noted that social-awareness connects a self-aware leader to their subordinates. Social-awareness enables a person to influence or motivate others (Goleman et al., 2013).

Within social-awareness is empathy, or the ability to sense other's emotions, concerns, or perspectives (Goleman, 2014). This skill is crucial for leaders and followers alike. The ability to read the room and recognize how a person's actions will affect followers is foundational to EI theory (Mayer et al., 2016). Empathy, as part of social-awareness, enables leaders to motivate and influence followers to achieve personal and organizational goals.

Goleman (2014) emphasizes the need for a person to be self-aware and understand self-management before they can empathize with others. A leader with developed social skills can inspire others using the traits inherent to high EQ (Day, 2014). If a person is self-aware, can manage their emotions, and are socially aware, then they have the tools to manage relationships (Mayer et al., 1999). Mayer et al. (1999) noted that having the tools does not imply the ability to manage relationships. EI, like any other skill must be practiced to be mastered (Goleman, 2004).

***Relationship management.*** Relationship management is where the three EI traits of emotional awareness, self-management, and social-awareness synthesize for a leader. Relationship management relates to a leader's ability to inspire, influence and lead change (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003; Goleman et al., 2017). Moshtari (2016) noted the influence of relationship management on goal achievement and creating an understanding of other's objectives and values. Relationship management also consists of developing others and being a catalyst for change (Goleman, 2014; Khalili, 2012). Relationship management is also where a leader is able to manage conflict and change, which is why high EI leaders have been proven effective as organizational change agents (Jiménez, 2018).

Being self-aware enables a leader to understand their strengths and weaknesses and leverage the strengths or compensate for the shortcomings in subordinates for task achievement (Moshtari, 2016). Self-awareness is one of the most important factors when examining relationship management as it relates to organizational change and self-efficacy of followers. Relationship management involves a considerable investment of time and energy with subordinates to create an atmosphere of trust and understanding. High EI leaders create high-trust organizations by showing compassion for the workforce, being curious and open to suggestions, and welcoming employee feedback (Neil et al., 2016). EI and change leadership

align in the literature as both have elements of emotional mastery and an understanding of the human element (Nguyen et al., 2019).

### **Emotional intelligence and change leadership**

Nguyen et al. (2019) explored the theory of EI and the relationship of EI with regards to effective leadership. High EI leadership implies a leader has a mastery of empathy, social skill, and self-motivation (Issah, 2018). McClelland (1998) researched attributes of high-performing leaders and theorized desired competencies or behaviors, such as social life, family life, etc., were better predictors of leader success. McClelland (1998) further noted how those leaders affected employee retention. Bar-On (2010) later developed a test to measure EI in leaders and was able to correlate leader EI to workplace performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism, organizational commitment, and leadership.

Jiménez (2018) noted the relationship between EI and effective leadership and the influence high EI had on organizational change. Leaders who fail to understand EI, their own, and their employees risk failure in growth and employee retention (Mahal, 2016). Leadership continues to evolve as new challenges emerge, such as the multiple generations in the workplace and the need to motivate each in a meaningful way (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). This challenge requires an understanding of critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and emotional intelligence (Dinh et al., 2014). Kotter (1996) defines leadership as aligning an organization's goals and vision with the human element and inspiring the workforce to achieve those goals. Kouzes and Posner (2017) further refined leadership as matching the willingness to lead with those inspired to follow.

The job of any leader is to motivate those around him or her to get results, and that involves understanding EI (Goleman, 2014). It is the art of leadership, which motivates

employees to connect their personal goals and aspirations to the vision of the organization (Goleman et al., 2017). The most effective leaders understand that good leadership and change leadership are symbiotic by nature; hence neither can be effective unless the other is too (Burnes et al., 2018). Ford and Ford (2012) noted the amount of change a leader is required to make and the impact the change has on the leader's job affect the willingness to implement the change. This is a natural phenomenon but also reinforces the old adage that those with *skin in the game* are more willing to make radical change than those who have little to risk (Ford & Ford, 2012).

Ford and Ford (2012) noted in the conclusion of their study that although large-scale changes in organizations are beyond the ability of one leader to implement, a leader's ability to enlist allies to assist with implementing change can be instrumental in change. By et al. (2016) referred to the enlisting of allies as a form of *distributed leadership* or a leader's ability to implement differing leadership styles to integrate a leadership team. A leader must be deliberate to create an atmosphere of positive change and understand change will take time (By et al, 2016). Jiménez (2018) explored the idea of resistance to change and also noted leaders must have high EI to find allies and help those employees who are afraid of or resistant to change.

Neil et al. (2016) studied EI and leader influence on change and noted that while participants did not identify EI by name, they mentioned successful leaders understood the emotions of those around them and were able to relate to the workforce. Neil et al. (2016) further noted that high EI leaders provide employees opportunities and bring out the full potential in their staff. Gatti et al. (2017) posited that followers want to find meaning in their work and believe there are making a difference with their job. Gatti et al. (2017) also found satisfaction was not correlated to hours worked or salary, but how an employee saw value in their work.

Good leaders look to provide employees a place to grow and are free with constructive feedback, and understand the need to interact daily in a positive manner (Neil et al., 2016).

Pastor (2014) astutely noted that leadership is about interactions with people – and people have emotions. Pastor (2014) further mentioned the importance of social intelligence when leading and dealing with employees. Duncan et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative study, which showed positive relationships between leader EI and follower job and team performance.

McClellan and DiClementi (2017) discussed the basis of emotions and the need to understand what happens physiologically so leaders can better understand how they respond consciously. The term emotional hijacking has been used to describe what happens when a person reacts to external physiological stimuli in a negative or irrational way (McClellan & DiClementi, 2017). It is crucial that high EI leaders understand what is happening with themselves and their followers if they are to effect meaningful change. Teaching self-awareness and practicing intentional leadership, which is understanding how decisions regarding change can affect followers' emotions, are crucial to positive change (McClellan & DiClementi, 2017).

EI and change leadership are a nexus of two well-researched and studied theories whose value in all aspects of life are profoundly interconnected. Consequently, it is imperative that leaders, theorists, and researchers look at ways to improve leader emotional intelligence, which can have a positive impact on the morale and effectiveness of organizations going through change.

### **Developing EI**

Deary et al. (2009) theorized intelligence was an amalgamation of cognitive abilities, mental abilities, and IQ. Mau (2017) posited that most leaders do not have innate leadership qualities but need to be trained in the essential leadership competencies. Sadri (2012) looked at

the leadership qualities that correspond with EI and concluded that most could be considered acquired skills. Sadir (2012) also mentioned that each EI skill should be examined and taught discretely. Gilar-Corbí et al. (2018) believe emotional intelligence competencies can be taught and should be taught in academic settings to better prepare for challenges in the workplace. Despite this, Mattingly and Kraiger (2019) assert that there is insufficient research to prove that EI can be improved through training.

The literature provides examples of those who believe EI is ability-based or that learning can only enhance ability up to a personal and predetermined ability (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019). Mattingly and Kraiger (2019) found that regardless of the format, only moderate positive effects were achieved during EI training. There is even debate as to whether EI can be considered a legitimate construct and therefore, something which can be trained (Antonakis et al., 2009). However, the literature supports that emotional competencies can be trained. Richardson and Rothstein (2008) examined studies on stress and emotional management and found a strong correlation between those who had emotional and stress management training and their ability to successfully manage emotional responses as opposed to those who had no training. Much of EI is based on the ability to recognize emotional responses to external and internal stimuli, so it would follow that having training in emotional management would be beneficial to leaders seeking to understand their own and their subordinates' triggers (Nelis et al., 2011).

To that end, EI is one of the most popular training programs offered, with hundreds of vendors providing EI training online and in person. A 2020 web search produced hundreds of returns on emotional intelligence training, including almost all major universities with teaching and business degrees. Providing impactful and lasting emotional intelligence training is of interest to businesses as a leadership development tool and hiring measurement (Mattingly &

Kraiger, 2019). The specific reasons organizations seek those with EI and provide training in EI are the skills typically found in EI, such as social-awareness and self-management (Lopes, 2016). These skills are vital for leaders and other professions that require frequent human interaction, such as nursing and sales (Lopes, 2016).

Gregory et al. (2017) recommend development programs focus on improving emotional intelligence, starting with a baseline assessment, which includes a self-assessment, assessments from peers, subordinates, and supervisors. This “360” assessment would provide potential blind spots as well as areas for improvement (Gregory et al., 2017). Gilar-Corbí et al. (2018) supported the idea of baselining students to better understand not only where the person receiving training is in regards to EI, but also what type of training best suits the person. Gilar-Corbí et al. (2018) posited that among the types of training available, coaching could have the greatest impact.

Dippenaar and Schaap (2017) studied the impact coaching has on EI leaders and found improvements among those leaders who had positive coaching experiences with executive coaches. Of note in this study was the positive impact executive coaching had on stress management and empathy (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). Grant (2014) noted the effectiveness of coaching leaders during organizational change, which contributed to reduced stress, resilience, and leader self-efficacy. This is in line with the studies by Dippenaar and Schaap (2017) as well as Gilar-Corbí et al. (2018), who support the notion of coaching as an EI training medium. Another training method of EI is mentoring.

Opengart and Bierema (2015) reviewed the relationship between mentoring and EI learning if the protégé and mentor are in a positive developmental relationship. They found that the quality of the relationship could have a bidirectional EI learning effect for both the mentor

and protégé. Opengart and Bierema (2015) also advocated as others have, for conducting an EI measurement before the relationship to assess the effectiveness of the training.

The literature provides many examples of where EI can be taught and should be part of any well-rounded curriculum for both students and leaders (Gilar-Corbí et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2017). Lopes (2016) demonstrated the importance of public or customer-facing employees and leaders to have EI qualities. Mattingly and Kraiger (2019) noted the importance of EI in leader development and recruitment. These indicate that having high EI leaders and training programs to support them is crucial to business and leaders looking to develop those skills.

### **Summary of EI**

Based upon the review of the EI literature, emotional intelligence is hypothesized and defined in many different ways, as shown in the models of Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (2000), and Bar-On (2006). Goldman et al. (2017) and Thorndike (1920) all explored social intelligence and enumerated many of the qualities that would later be attributed to high EI persons. Mayer et al. (2016) developed foundational theories on EI and later updated their thinking on EI, which is simple EI helps shape social and personal intelligence. Goleman (1995) wrote the first books on EI and would later create the theory that EI is made up of four distinct traits. Goleman (2000) described those traits as self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management. Goleman (2014) later noted that the first three traits, self-awareness, self-management, and social-awareness, all support the last trait of relationship management. Additionally, the literature provides many peer-reviewed articles which show, high EI is crucial for leaders looking to implement change.

EI and change leadership are theories that complement one another (Jiménez, 2018). Ford and Ford (2012) asserted that wholesale organizational change is too big for one person to

implement and that leaders must enlist allies to help them make a change. By et al. (2016) noted that change only happens when the leader and his or her allies have overcome internal forces against change. Jiménez (2018) noted this could be done by high EI leaders who can find ways to cooperate and collaborate with peers and subordinates. To make this happen, leaders must be developed or trained in EI.

Deary et al. (2009) theorized intelligence was an amalgamation of cognitive abilities, mental abilities, and IQ. EI training should be developed for organizations as part of leadership assessments to further refine and enhance the organizational leader's abilities (Gregory et al., 2017). The need for high EI leaders to implement social change in organizations, particularly organizational change, could not be more relevant today. Kunnanatt (2004) posited that EI training could kindle within employees and leaders the desire to pursue noble goals and accomplishments, which are complementary to those of organizations. EI training consists of many modalities to include online, classroom, coaching, and mentoring (Gilar-Corbí et al., 2018). Regardless of the format, the literature has provided that EI training enhances the organization and individuals.

All of the models noted above provide for a basic theme, that is EI is a fundamental skill, which leaders and followers should possess. Geofroy and Evans (2017) provided that organizations with high EI traits, such as the one Goleman (2000) listed, have higher levels of organizational commitment, trust, and teamwork. All of these traits are foundational to implementing successful organizational change. EI is recognized throughout the literature as a crucial trait for leaders and followers. EI helps leaders balance emotions with reason, which is becoming a more important skill as the workforce changes (Goleman et al., 2017). As traditional models of organizational structures change, so must the workforce and leaders change,

particularly with the challenges of pandemics and telework. Leaders must understand how to communicate the change and adapt their leadership style to these changes. Having the four crucial EI traits of self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management are key for leaders and employees as more organizations implement change to adapt to external and internal pressures (Goleman, 2014).

### **Organizational change**

Organizational change has been and remains a dominant subject for leadership and management studies. The enormous amount of literature on change is a challenge for leaders looking for a simple or sometimes all-encompassing formula to implement and manage change. Many of the articles about change offer mechanical or prescriptive formulae regarding organizational change without considering the human factor of emotions. Rosenbaum et al. (2018) examined many different organizational change models and concluded the most important aspect of a change model is the organization's willingness to change. Additionally, they fail to adequately define what is meant by organizational change, which can have many meanings (Suddaby & Foster, 2017). Organizational change has underlying assumptions for many, which are usually not expressed, and often a clear vision of what the final outcome of the change looks like is not defined (Suddaby & Foster, 2017).

The literature shows that organizations pursue change for a variety of reasons, both internal and external (Suddaby & Foster, 2017). Firms enact changes based on the external environment, workforce, technological, or competitive market reasons (Burnes et al., 2018). Organizations must change to adapt to the ever-changing workforce, economic and societal conditions as well as the changing global market (Cabrera et al., 2018).

Leaders must successfully communicate the reason for the change, understand themselves, provide guidance, and set the conditions with the workforce in order to successfully implement change within an organization (Cabrera et al., 2018; Kotter, 2012). As noted above, the workforce in total is crucial to implementing change. If the workforce believes that change is beneficial, either intrinsically or extrinsically, then change is more likely to be adopted and embraced (Smollan, 2014). Kotter (2012) provided a structured process for change and also discussed the employee emotions of change in his theory of change. Although Kotter's (2012) change theory will be the basis of this study, it is important to examine the history of change management in the literature as well as other prevalent theories.

### **Organizational change theory**

One of the primary questions in this dissertation is how do Department of Defense leaders and followers understand the link between EI, self-efficacy, and organizational change. In order to understand the question, it is necessary to have an understanding of change models and why Kotter's eight-step process for change is necessary. Hayes (2018) described how models influence a leader's thinking and how they can better plan the change process. Organizations change because of the need to constantly update the vision, structure, processes, and skills to meet internal and external demands (By, 2005). The "how" of change management is usually through differing models that involve the organization's structure, personnel, leadership, and processes (Karaxha, 2019). The literature on change management process has many theoretical models or processes; this dissertation will focus on three that have elements of EI included in the theory they include McKinsey 7-s process, Lewin's three-step process, and finally Kotter's eight-step process. This is because consciously or unconsciously, variants of these three models seem to be most prevalent (Chappell et al., 2017).

### ***McKinsey 7-s process***

The McKinsey 7-S process was developed in 1980 by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman, who were working at the time for a consulting firm, McKinsey and Company (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Peters and Waterman (1982) provide that there are seven elements of an organization that need to be aligned to ensure a successful change in an organization. Kaplan (2005) noted the 7-S process consists of seven factors, which are critical to success. They are strategy, structure, systems, staff, skills, style, and shared values (Kaplan, 2005). The goal of the process is to align the first three hard “S’s” of strategy, structure, and systems, with the soft “S’s” of staff, skills, style, and shared values to achieve change and improve organizational effectiveness (Cox et al., 2019; Kaplan, 2005; Peter & Waterman, 1982). The 7-s process was one of the first to include the workforce (staff) into the process, and not just the tangibles of capital, infrastructure, and equipment (Cox et al., 2019). It is important to understand all the seven factors are interconnected; that is, a change in one factor requires revision of the other factors to achieve success in the model (Peters & Waterman, 1982). The soft S’s of the 7-S process have elements, which correspond to EI factors, such as staff and shared values. The challenge with using this process for change in an EI context is presumably, most of the 7-S process concern hard systems and business strategies. The next process with EI components is Lewin’s three-step process.

### ***Lewin’s three-step process***

Lewin’s 3-step process of unfreezing old behaviors, implementing positive changes, and then refreezing the new, positive changes continues to be one of the most used models or processes regarding change (Burnes & Bargal, 2017). Lewin posited that leaders use what we now know as EI with employees to break down resistance to change by unfreezing old habits,

provide new and acceptable habits or ideas in their place then refreeze the new habits (Cummings et al., 2016). The studies conducted by Lewin were revolutionary as they moved away from individual contributions to group dynamics, which substantially changed how change management was conducted (Burnes & Bargal, 2017). Lehmann (2017) supported the idea of group dynamics providing more insight to change than individuals as groups. He claimed peer pressures within groups could be self-regulating as opposed to individual worker behaviors. Lehmann (2017) also noted that Lewin believed individuals are more influenced by how groups react to change as opposed to one or two members of a workgroup. Goleman et al. (2017) also supported this by pointing out how leaders who are socially aware can gauge how change is progressing through groups' actions more so than individuals'.

The unfreezing, change, and refreezing of Lewin's step process is almost entirely driven by social and subsequently pairs nicely with EI theory (Burnes & Bargal, 2017; By, 2005). Lewin's work serves as the basis of many other theories, which expand on the three steps and to delve deeper into unfreeze, change, refreeze model (Burnes & Bargal, 2017). Much of change management today requires more fidelity than Lewin's three-process because of generational differences in the workforce as well as the complexity involved with change (Baker & Hastings, 2018). Kotter's eight-step process provides more fidelity in how change is executed (Hackman, 2017), but this does not discount the use of Lewin's process when broader changes are needed.

### ***Kotter's eight-step process***

Kotter (2012) discussed the need for change and that organizations must be agile enough to make changes. Kotter (2007) also understood that one person could not make those changes alone but needed to have allies in key places. One of the challenges faced by leaders is not properly conveying the need for change or the leader's vision of change (Hackman, 2017).

The advantage of the Kotter eight-step model is its flexibility and how it can be used in many situations. Wheeler and Holmes (2017) described how the Kotter model was used to effect change in city libraries. Small et al. (2016) examined how hospitals use the eight-step process for nurse coordination and cooperation between shift changes. Calegari et al. (2015) further complemented the eight-step process and how a university accreditation process was improved and streamlined. From the examples above, we see the advantages of the Kotter model and its use in many situations, most involving critical elements of EI.

Pollack and Pollack (2015) noted an essential element to implementing the process in the background and skill of the leader and followers implementing the model and situation(s) needing change. Kotter (2007) posited that if the eight steps in his change model were implemented sequentially, paying close attention to each as it is implemented, then change was possible.

**Step one: create a sense of urgency.** Kotter (2012) insisted that the first step in creating an atmosphere of change is developing a sense of urgency in the workforce. Kotter (2007) noted that the most common reason organizations fail to implement the eight-step process successfully is a lack of leader involvement in the early stages of change, i.e., creating a sense of urgency. To this end, Pollack and Pollack (2015) noted that a majority of the organization's leaders and managers needed to believe change is necessary and urgent before the change, else the change would fail.

Hackman (2017) noted the sense of urgency helps overcome complacency and can overcome organizational inertia if properly implemented. Pollack and Pollack (2015) noted that creating a sense of urgency must align with organizational goals to be effective. Creating a sense of urgency is also a trait of High EI leaders, as they know when to accelerate and decelerate an

organizations business pace (Goleman et al., 2017). This understanding of an organization's tempo can be part of a leader's social-awareness. Kotter (2012) added that the sense of urgency is usually created with a key group of leaders who become the guiding coalition of the desired change, i.e., step two.

**Step two: create a guiding coalition.** Having a sense of urgency allows leaders to more easily gather allies to implement change (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Wheeler and Holmes (2017) reinforced what others have noted, which is one person cannot create lasting change alone but needs a group of acolytes to promote his or her vision. Kotter (2012) posited that at least three influential leaders, both formal and informal, need to aid in leading the change effort to be successful.

Selecting the right guiding coalition can also be tied to a leader's EI in social-awareness, as they must be aware of who are their organization's formal and informal leaders. Kotter and Cohen (2002) noted potential problems if the wrong allies are selected, and the importance of selecting those with the right blend of skill, trust, credibility, and leadership attributes to influence change. Cohen (2001) called this getting the right people on the bus, not just filling seats. Kotter (2012) warned against those who present as allies yet are sabotaging change from within.

Pollack and Pollack (2015) noted the aspirational goal is to have all managers involved with an organization's change process, and although change can happen with a small guiding coalition, to be successful, the number of champions of change must grow over time. As the number of allies or champions grows over time, a group synergy will be created, which can overcome organizational inertia (Kotter, 2014). To grow a guiding coalition, the leader must overcome the stress related to change (Lawrence et al., 2014).

Li et al. (2016) noted the importance of EI and socio-emotional leadership as it relates to group dynamics. High EI leaders can reduce the stress related to change, which in turn garners allies in the change effort. Another aid in building a coalition is creating a shared vision.

**Step three: developing a vision and strategy.** Kouzes and Posner (2017) insisted good leaders can create a vision of a future, which, if clearly articulated, allows the team to share the leader's passion for change. High EI leaders exhibit both self-awareness and social-awareness, which allows a leader to share ideas and, more importantly, vision (Goldman et al., 2017; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). A shared vision acts as a roadmap for the organization and allows everyone to see the goal of organizational change (Calegari et al., 2015). Kotter (2012) noted the vision and strategy are should be both bold and yet easily communicated so that everyone understands the goal of change.

Without a coherent strategy and vision, any effort toward change is bound to fail (Rumelt, 2011). Rumelt (2011) noted that bad strategy could be worse than no strategy as an organization can be led from its core functions into an unfamiliar business area. Kotter (2012) posited that if a leader cannot share their vision and strategy in five minutes and in such a way that the workforce understands and is excited about change, then there is a problem with the strategy and vision. Studies indicate a correlation between the leader's ability communicate their vision and the level of resistance to change (Huy et al., 2014). Once a coherent and tested vision and strategy is developed, it is time to share it with the workforce.

**Step four: communicating the change vision.** An overview of the literature provides many examples where a leader's ability to effectively communicate their vision seems to one of the fundamental elements of success (Berson et al., 2016; Kotter, 2012; van Knippenberg &

Stam, 2014;). Venus et al. (2019) noted the importance of communicating vision and called it one of, if not the most important, aspect of leadership. That is not to say having and communicating a vision are exclusively the keys to success.

Berson et al. (2016) warned that having a vision and communicating that vision neither guarantees success nor that the workforce will embrace it. It is important to ensure a vision serves the whole of the organization and not just some (Venus et al., 2019). Berson et al. (2016) warned that to be effective, and a vision should encompass benefits to the stakeholders and workforce and not be narrowly focused on advantages to the leader or organization's bottom line. Hughes (2016) also observed the need for the workforce to understand why the status quo is no longer acceptable. Hughes (2016) understood the problem with constant change and how a lack of stability affects leaders and followers alike.

Kotter (2007) also noted that even if the vision is compelling, most leaders and organizations under-communicate their vision by a factor of ten. Kotter (2012) claimed a problem is the vision becomes buried in "MBA-speak" or is riddled with jargon, which in turn waters down the message (p. 90). If the leader has a clear idea of their vision and strategy, it should be easy to communicate to the workforce. An example of communicating a clear vision and strategy was during the first Gulf War. The US strategy, as communicated to every soldier, sailor, marine, and airman was to destroy the Iraqi army in the field and liberate Kuwait (Powell & Persico, 1995). Powell and Persico (1995) also noted how the message resonated with the troops, as they understood how their leader's vision and strategy was their path home.

Venus et al. (2019) noted the need for organizations to use all forms of communication to convey a compelling vision effectively. More than this, followers and leaders alike must see themselves and their role in the vision (Venus et al., 2019). Kotter and Schlesinger (2008)

noted the importance of trust in leadership as a precondition to following a vision. Resistance to change can be tied to a lack of trust in leadership and organizational intentions (Covey & Merrill, 2006). Cherniss and Goleman (2001) provided examples of how EI can help engender trust between leadership and followers by encouraging feedback and preparing the workforce for change through meaningful dialogue. This is especially important, as leaders must trust that followers understand their vision and strategy so as to empower them to implement change.

**Step five: empowering broad-based action.** The literature also provides many examples of how empowering leadership and empowered workers are other elements to an organization's success (Cai et al., 2018). Gao and Jiang (2019) provided that empowered followers are much more likely to embrace a leader's vision and direction when their work is valued, and they are looked upon as partners and not simply labor. Gerpott et al. (2019) provided that empowered or self-regulated followers perform better because of inherent trust, particularly relating to individual perceptions of personal ability. Having the trust of management is crucial for subordinate leaders and followers to implement the change provided in the vision and strategy (Covey & Merrill, 2006; Kotter, 2012).

That is not to say leaders simply release employees to implement the vision and strategy without tools and skills needed for change (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Leaders must continually assess the capabilities and skills of employees to ensure the right person is performing the right job, which also speaks to the social-awareness of the organization's leadership (Cai et al., 2018; Goleman, 2007). Lee et al. (2017) warned of too much autonomy without unregulated leadership and involvement. This can lead to the organization going in different directions, even contrary to the vision and strategy, if subordinate divisions are not coordinated and aligned (Lee et al., 2017).

Kotter (2012) noted that structural barriers to change must be removed by leadership to allow for empowered followers to succeed. Kotter (2007) also provided that some of those barriers could be leaders in key positions who are impeding or purposefully sabotaging change. Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) warned that leaders ignore these impediments to change at the organization's peril. Providing resources, removing obstacles, and choosing the right personnel are the cornerstones of empowering change (Cai et al., 2018; Kotter, 2007, 2012; Lee et al., 2017). Providing all of these are successful, the leader can turn their attention to step six of Kotter's change process, generating short-term wins.

**Step six: generating short-term wins.** Creating short-term wins is important for no other reason as nothing encourages winning as much as winning (Kanter, 2012). Kotter (2012) noted that organizational change takes a long time. To keep employees and leaders involved it is vital to create short-term wins (Kotter, 2007). Rogers and Meehan (2007) posited that winning creates and sustains a positive organizational culture.

This is evident in all walks of life, where different types of organizations seem to overcome adversity and remain competitive year after year, think Apple or Amazon. Brettel (2015) explored the linkages between culture and organizational innovation and posited that organizations with positive culture toward new ideas and creativity accept and embrace change. Fostering a positive organizational culture and creating short-term wins allows organizations the freedom to work with new ideas that support the vision and strategy of change (Brettel et al., 2015; Kotter & Rathgeber, 2016).

Kotter (2012) noted the three positive attributes that wins have on teams. First, they are visible to the organization and engender a sense of pride to the team (Hackman, 2017). Second, the win is indisputable as a win for the organization and the team (Kotter, 2012). This allows the

team to celebrate an unambiguous contribution, and as pointed out earlier, winning begets winning (Kanter, 2012). Third and last, the win is aligned with the vision and strategy of the change (Hackman, 2017; Kotter, 2012). This reinforces in the minds of the leaders and followers the vision and strategy of the leaders and that change is going in the right direction (Kotter & Rathgeber, 2016; Suddaby & Foster, 2017). Kotter (2012) also provided that short-term wins can build momentum for change that cannot be undone by detractors and opponents.

Short-term wins also produce an emotional or physiological response by releasing dopamine, which works with the body's reward centers (Sinek, 2009). Winning can become almost physically addictive, which can be a good or bad thing depending upon the circumstance (Robertson, 2012). In this case, winning encourages an organization's workforce in the direction the change vision and strategy provide. It is supposed that high EI leaders will find the right time to move forward to step seven to consolidate gains, providing they can sense the organization's mood for more change (Goleman, 2014).

**Step seven: consolidating gains and producing more change.** Kotter (2007) warned of "declaring victory too soon," which allows organizations to morph back into their pre-vision and change strategy state (p. 102). Chappell et al. (2016) noted this step is the second least used or recognized by change practitioners. Missing this step allows organizations to slip back into old habits. To guard against this, it is imperative to not let up until change becomes part of the organization's culture (Jones-Schenk, 2017). Kotter (2007) reminds leaders that true organizational change is a marathon, not a sprint. As such, it can take years before true meaningful change becomes part of an organization's culture (Kotter, 2007, 2012). Ionescu et al. (2014) noted the need to promote those individuals who have supported and continue to support the vision and strategy of change as well as continue to engage the workforce

in dialogue about the need for change. Schweiger et al. (2018) warned that change-resistant employees and managers view any setback or pause in change, as an opportunity to revert back to pre-organizational change habits. Leadership and change culture must go hand-in-hand in this phase to overcome organizational inertia and detractors (Mohelska & Sokolova, 2015). Kouzes and Posner (2017) added by “creating a spirit of community” around change, it becomes harder to fall back into bad habits and allow the organization to regress (p. 273). Iljins et al. (2015) reinforced the idea that change and organizational culture or climate are influenced by change agents, both negative and positive, and leaders need to monitor this closely. Once change starts to become the new normal, it is possible to move to step eight, anchoring new approaches in the culture.

**Step eight: anchoring new approaches in the culture.** Mohelska and Sokolova, (2015) hypothesized that the organization’s leadership and culture are symbiotic. To this end, Kotter (2012) further insists that unless change is rooted in the organization's culture, i.e., leadership, the organization is destined to fall back into old norms and values. This is why it is important to have socially and self-aware leaders who understand their impact on culture and therefore change (Kotter, 2012; Mayer et al., 2016). Kouzes and Posner (2017) added that when leaders are personally involved with the culture, then changes become permanent.

Kotter (2012) underscored that communication throughout the process is crucial to change, and leaders must wholly commit to change, which includes succession planning so that change does not stop when the current leaders are promoted or retire. Băeșu (2018) further underscored the importance of hiring and promoting EI leaders who support employees, not task-oriented and positive work cultures. Understanding that culture is downstream from

change and comes after, not before organizational change is another important aspect to Kotter's eight-step process (Kotter, 2012).

### **Summary of organizational change theory.**

The literature on organizational change provides for the myriad reasons organizations unsuccessfully implement changes, which can be cultural, economic, employee resistance, socio-cultural factors or simply incompetence on the part of an organization's leadership (De Keyser et al., 2019; Habersang et al., 2019). Leaders must be prepared to adapt their change model to conditions or risk failure (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Gunsberg et al. (2018) noted that no attempt at organizational change proceeds with changes or corrections in the process and that leaders must remain agile throughout the process.

The literature provides many reasons for change and provides many models for change to address those reasons. Burnes et al. (2018) noted the most prevalent reason for organizational change is driven by external market or socio-cultural pressures. Cabrera et al. (2018) noted that organizations must adapt or risk losing talented employees and ultimate failure. Because employees are the engine of change, the change models presented in this dissertation are predominately people and not process-focused (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982;).

The models were also selected as they are the most recently used by the organizations reviewed in this dissertation, and their results can be explored using qualitative research. Another essential element of organizational change is empowered employees during organizational change. Efficacy is an integral part of change and EI and is the third element of this study.

### **Self-efficacy theory**

Bandura's (1977, 1982, 1986, 1993, 1997, 2012; 2018) research provides the theoretical foundation for self-efficacy in this study. Self-efficacy is part of social cognitive theory, which provides a framework to understand why and how people are motivated (Bandura, 2012, 2018). To understand self-efficacy, the researcher must first understand social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2018).

### **Social cognitive theory**

Social cognitive theory describes that individuals have an innate and moral ability to self-regulate behaviors and not simply react to external stimuli (Bandura, 2012). Bandura's (2012, 2018) social cognitive theory posits that human behavior is motivated and regulated by a person's behavioral, personal, and environmental determinants. Bandura (2018) adds that the environmental determinants, such as established goals or feedback information, affect the cognitive and in turn, behavior. Bandura (2001) also spoke to how a person's belief in their own abilities influences the three determinants of human behavior and self-efficacy. Bandura (2000) called this belief human agency, and this is what allows a person to govern thoughts and emotions.

Human agency or agency is part of the foundation of social cognitive theory and posits that individuals control their response to external stimuli (Bandura, 2001). Bandura (2018) described three types of agency as personal agency, proxy agency, and collective agency. Personal agency refers to how a person reacts to their environment as opposed to proxy agency which refers to how others affect or influence a person's choices or decisions (Bandura, 2001). Collective agency discusses how and individual works within a group (Bandura, 2001). This

study will focus primarily on proxy agency, as that is how a leader can influence a person's self-efficacy or agency (Alavi & McCormick, 2016).

Bandura (2018) noted how human agency is exercised through self-control. Human agency is also influenced by efficacy, which is what a person can intrinsically perform (Bandura, 2012). For example, unless a person has a physical limitation, they can perform normal day-to-day activities such as crawl, walk, run, or jump. Bandura (2018) pointed out this innate efficacy is not affected by internal or external determinants. Differing from efficacy, self-efficacy refers to a person's determinate belief in their ability to successfully perform an action (Chesnut & Burley, 2015).

### *Self-efficacy and performance*

Self-efficacy is heavily influenced by a person's behavioral, personal, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1977, 2001, 2012, 2018). Self-efficacy can be viewed extent to which an individual perceives themselves as able to perform a specific behavior, such as run a 5-minute mile or climb a mountain (Bandura 1982; Bandura & Locke, 2003). One aspect of the research into self-efficacy is how beliefs influence a person's goals and how much they will sacrifice and endure to achieve that goal (Bandura, 1982, 1997). Beliefs can strongly influence the outcome of events and are a strong motivator. Indeed, a person who exhibits high self-efficacy of outcome can overcome many obstacles to achieve their goals (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura (2012) posited there are four antecedents influencing self-efficacy: cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes. Bandura (1982) explains that the cognitive process leaves a lasting influence on self-efficacy as each new experience or goal is overcome. This provides the individual with the confidence they can overcome similar challenges and possibly seek newer and larger goals (Bandura (1997). Bandura (2012) described motivational

processes as the belief in what a person can or cannot do, meaning if a person believes they can, or conversely cannot achieve a goal or action, then that is what will most likely happen.

Affective processes are those experiences that happen outside a person's locus of control, like stress, and that person's belief in how well they can or cannot cope with the processes (Bandura, 2012). Bandura (2012, 2018) noted this is how individuals cope with stress and influences their reaction to external stress, like change. Bandura (2012) defined the decisional process as the choices individuals make based on their beliefs.

Bandura (1997, 2012) noted how the four processes shape self-efficacy and influence choice and performance. The literature provides strong empirical evidence for the positive and negative effects of self-efficacy on performance. The literature also provides many examples of how self-efficacy and EI are connected. The literature reviewed showed how EI is influenced by self-efficacy and how a leader's EI influences follower self-efficacy. Next, the literature review examines self-efficacy and emotional intelligence.

### ***Self-efficacy and emotional intelligence***

Bandura (1997) observed that self-awareness and self-regulation or self-management are critical to the development of self-efficacy. This is the nexus between Goleman's (1995, 2000) and Bandura's (1997, 2012) theories on self-efficacy and EI. Both theories understand the importance of emotions and the ability to moderate and control them to achieve goals (Black et al., 2019). Huang (2016) noted that when individuals exhibited a high degree of self-efficacy or self-awareness, they tended to set higher goals and achieved higher achievements. The literature shows that internal environmental factors can drive self-efficacy (and vice versa) as can external environmental goals (Bandura, 2012, 2018; Huang, 2016).

As shown in the literature, EI can be learned as can self-efficacy since both are influenced by the motivational and selective processes (Bandura 2012; Black et al., 2019; Goleman, 2000). Tannenbaum et al. (1991) noted a significant increase in self-efficacy before and after in recruits who successfully completed basic military training. As mentioned before, Tannenbaum et al. (1991) noted the increase in self-efficacy with military recruits upon completion of basic military training. Black et al. (2019), in their study, showed the positive effect of EI on self-efficacy. Next, the study looked at self-efficacy and organizational change.

### *Self-efficacy and organizational change*

Bayraktar and Jiménez (2020) explored the relationship between transformational leadership, self-efficacy, and employee reactions to organizational change. They found a strong correlation between leaders who provide emotional support to employees during change and employee self-efficacy. Bayraktar and Jiménez (2020) noted that transformational leaders in this study exhibited many of the traits associated with high EI leaders. Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) noted there are many reasons to expect that self-efficacy and organizational change theory should intersect.

Primarily, self-efficacy and organizational change constructs find a nexus in the stress of change and an individual's ability to cope or accept that change (Bayraktar & Jiménez, 2020; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019). Alavi and McCormick (2016) posited that proxy agency, or the ability to allow others to mitigate stress, is one of the most powerful influences a leader can have. Judge et al. (1999) examined a number of dispositional traits (locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, self-esteem, positive affectivity, openness to experience, tolerance of ambiguity, and risk aversion) that influence organizational change. The data from the study showed a high correlation of positive self-concept and coping with change (Judge et al., 1999). Book et al.

(2019) also support the impact leaders can have on follower self-efficacy as employees seek affirmation from management.

The literature provides many examples of how change stresses employees and the importance of learned and innate coping behaviors (Bandura, 1997, Bernerth et al., 2011; Kragt & Guenter, 2017; van der Voet & Vermeeren, 2017). Leaders have a direct impact on employees during change if they understand that change is stressful and provide coping measures for employees to manage stress (Bayraktar & Jiménez, 2020; Judge et al., 1999). Bandura (2012) provided how individuals develop self-efficacy, which also aids leaders with the tools to help followers improve and develop coping behaviors to stress. Self-efficacy and stress management continues to be a focus of researchers as the literature attests.

### **Summary of self-efficacy**

The literature review focused on the body of knowledge on self-efficacy, with particular attention to Bandura's (1997) social-cognitive and self-efficacy theories. Social-cognitive theory, the way an individual adapts or reacts to internal and external stimuli, is the basis for self-efficacy (Bandura, 2018). Bandura (2001) noted that foundational to social-cognitive theory is agency, which consists of personal agency, proxy agency, and collective agency. The three constructs can be viewed as internal, external, and group influence to self-efficacy (Alavi & McCormick, 2016; Bandura, 2001).

Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1997) is a person's belief in their ability to perform a task. Bandura (2012) and Judge et al. (1999) mentioned self-efficacy as a regulatory mechanism, which influences a person's performance by aiding the cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes. Huang (2016) linked self-efficacy to achievement goals and found that establishing hard but not impossible goals can have a positive feedback effect on self-

efficacy. Rapp et al. (2012) noted the strong linkages between self-efficacy and performance and noted it was one of the strongest of all performance factors. Follower self-efficacy and leader EI are closely related as well as the literature provides many examples.

The literature also provided a nexus between EI and self-efficacy as both are dependent on a person's self-awareness and self-management (Bandura 2012; Black et al., 2019; Goleman, 2000). EI and self-efficacy are also linked through agency theory as both have elements of external, internal, and group behavior factors (Bandura, 2012; Goleman, 2007; Payne, 1985). Self-efficacy has many of the same feedback loop as EI since both are emotions-based and how a person deals with external and internal emotional stimuli (Bandura 1997; Goleman, 1995, 2000).

Organizational change and self-efficacy are linked in the literature as well. Bayraktar and Jiménez (2020) examined self-efficacy and organizational change in the context of leadership styles. Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) studied the nexus of employee and leader self-efficacy as it related to organizational change theory. Organizational change and self-efficacy are also linked in the literature as change invokes a stress response, and self-efficacy is how employees cope with that stress (Alavi & McCormick, 2016; Smollan & Parry, 2001).

The literature on self-efficacy, as it relates directly to organizational change and leader EI, is scarce. There are many examples of literature on Bandura's theories on self-efficacy and how they relate to EI or organizational change, but none examine all in one study. Self-efficacy and social-cognitive theory are essential topics for leadership studies as they encompass the understanding of what drives motivation, emotions, and ways individuals cope with those emotions (Bandura, 1997, 2012, 2018). Self-efficacy has been empirically linked with emotional and behavioral outcomes in clinical, educational, and organizational settings (Newman et al., 2019). Rapp et al. (2012) noted in their study that self-efficacy had a solid correlation to work

performance more so than other external influences such as organizational goals and leadership feedback. While the literature provides myriad examples of self-efficacy and this review only examined self-efficacy through the lens of EI and organizational change.

### **Summary of the literature review.**

Black et al. (2019) spoke to a gap in the literature regarding EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. While the literature is rich with examples of each theory, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy individually or in pairs, numerous searches using Google Scholar, Liberty University's Falwell Library, and online academic search programs such as ProQuest, EBSCO yielded no results when searching for all three. The researcher could not find even one example when searching the hundreds of thousands of dissertations on ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. This indicates a gap in the available literature on how these three leadership-related theories converge. While searching the literature, the researcher did find linkages through terms and foundational ideas of the three theories. EI had many recent examples in the literature.

Geofroy and Evans (2017) review trust and organizational commitment and found a strong correlation between those attributes and EI. Lone and Lone (2018) noted that EI could be considered the "underlying competency for effective leadership" (p. 36). EI is crucial for leaders as they must adapt along with evolving workforce and cultural dynamics (Goleman et al., 2017). In today's dynamic business and management environment, leaders must understand how to effectively communicate and adapt to environmental changes. Goleman (2014) provided an understanding of EI and the four EI traits of self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management which all leaders need when motivating employees and managing organizational change

There is a vast amount of peer-reviewed literature on organizational change as it is one of the most researched topics in business studies (Rosenbaum, et al., 2018). In addition, to change, the literature was replete with examples of how organizations unsuccessfully implemented changes, which included employee resistance, socio-cultural factors or quiet often mistakes due to organizational leadership (De Keyser et al., 2019; Habersang et al., 2019). The literature showed that leaders must be flexible when adopting change (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Gunsberg et al. (2018) provided that agility in leaders and their process is foundational to change.

The literature provided the many reasons for change, the most prevalent external market or socio-cultural pressures (Burnes et al., 2018). The underlying success or failure with change remains how a leader relates to the workforce (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982). The three models examined in this literature review, McKinsey 7-s process, Lewin's three-step process, and Kotter's eight-step process, are the most commonly used when change involves people and not processes (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Finally, the literature reviewed self-efficacy which was centered on the theories by Bandura (1977), particularly his social-cognitive and self-efficacy theories. The literature provides the definition of self-efficacy as an individual's determinate belief in their ability to successfully accomplish a task (Chesnut & Burley, 2015). Most of the literature on self-efficacy looked at how an individual copes with external or internal environmental factors. The focus of this study is found in proxy agency, or how leaders influence follower's self-efficacy or agency (Alavi & McCormick, 2016).

While there were no definitive studies or documents which connected the three theories, the literature reviewed does support linkages between self-efficacy, EI, and organizational

change (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1986, 1993, 1997, 2012; 2018; Bayraktar & Jiménez, 2020; Black, 2019; Huang, 2016; Judge et al., 1999; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019;). The literature also shows a correlation between EI and self-efficacy as defined by Goleman (1995) and Bandura (1997). The nexus of the two the two theories can be found in self-awareness and self-management (Bandura, 2012; Goleman 2000). Additionally, the literature shows an intersection with self-efficacy and organizational change (Bayraktar & Jiménez, 2020; Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019). This study will add to the body of knowledge regarding these crucial leadership theories.

### **Transition and Summary of Section 1**

Section 1 included the problem statement, purpose of the study, nature of the study, research questions, contextual framework, and the significance of this study. A review of the existing literature on research regarding the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change was also included and found gaps regarding the nexus of the three theories. This research added to the understanding that leaders and researchers have regarding the influence of leader action on follower self-efficacy in general. The following section describes the study design, population, research method, and how data is to be collected. The following section will also address the reliability and validity of the data collected.

### **Section 2: The Project**

Understanding the nexus of leadership studies, which focus on the emotional intelligence of leaders, self-efficacy of followers, and organizational change, will be the focus of this study. This section will present the design, approach, and methods used in this study. The focus of this section is to explain how data was collected and analyzed. This section also explains how the researcher will protect and preserve the rights and identities of the volunteers participating in this

research. This study further explored emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and organizational change as they all relate to ongoing trends in leadership studies.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management. The challenge to DoD leaders, depending upon their EI quotient, is to understand the impact change has on follower self-efficacy. DoD organizations are subject to frequent management changes as each new leader attempts to put his or her stamp on the organization, which in turn leads to frequent changes in policies and procedures. Low EI DoD leaders have often forced change without understanding the impact on the workforce morale or self-efficacy, and then are surprised at the negative results (Allen, 2015; Williams, 2018).

The findings of this study can serve as a foundation for future research on EI among leaders who are looking to implement change within their organization. This study can also assist DoD to focus training as it examines the effectiveness of leadership programs. The study results may also contribute to better hiring practices by providing context in which hiring and training managers can evaluate potential employees.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher in qualitative research is paramount, as they are the principal instrument for gathering information and conducting analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In this qualitative study, the researcher's role consisted of collecting and analyzing the narrative data through interviews to acquire an insight into the phenomenon to be studied (Yin, 2016). Creswell (2016) noted that the researcher often acts as a voice of the participants, allowing their lived phenomenon to be expressed from multiple perspectives. The literature review and qualitative research theory provided context, which allowed the researcher to focus on relative

information to be collected during participant interviews regarding EI, organizational change theory, and self-efficacy.

The researcher designed the interview questions to explore the phenomenon and allow the participants to expand on their perceptions of self-efficacy and the influence leader EI had on them during a recent organizational change event. The interview questions often generate follow-on questions, which the researcher documented using transcription software and examined for potential themes. The researcher then used established qualitative researcher models to analyze the data collected.

Assembling the collected data and making sense of the information is one of the most difficult tasks for the researcher unless an established model is used (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher used coding as described by Saldaña (2013) to analyze the data. The researcher then looked for themes after the data were coded. The researcher validated those themes as they emerged and then checked for bias.

Creswell (2016) and Silverman (2013) noted the necessity for the researcher to check the validity of the themes after the information is analyzed. The researcher used triangulation, which naturally occurred during coding, to help validate themes as they emerged in the research (Creswell, 2016). Saldaña (2013) noted that to ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected, the participants should be asked the same questions and detailed notes taken. The researcher read the questions from scripts (Annex A and B). The transcripts from each interview were checked by the corresponding participant (Silverman, 2013). To ensure privacy of the participants, all notes and materials were scanned or stored on an encrypted hard disk. The disk will be held for three years then the files will be deleted and wiped using the latest antivirus software.

The researcher completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) certification for performing research using human participants. Finally, the researcher sought and

gained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before conducting research. This is designed to protect the researcher and participants from potential harm and bias during the interview process.

## **Participants**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) noted that subject selection in qualitative research is deliberate because the participants should have an understanding of the phenomenon under study so understandably, selecting the correct participants is of utmost importance. The participants of this study were employees of a large East Coast DoD agency. These participants were selected as having led organizational change or have been followers in organizations undergoing organizational change.

The DoD agency was contacted and permission was granted for the study. The researcher, along with members of the organization, identified leaders and followers with recent organizational change experiences. The researcher provided an outline of the study to DoD agency leadership as well as the proposed questions in order to maintain a good working relationship. The DoD agency leadership understands to protect the privacy of the participants only the researcher and dissertation committee members will be allowed access to field notes, participant interview responses, and other research materials. The DoD agency leadership also understands that names or any identifying information, such as titles, will not be published as part of the study or shared with the DoD agency leadership. Permission has been obtained from the DoD agency leadership, and a target organization has been identified for study.

The researcher invited participants to a voluntary interview using online video teleconference using Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher conducted the interviews outside of regular office hours and outside of the DoD-owned facilities to ensure an environment conducive to openness and without interruption. Before the interview, the researcher advised the participants they

may terminate participation in the study or interview at any time and read the interview scripts provided in Appendix A and B. The participants were also advised of the researcher's methods to safeguard the participant's privacy. Finally, the researcher ensured each participant reviewed and signed an interview consent form before beginning the interviews.

### **Research Method and Design**

Selecting an appropriate research method is foundational to properly exploring the phenomenon to be researched. Creswell and Creswell (2018) provided multiple, academically acceptable research methods and study designs for this study. The researcher examined each method and design in-depth to address the phenomenon, and the researcher decided that a qualitative method was appropriate. The researcher considered all of the factors related to the problem to be considered, including research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review, before deciding on a qualitative method. This section will explain why the researcher chose the qualitative method and case study design.

#### **Discussion of method.**

The qualitative method was selected because the use of surveys and interviews is the best way to gather the multiple emotions and experiences associated with a lived experience. (Creswell & Poth, 2018). For that reason, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy is best studied using the qualitative method as the research involves lived experiences. Importantly, the qualitative method answers "how" and "why" questions, which are the primary type of research questions of this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Also, the qualitative method looks at views and experiences of individuals, which is the foundation of this study (Stake, 2010).

Quantitative research was not chosen for this study because this method is primarily concerned with correlational relationships between known variables (Stake, 2010). Quantitative research is also focused on closed-ended questions; this would preclude exploring the lived

experiences of the research participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study requires the researcher to ask open-ended questions; therefore, quantitative research is inappropriate for this study.

Mixed methods research was considered as a potential method for this study as it supports a mix of qualitative and quantitative components (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Mixed methods research can be useful when the researcher requires both hard and soft data, and neither qualitative nor quantitative are appropriate (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To use mixed methods research, the study should have a strong combination of qualitative or open-ended questions and quantitative or closed-ended questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Mixed methods research was not used because the primary focus of the research in this study is the lived experiences of the participants.

The main types of qualitative research designs are phenomenological, ethnographical, narrative, grounded theory, and case study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher examined each on its own merits and decided on the case study design. Yin (2014) noted the case research design is used in situations when the question of how or why a phenomenon occurs. This research explored the how and why of leader EI on follower self-efficacy during change management, and the case study design was the most appropriate to answer those questions. Case study research is considered one of the more challenging research designs, but also versatile as the design lacks established norms and procedures, unlike other methods (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) noted that case study research could include quantitative and qualitative evidence, which could be helpful to the researcher.

*The other types of research designs*

The phenomenological design calls for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of the researched population (Wertz, 2011). The need for an unstructured approach and exploration of participant stories allows the researcher to explore lived experiences in dealing with the phenomenon to be studied (van Manen, 2017). The phenomenological method was not chosen because the research into EI and self-efficacy involves more than stories of lived experiences and requires the researcher to ask more guiding questions than is typically found in phenomenological research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The other methods and the reason they were rejected are provided below.

Ethnographic research differs from other types of research in both the scope and focus as the research concentrates on shared values or beliefs of groups or individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) noted ethnographic research could also be delineated by language or culture. Ethnographic research is based on patterns that differentiate a group from others by beliefs, language, or culture. This type of research was not appropriate because the varied beliefs, cultures, and behaviors of the research participants are not the focus of this research.

The narrative research design is useful when the experiences of a group or individual play a central role in exploring the questions provided in the problem statement (Creswell, 2016). The narrative design is particularly valuable when exploring problems which are stories based on societal problems or issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This was inappropriate for this study due to the non-linear manner of organizational change and the generally narrow focus of the narrative design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Finally, the grounded design was examined for this study and can be useful when a researcher needs to create a theory to explain a particular phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Kempster and Parry (2011) noted that grounded design allows the researcher to explain the actions of the research participants by providing research data. Creswell and Creswell (2018) examined the advantages of the grounded method theory, particularly when research data leads the researcher to seek additional information from research participants. Grounded theory was not chosen because the theories of change, EI, and self-efficacy have sufficient research associated with them individually and in pairs.

### **Discussion of design.**

The case study design was appropriate for this research as it allowed the researcher to explore the lived experiences of the leaders and followers and their perceptions of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. One of the participants identified as a leader had their emotional intelligence (EI) established using the Schutte Self-Reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to provide the researcher with a simple baseline of leader EI. The researcher supplemented the SSEIT with interviews exploring how the participant leaders understood EI theory. The participants identified as EI leaders and who have recently implemented an organizational change were also interviewed on their organizational change method and how they perceived their actions influenced follower self-efficacy.

The participants identified as followers who took part in organizational change were interviewed regarding their perceived self-efficacy and how organizational change was implemented. The case study design suggests that persons who experience a shared phenomenon should have similar reactions or emotions to the experience (Patton, 2014). This hypothesis was confirmed during the study. Riddler (2017) noted the case study design is particularly useful when trying to understand a particular phenomenon by examining an actual event. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested the case study design is appropriate when looking at a process or issue

bounded by time. The researcher examined a small population with a specific experience, bounded by time, and as such, the case study design was most appropriate.

### **Summary of research method and design.**

Qualitative research and the case study design were appropriate for looking at the how and why as the study seeks to understand how self-efficacy is influenced by a leader's EI during organizational change. Selecting a flexible research method and design allowed the researcher to explore the emotions of the participants, which added to the body of knowledge on leadership, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. How the participants of the study were selected is explained in the next section.

### **Population and Sampling**

The researcher used purposive sampling to select participants, which ensured the population sampled had the lived experiences needed for the study. This is common in qualitative research when time and population size are considerations (Silverman, 2013). The researcher chose participants using a purposive, criterion sample of adults who had led or who had been followers during an organizational change in the DoD agency. A purposive sample ensured the participants provided relevant observations regarding the lived experiences in the study (Silverman, 2013). Creswell and Poth (2018) posited that a critical consideration in determining a research group is the challenge of finding participants who have the related lived experiences with the phenomenon and their ability to express their lived experience in a way that is understandable. The researcher used purposive sampling with the participants in the DoD agency.

Guest et al.(2013) listed the many types of sampling available using purposive sampling. The researcher chose criterion sampling as this selects participants based on a predetermined set

of attributes, such as having experienced organizational change within the last three years (Guest et al., 2013). Creswell and Poth (2018) advocated for purposive sampling within a case study to provide for bounding of the case. The researcher interviewed 17 participants and reached saturation early on during the interviews (Saunders et al., 2017).

### **Discussion of Population.**

There were approximately 137 potential participants in the population available for sampling in this study. This represented employees, managers, and supervisors who were part of a 3-year change effort in one office at the East coast DoD agency. The researcher only selected participants who could provide pertinent information and background on the phenomenon at the center of the study, EI, and self-efficacy during organizational change. The researcher was mindful that only participants who have the lived experience were selected as that has a direct relationship to the reliability and validity of the data (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The researcher did not report on gender or race as that was outside the scope of this research. The researcher sent a solicitation email to the population and conducted a preliminary discussion with each potential participant to determine if they had taken part in the office's organizational change and how long they had been with the DoD agency. The researcher then determined the sample size after all respondents have been screened.

### **Discussion of Sampling.**

The researcher conducted interviews with the selected participants until the data indicated saturation was achieved (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) noted the saturation point for sampling can occur with as few as six participants but may require more depending upon the theme selected. Saturation is an essential consideration with qualitative studies and occurs when participants are not providing relevant or new information (Silverman,

2013). Data saturation is subjective and normally determined by the researcher as they are the primary instrument for data collection in qualitative studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The researcher planned on interviewing a minimum of 20 followers but adjusted to the final number as coding indicated saturation had been achieved (Saunders et al., 2017). However, the researcher was aware additional interviews might have been necessary if sufficient information was not collected for data saturation, but this was not the case. The researcher also interviewed the two principle leaders regarding their EI and their methodology for organizational change to provide context to the study. The two principal leaders were selected as leaders of organizational change in the last three years. Additionally, basic demographic information was solicited for all participants, such as how much time they had been in DoD and their overall service time with the selected DoD agency, as depicted in Table 1. The researcher was careful not to bias the participants responses by only asking follow-up questions or probes and not leading questions (Creswell, 2016).

#### **Summary of population and sampling.**

The study sought to understand the effect a leader's EI has on follower self-efficacy during organizational change; therefore, only participants who meet that criterion were sampled. O'Reilly and Parker (2012) noted qualitative research should have an appropriate sample size which is commensurate to the complexity of the study. The population and sample size should be large enough to contain participants who have insight on the research topic but not too large to become oversaturated (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012; Saunders et al., 2017). The researcher sought a balanced sample size and time to achieve saturation and believes the 17 participants were sufficient to provide the necessary information. The 17 interviews yielded over 200 single-space pages of interview notes and participant transcripts.

## **Data Collection**

The researcher's role for data collection in this study was to conduct and record each of the 17 interviews, take notes on the body language, tone, and other non-verbal communication during the interviews. The data gained, through both verbal and non-verbal communication, were crucial in the exploration of the research questions presented in Part 1 and to address the problem initially presented in this study, which is the lack of scholarly research on the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management.

The researcher collected data predominately using interviews and one EI instrument that acted as a baseline for the leader EI quotient. The researcher developed a list of open-ended questions included in Appendices A and B, which explored the experiences of follower and leader participants. In addition, probing questions were part of the interview to expand on thoughts or help with incomplete answers (Fowler & Mangione, 1990).

### **Instruments.**

The researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Stake (2010) reinforced this concept and noted qualitative researchers prefer gathering data using interviews and direct observation to explore the lived experience under study. The researcher conducted interviews to understand the emotions and experiences of the participants. Qualitative interview questions should be written and asked so participants can easily understand and answer in an open-ended manner (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher developed interview guides with questions specific to the followers and leaders of organizational change and are provided in Appendices A and B.

The interview guide for followers explored self-efficacy, EI, and their experience with organizational change (see Appendix A). The researcher explored how followers understood

their role in organizational change and if they were empowered to assist in the leader's vision of change. The questions in Appendix A explored research questions (RQ) 3-5. RQ3 asked how DoD employees are affected by change in their organization in regards to self-efficacy? To answer RQ3, follower guide questions explored self-efficacy topics such as empowerment, opinions, and feelings. Follower guide question 7 expressly addressed all three by asking; what were your beliefs about your ability to regulate your emotions, satisfy social needs, set and attain goals and voice your perspective during your office's organizational change? RQs 4 and 5 explored how follower's perceived leader EI and their understanding of the linkages between EI, self-efficacy, and organizational change. These questions provided many interesting vignettes, which are provided in Section 3. Follower questions 8 through 16 provided information that addressed RQs 4 and 5. Specifically, follower guide question 14 looked to understand the influence of leader EI, if any, by asking, how are you influenced at work to achieve goals? The researcher explored the lived experience of the followers through the follower interview guide, which addressed the RQs on the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management.

Similarly, the researcher developed an interview guide for leaders (see Appendix B) to address the RQs in Section 1 on leader EI and their perceptions of follower self-efficacy during organizational change. RQs 1 and 2 sought to understand how leaders perceived EI, self-efficacy, organizational change, and the leader's influence on follower self-efficacy. The SSEIT provided the researcher baseline information on EI for the primary leader, but to further examine EI, leader interview guide questions 1-8 explored EI using four EI areas as guides outlined in Appendix D. RQ1 was explored by these questions. For example, leader interview guide question 7 explored the leader's understanding of EI and organizational change by asking; how

has using your awareness of your own emotions helped you to be an effective change management leader? This question provided interesting codes which allowed the researcher better understand how this leader understood EI compared to the follower responses. A leader's EI awareness, or lack of EI awareness, is a vital component of this research and therefore needed an additional research instrument, the SSEIT.

The researcher administered the SSEIT to one participant leader in order to provide a baseline EI quotient for the leader compared to coded responses. The SSEIT questions are available in Appendix C. The SSEIT is based on the EI theories introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and conceptualized as a composite of the four EI skills expressed by Goleman (2014) as self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management. The results of SSEIT were shared with the participant as well as a short explanation of the four EI skills at the end of the interview so as not to bias the questions during the interview.

#### **Data collection techniques.**

The researcher conducted interviews using Zoom due to the COVID-19 crisis. Online interviews ensured the safety and health of the researcher and participants. The researcher obtained permission from each participant to record the interview before beginning the interview. The researcher read each participant a scripted overview of the purpose of the study, which is part of the interview guides for followers and leaders and found in Appendices A and B. This introduction informed the participant of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher conducted the interviews, reading each question verbatim, and asked follow-up questions were needed. The researcher used Microsoft Office Word 365's transcription capability and then corrected errors by hand. A copy of the interview transcript was shared with the participant to attest to its accuracy.

The researcher administered and scored the SSEIT for one of the participant leaders. The paper instrument was scanned into a locked Adobe electronic file, and the paper copy shredded. The transcripts were added to the study on an encrypted USB portable hard drive. The researcher began coding and organizing the research data as the interviews were completed and attested.

#### **Data organization techniques.**

The researcher used NVivo 12 to organize and code data after it was collected and attested by the participants. Coding for themes helped organize data and aided the researcher in understanding when data saturation occurred (Creswell, 2016). Once interviews were transcribed, they were collected into NVivo 12 for coding to examine emergent themes and monitor study saturation. Saldaña (2013) advised against coding interviewer questions and comments as they can bias the results, so the researcher was careful to exclude the interviewer comments and questions from the research.

The interviews were recorded using the recording feature on Zoom and transcribed using Microsoft Word 365 software. All notes were in digital format and added to the encrypted drive. The video recording, audio transcriptions, and notes were stored on an encrypted USB portable hard drive until the transcripts were attested then deleted using McAfee's wipe and shred function.

The BitLocker drive is secured with a 20 character and number password only known to the researcher and locked in a cabinet when not in use. The USB removable hard drive will be stored in a fire-proof locked box for three years, and then the drive will be wiped using the latest data destruction software to ensure the data is destroyed and cannot be recovered.

### **Summary of data collection.**

Data collection is foundational to this and any study. The data instruments include the researcher, the interviews, and the SSEIT. The researcher used NVivo 12 software to code and analyze themes as well as determine data saturation. The data is secured on an external and encrypted USB hard drive. The hard drive is secured in a locked cabinet for additional security. There are no hard copy notes for this study as all papers are scanned into locked Adobe electronic files and the paper shredded using a micro-cut shredder. The data on the hard drive will be wiped using the latest data-destruction software after three years at the conclusion of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

Creswell (2016) noted data analysis is where the researcher starts to make sense of the collected data. Creswell and Poth (2018) described data analysis as gathering the collected data in an organized manner, coding themes, and interpreting and presenting the data in a clear, unbiased manner. The process of taking raw data and turning it into something that can be used and analyzed is at the core of research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). The analytic process will be organized by theme as they are extracted from the data and based on the research questions presented in Section 1 (Yin, 2016).

### **Coding Process**

Qualitative, case study research generates a tremendous amount of narrative data. Woods, Paulus, Atkins, and Macklin (2016) recommended the use of Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS) as it provides researchers a ready tool to code and analyze data in a structured manner. QDAS also allows the researcher more time to examine themes as it frees them the manual processes involved in coding and separating the data (Woods et al., 2016). NVivo 12 QDAS

software was used to organize and manage the electronic files, including interview transcripts. Saldaña (2013) described coding as looking for occurrences of actions, emotions, or themes that “appear more than twice” (p.5). NVivo 12 aided the researcher by tagging of information and separating the data thematically, although the researcher still ended up coding much of the data by hand in the program.

After the interviews were transcribed and checked for accuracy by the researcher and participant, the transcript file was added to NVivo 12. Patton (2014) recommended the researcher monitor the coding process until saturation occurs, then check the data whether it answers the original research questions. The research questions and exploring the data related to those questions provide the foundation of the study (Patton, 2014).

The researcher analyzed the collected data against the research questions. The researcher assigned data into groups and themes using NVivo 12 and by hand. Saldaña (2013) recommended to next collapse the raw data into manageable categories and look for recurring themes. The themes were EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy. The method used was framework coding, as it uses terms from the research and helps keep the researcher focused (Saldaña, 2013).

Within the framework, trends in words, emotions, or feelings were identified. For example, within EI, groups such as self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management emerged. Self-efficacy had groups such as emotions, behaviors, and relationships. The researcher used Saldaña’s method by grouping the themes as seen in figures 2, 3, and 4. NVivo 12 was invaluable for this process (Saldaña, 2013). The QDAS was also helpful in color-coding relationships among codes, categories, and themes, which helped the reader with the final report, as seen in Figures 2, 3, and 4.

### **Summary of Data Analysis**

The data analysis process consisted of organizing, coding, interpreting, and presenting the collected data using a NVivo 12 and by hand. NVivo 12 was used to organize the information. NVivo 12 was also used to code and sort the data. During the coding, process themes were identified from the collected data. The findings in Section 3 represent the lived experiences of the participants regarding EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy. The research was also checked for reliability and validity, which was covered in the next section.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Creswell and Poth (2018) posited that validity speaks to the accuracy of the research methods, and reliability speaks to how faithful the researcher relayed the participants lived experience. If a study is reliable and valid based on the definitions provided by Creswell and Poth as well as Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), then later research should be able to repeat the study as well as the results. Reliable and valid research is accepted by the reader as credible, trustworthy, and transferable (Morse, 2015). The study's reliability and validity are of utmost importance if the research is to be accepted into the body of knowledge (Jordan, 2018). The person-centered approach of qualitative studies requires that the primary checks of validity and reliability are methodical in nature instead of statistical (Noble & Smith, 2015). The researcher will employ control measures for reliability and validity as recommended by Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), Creswell (2016), and Creswell and Poth (2018). Those control measures are listed below.

#### **Reliability.**

Hayashi et al. (2019) spoke to the reliability of qualitative research in much the same way as Creswell and Poth (2018) did, which is that reliable research is consistent and faithful

over time. Noble and Smith (2015) noted that reliability also accounts for the biases inherent in qualitative research. The researcher ensured consistency by selecting participants using the same criteria, using the same recruitment email, and using the same interview guides. The same method for data analysis, NVivo 12, was used for all transcripts.

Noble and Smith (2015) also recommend keeping comprehensive records of the research, including attested interview transcripts. This researcher used the leader and follower interview guides (see Appendices A and B) for the participant interviews, as well as asked the participants to attest to the transcriptions after each interview. The researcher asked the same questions, in the same order, of all participants following the interview guides. By following prescribed questions, another researcher using the same interview guides would be able to duplicate the results with a like population of participants. Yin (2014) noted that reliable research is repeatable and consistent. The researcher implemented academically-recommended procedures to meet the reliability test noted by Yin and Creswell (2016).

### **Validity.**

Creswell (2016) noted that in quantitative research, validity speaks to statistical measurements, and the results can be generalized against other populations. Qualitative research, on the other hand, speaks to the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2016). Creswell recommended two strategies to aid with research validity; they are triangulation and member checking. A third strategy, data saturation, will also be used to ensure enough participants have been interviewed to achieve a valid sample with the lived experience to be studied (Creswell, 2016).

Triangulation is widely used in qualitative studies to establish reliability and validity (Creswell, 2016). Morse (2015) defined triangulation as using different sources of

information to answer one question or questions. Creswell (2016) noted that triangulation usually occurs naturally as themes emerge during the coding process. The researcher used triangulation by using data from multiple interviews as described in the data analysis section and by using NVivo 12 to look for those emergent themes.

Member checking was used by the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. Participants were asked to review and attest to the transcripts of all interviews before coding begins. Creswell (2016) noted this collaboration with participants as another check on the researcher, as participants are allowed to review, comment on and approve the transcriptions. This strategy can aid in the trustworthiness and credibility of the research (Iivari, 2018). Additionally, this allows the participants unfiltered input to the research as it relates to their lived experience.

The researcher knew when data saturation occurred as the data collected during interviews became repetitive. Hayashi et al. (2019) noted that data saturation in qualitative research is one way for researchers to ensure the reliability and validity of a study and that data from participant interviews can be used to achieve saturation. The researcher used the same interview guide for the follower participants to reach data saturation. The researcher conducted 17 interviews but was prepared to do more or less to achieve data saturation. This method was consistent with the methods described in O'Reilly and Parker (2012) and Saunders et al. (2017).

### **Summary of reliability and validity.**

This section reviewed the strategies used by qualitative research to check reliability and validity. The researcher employed three qualitative research strategies to check the reliability and validity of the research: triangulation, member checking, and saturation.

Reliability and validity speak to the accuracy and repeatability of the research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Creswell, 2016). A study can be considered reliable if it can be replicated in other studies (Yin, 2014). The researcher ensured the data collected and analyzed in this study was checked using the methods listed above to confirm the reliability and validity before completing the final study.

### **Transition and Summary of Section 2**

Section 2 explains how the research was conducted. The researcher explained the qualitative research method and design as well as explaining why the researcher selected the case study design for this study. This section also provided the purpose of the research and the role of the researcher. The researcher explained the population that was sampled and the sample size used to reach data saturation. Section 2 also explained data how the data were collected using interviews and analyzed with NVivo 12. The researcher also explained how the data were coded into themes. Additionally, the researcher used triangulation, member checking, and saturation to ensure the study's reliability and validity. After the data was collected, coded, and checked for reliability and validity, Section 3 provides a detailed summary of findings, the recommendation for action, further research studies, and the researcher's study reflections.

### **Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change**

The purpose of this section is to present findings, relevant applications, and recommendations associated with this qualitative case study. The section begins with an overview of the study, which explored the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. A vital element of this study is how and why the themes detailed in the findings address the research questions. A detailed discussion of the findings is followed by the applicability of research to leadership, change management, and self-efficacy during organizational change. Last, the researcher provided recommendations for future studies as well as the researcher's reflection on personal experiences while conducting this case study.

#### **Overview of the Study**

This qualitative case study explored the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. Most of the data gathered for this single case study came from semi-structured interviews with employees and leaders in an east coast Department of Defense (DoD) agency. The researcher conducted interviews as the primary means to explore participants' personal experiences concerning the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. There were approximately 92 potential participants after working with the leaders of the agency who met the initial screening criteria. The study sought only those employees who were in the organization during the most recent organizational change and worked for the two leaders in the research. This factor reduced the pool of available participants. The researcher received positive replies from 19 total participants, and two subsequently withdrew from the study before the interviews took place.

The primary objective of the study was to interview enough participants to achieve data saturation. Based on the target population and the study's purposive nature, a total of ~20 interviews were needed to reach saturation. Vasileiou et al. (2018) posited that qualitative research using purposive interviews could have a smaller population for study than quantitative research due in part to the amount of information gathered during the interview process. Data saturation was achieved early in the interview process as no new information was revealed after the ninth interview; however, all qualified participants expressing an interest in participating were allowed to participate. A total of 15 followers were interviewed, which represented 16% of the population.

The study was conducted by interviewing two leaders and 15 followers. The researcher gained consent from each participant before conducting the interviews. Each participant signed and returned to the researcher a consent form that included information about the study and steps to withdraw. Before the interview was conducted, the researcher reviewed the consent form with the participant and read a short statement included in front of the interview guides provided in appendices A and B. The researcher attempted to create a comfortable atmosphere for the participants by dressing casually and presenting a calm and friendly demeanor. The researcher read the interview questions in a conversational tone and took note of body language, changes in the participant's voice tone and inflections, and facial gestures to reveal additional information during the interview. Each interview lasted on average 45 minutes, with some going considerably longer. The researcher subsequently emailed the interview transcript to the participant to ensure the responses were accurate, free of errors, and that the interviewer agreed with and understood their responses. The transcript review was used to improve the accuracy and add rigor to the validation process. Additionally, this allowed for member

checking. The participant was provided the opportunity to add any additional comments and expand on thoughts or theories that they believed relevant to the research.

During the study, the researcher's role was to conduct interviews, record, and then transcribe each participant's responses to the interview questions. The researcher also collected the completed SSEIT from the primary leader and scored the survey with the participant. The researcher also compared the transcripts with notes taken during the interviews to ensure impressions regarding body language, tone, and mood were consistent with the themes. After the participant approved each interview, the researcher used the modified van Kaam method to check the objectivity of the researcher's analysis of the data (Sumskis & Moxham, 2017).

Once the initial step of coding the interviews was completed, the data were uploaded to NVivo 12 for further analysis. The researcher used the NVivo 12 qualitative research software to assist in exploring the experiences and perceptions of the participants studied. The researcher also coded the interviews by hand using highlighters and notes. The participants' responses were entered into the NVivo 12 software, minus the questions and any comments from the researcher, to help identify clusters and themes. The NVivo 12 software also aided the researcher in determining data saturation. The results addressed the research questions as they related to the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management.

### **Presentation of the Findings**

The findings of this qualitative case study research demonstrate the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. Participant responses and subsequently collected data were evaluated equally using NVivo 12 data analytic software. The researcher used NVivo 12 to sort themes and codes noted in the interviews.

### **Themes Discovered.**

To parse out the themes, the researcher read each interview, noting the emergent ideas. The researcher made notes while reading and also reviewed the notes taken during the interviews. The researcher then coded the interviews using the Van Kaam method, which is a modified version of Moustakas (1994) seven-step process.

1. The data were preliminarily grouped into relevant experiences or themes. The researcher scanned the interviews, looked for quotes relating to the research questions, and labeled each as EI, change management, or self-efficacy. This was a quick scan to help parse the information into manageable portions. The researcher's notes aided with the preliminary scan for themes matching the research questions. Within each label or theme, the researcher created a subcategory of positive or negative relationship to one of the three primary labels indicating if the participant had a corresponding negative or positive view of the theme. The researcher also noted other subthemes such as preferred leadership style under change management.

2. The researcher reduced or eliminated the unnecessary information. An example of this was several participants offered interesting anecdotal stories that indirectly related to the research but did not answer the fundamental research questions. The researcher parsed the interviews for quotes or relevant information. This process helped reduce the over 200 pages of interview transcripts and notes into a more manageable task.

3. Next, the researcher clustered invariant components looking for themes. During this step, the researcher clustered and grouped ideas and quotes into the themes of the research, EI, change management, and self-efficacy and identified if the experience for the participant was positive and negative. This happened in iterative cycles. The first cycle looked at what emerged on a textual level. The next and subsequent cycles compared the interview transcripts,

researcher's notes, and codes to the previous themes. Each subsequent cycle assisted the researcher in connecting the research questions to the interview themes.

4. The researcher parsed the interview notes for codes and themes not explicitly stated in the interviews. During this step, the researcher checked himself to ensure that if the participant did not explicitly state they had negative or positive views of a theme, could their opinion or experience be inferred? Is their experience compatible with the theme?

5. The researcher then grouped the interviews by the three overarching themes, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and participant opinion on change management. These three groupings allowed the researcher to reference participants and themes quickly. The researcher also coded for fixed ideas and matched them to the research questions

6. The researcher used his notes in this iterative step to look for non-verbal cues during the interview. An example of this was if the researcher noticed the participant become uncomfortable with a question during an interview by exhibiting known body language signs. These would be crossing arms across the chest or looking down. The researcher was also cognizant of facial cues, which indicated the participant's emotions relating to a question.

7. Last, the researcher explored the perceptions of the participants and their experiences with the themes. The researcher has noted exceptional insights, which emerged from participants without calling the participant out. Due in part to protect the participants from any attempt to discover or guess their identity by leaders or employees of the East Coast DoD Agency.

This process allowed the researcher to match the codes to the overarching themes of the research, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each of these will be discussed in-depth in the next sections.

### **Interpretation of the Themes.**

The three major themes of the research were EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each theme was explored during the interviews and subsequent coding. The themes of this study were determined by the subjective nature of the interviews. Those themes were emotional intelligence, both of the leaders and the followers, and how the participants related to organizational change, both negative and positive. The last theme, self-efficacy, emerged from vignettes provided by the participants. As stated, within each theme, categories emerged as the researcher coded the interviews. It was necessary to identify codes or categories within the themes and the data collected in this study. Moustakas (1994) noted that researchers need to develop themes or a composite of data that would represent the group or information.

#### *Emotional intelligence.*

While the researcher was coding and theming-the-data (Saldana, 2013) for emotional intelligence, the researcher referred to EI domains from Goleman et al. (2017) to help create categories and codes and included the excerpt in this research as Appendix D. These competencies aided the researcher in creating categories and codes relating to EI for both leaders and followers. The EI theme was supported in many instances by the participants as questions regarding EI were part of the questions for both leaders and followers, and saturation involving EI was achieved early during the interview process.

#### *Organizational change.*

The researcher referred to the organization change theories presented in Section 1 for coding guidelines. The researcher primarily used the Kotter (2012) eight-step process as that was the model mentioned by the leader driving the change for this case study. The Kotter change model is presented in Appendix E for ease of reference.

### *Self-efficacy.*

The researcher used Bandura's (1977) theory to code for emotions or actions relating to self-efficacy. Bandura posited that individuals develop a sense of self-efficacy by interpreting information from four primary sources of influence: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, emotional and physiological states. Annex F was used by the researcher to code for self-efficacy and explained the four primary sources of influence.

Once the framework for coding was established, definitions for each code were determined. The codes examined values, beliefs about ability, coping mechanisms, relationship with supervisor, relationship with peers, the opportunity for growth, organizational culture, job function, and vision. Within the main themes of EI, self-efficacy, and change management, the following codes were predominant: culture, mission, vision, clear communication, capable, perspectives, empowering, confidence, behaviors, people-oriented, emotions, servant leadership, and trust. Trust was coded by the researcher 71 times within the 17 interviews.

### **Representation and Visualization of the Data.**

A comprehensive review of the participant's response was conducted based on the interview questions. The coding process provided by Saldaña (2013) offers future researchers a common framework for reviewing and applying the same process as the researcher for this study. To provide context for future researchers, the exact word did not have to be used for an idea to be coded. For example, when a participant mentioned they were willing to take the advice of a leader or coworker, that was coded as trust. Another example would be if a participant noted a coworker was getting angry or upset, which was coded as emotions. The subcode was the actual emotion, such as anger. Each code or subcode used illustrates a distinct thought, emotion, or concept (Saldaña, 2013).

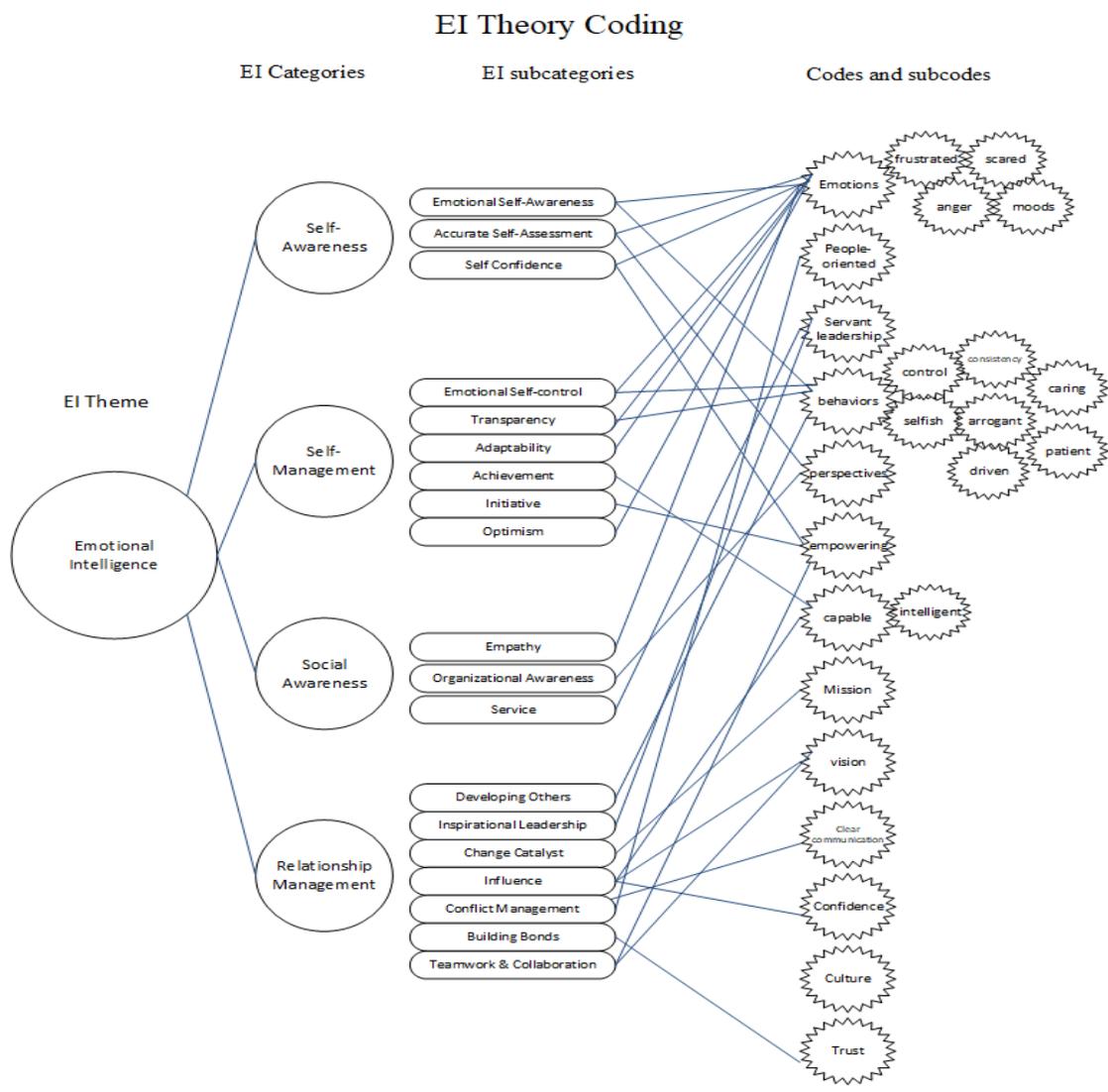
**Table 1***Participant Demographics*

	Years with DoD	Years with Current Organization
Participant 1	33	19
Participant 2	36	12
Participant 3	8	4
Participant 4	33	13
Participant 5	17	3
Participant 6	40	11
Participant 7	37	16
Participant 8	30	30
Participant 9	18	18
Participant 10	35	35
Participant 11	18	18
Participant 12	38	28
Participant 13	33	11
Participant 14	32	3
Participant 15	23	2
Participant 16	34	7
Participant 17	23	13
Average	29	14

Table 1 represents the participant experience with DoD and the East Coast agency. All participants were in leadership roles during the time frame of organizational change and at different levels. All the participants had direct, almost daily contact with the leaders affecting the change. The average time with DoD was 29 years and 14 years with the East Coast DoD agency. The range of leadership experience varied as participants shared vignettes from current and past positions.

All participants had directly managed employees, and most had extensive experience with organizational change. Most participants freely shared their experiences, with only a few being guarded with their responses or showing distinct body language that they were uncomfortable with the interview. Participants provided insightful stories regarding specific

examples on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, which greatly aided the coding process.



**Figure 2.** EI theory coding

Figure 2 illustrates the coding process for EI. As each code was developed, it was placed in a subcategory, which was then associated with the EI category. The researcher found the majority of codes were used with all three themes. Figure 3 illustrates the coding process for self-efficacy. As mentioned, the model for the self-efficacy in Appendix F.

# Self-Efficacy Theory Coding

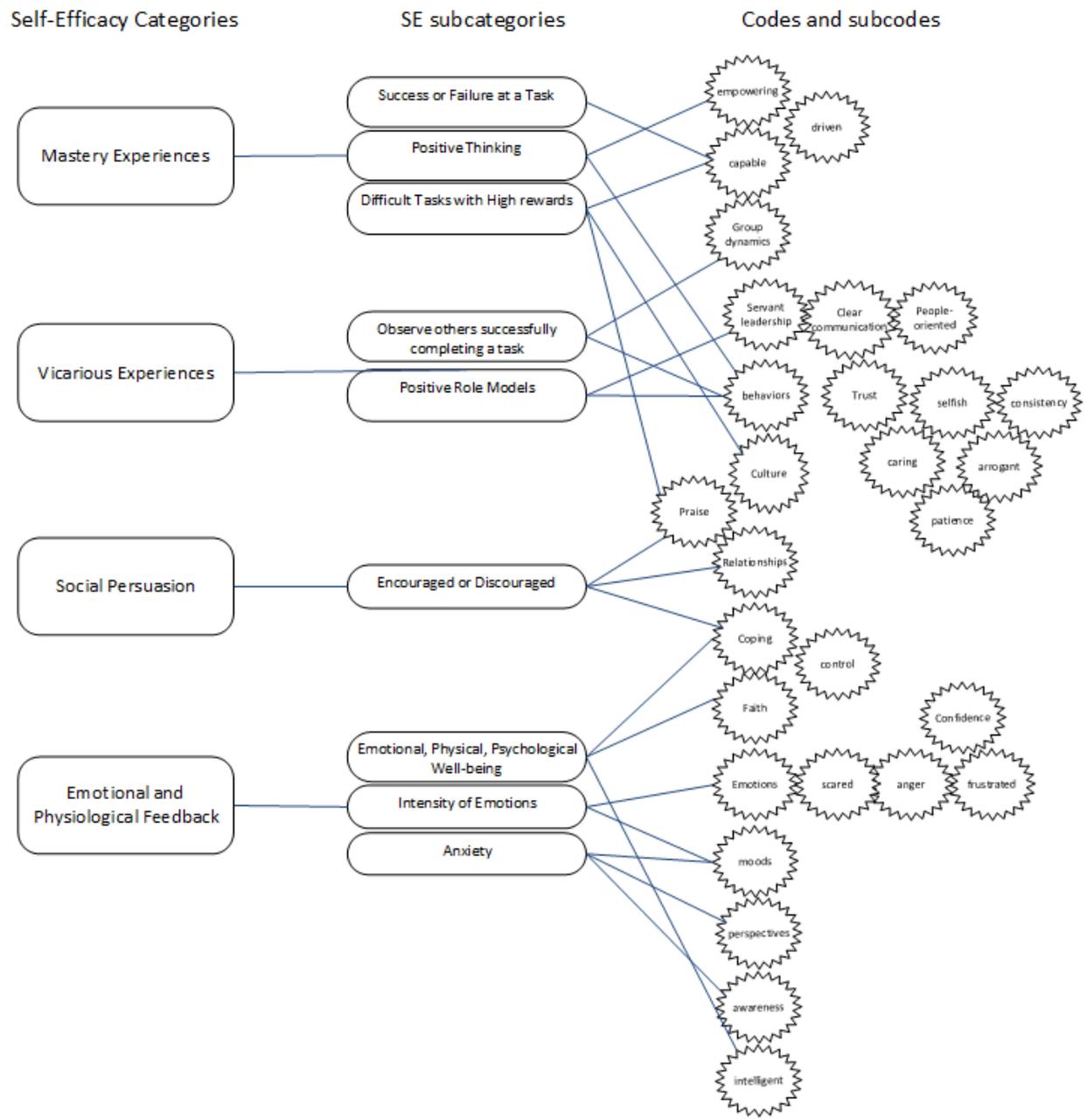


Figure 3. Self-efficacy theory coding

### Change Management Coding

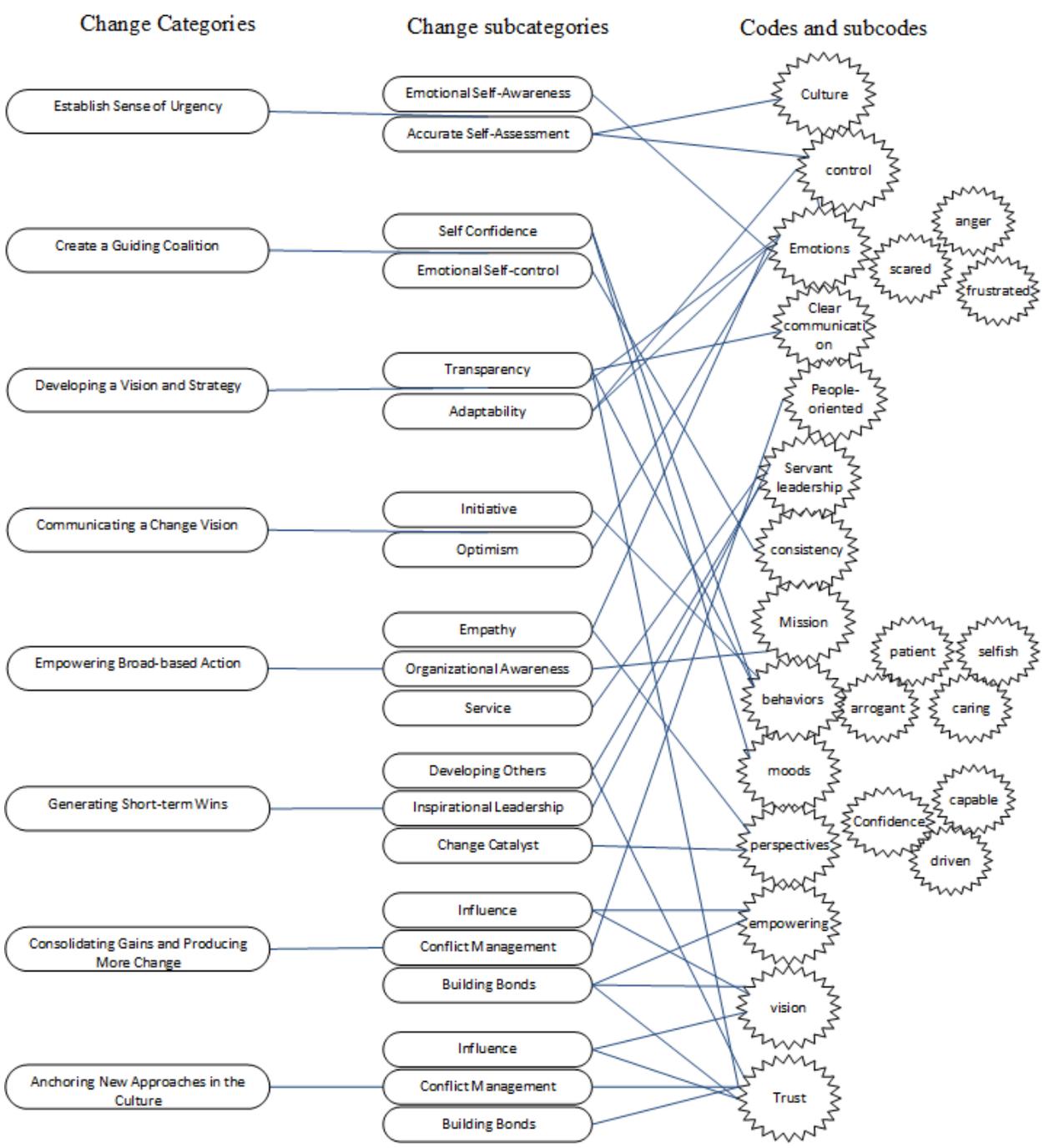
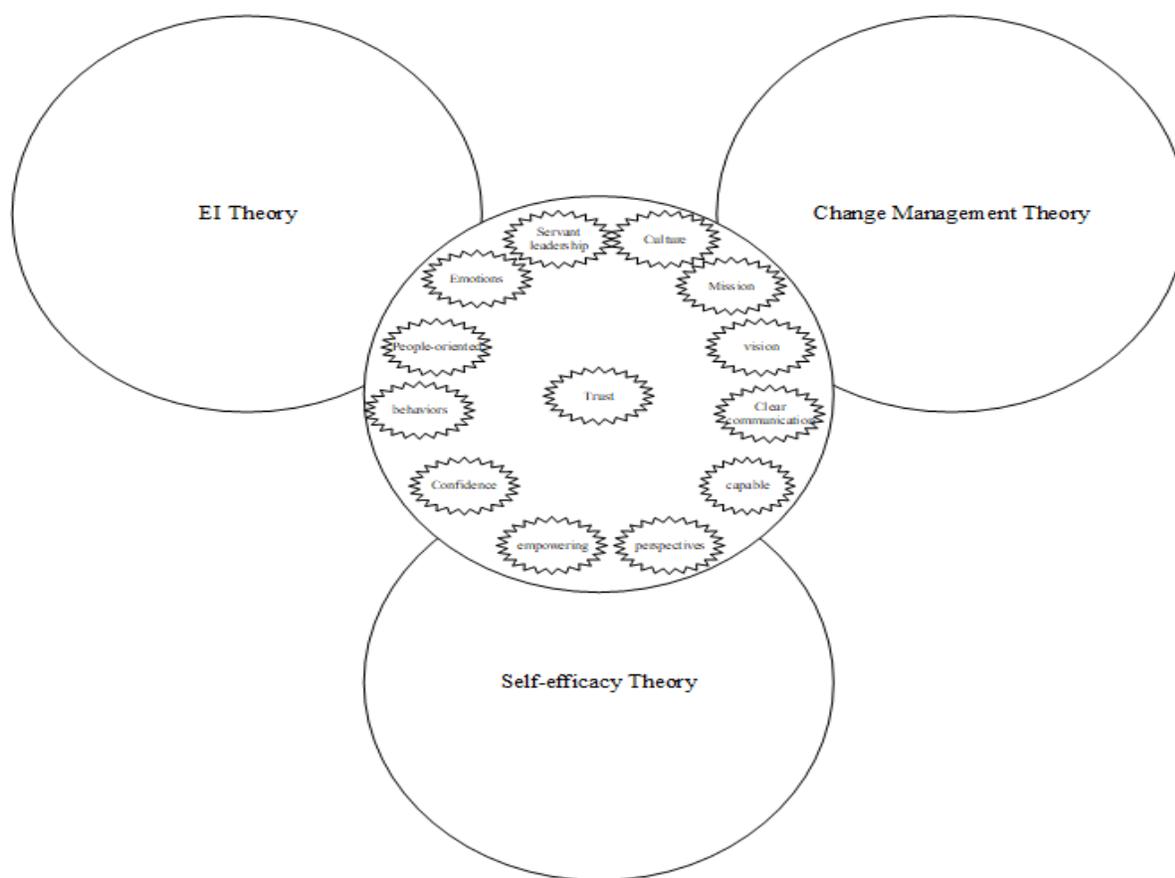


Figure 4. Change management coding

Figure 4 also shows the researcher's coding process for change management, as well as illustrating how the codes for all three are beginning to repeat. The researcher achieved

saturation of the codes, for all three themes by interview nine. The participants used similar language when describing the themes and, in turn, allowed the researcher to match codes. Figure 5 shows how the codes came together with each of the codes in the center of the Venn diagram appearing in each of them. The code that repeated the most for all themes was trust. That is why trust is in the middle of the diagram.

### NEXUS of the Themes and Codes



**Figure 5.** Nexus of the themes and codes

#### **Relationship of Findings.**

The following findings are supported by participant interviews and a review of the literature regarding the effect of leader EI on follower self-efficacy during change management.

The purpose of the case study and findings was to add to the literature and understanding of the themes of EI, self-efficacy, and change management. Participant interviews were the predominant method of information gathering. The sample of the population studied, the researchers' use of triangulation, member checking, and saturation are meant to provide validity to the study and analysis.

### *The Research Questions.*

It is essential at this point to reiterate the purpose of this qualitative study, which was to explore the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management. The challenge to leaders, regardless of organization, is to understand the effect change has on follower self-efficacy. Understanding the effect change has on followers also logically demands the leaders have an understanding of emotions, theirs, and their followers to be effective. Organizations are subject to frequent management changes as new processes, both operational and social, evolve. This study focused on an East Coast DoD agency, but change is not the reserve of the DoD. Most if not all organizations will face change, and it is vital that organizations understand the cost, not just in materials, but in human productivity that change requires.

A hallmark of DoD organizations is the frequent organizational change due to changes in leadership, both political and military. As each new leader attempts to put his or her stamp on the organization, the employees' experience change in varying degrees. In that context, the research questions were developed and listed below.

RQ1. How do managers within the DoD describe EI and their understanding of self-efficacy?

RQ2. How do managers within the DoD characterize follower self-efficacy during change within their organizations?

RQ3. How are DoD employees affected by change in their organization in regards to self-efficacy?

RQ4. How do DoD employees describe EI among their leaders, and does this influence their self-efficacy?

RQ5. How do DoD employees understand the link between EI, self-efficacy, and organizational change?

The research questions guided the interviews and provided the basis of the interview guides in Appendices A and B. Within the context of the research questions, the researcher explored leaders' understanding of EI, theirs and whether they understand how their EI affects subordinate behaviors. The researcher also learned about follower EI and how those participants described the EI of the two leaders of this case study. Additionally, the research questions explored employee self-efficacy and specifically employees who experienced organizational change under the leaders in this study. The questions explored employee perceptions of whether they felt empowered during the change. Also examined was how employees perceived leader EI qualities of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills using Appendix D as a guide (Goleman et al., 2017).

#### *Findings for RQ1.*

The first question, how do managers within the DoD describe EI and their understanding of self-efficacy, was primarily focused on the leaders of the change but also later included all participants as EI codes emerged for each participant. The researcher realized that how some questions were answered indicated not only the EI of the leaders but the follower answering the

question. A specific example is question nine in Appendix A; did you witness any coworkers or supervisors get emotional during the organizational change? Thirteen participants indicated differing levels of emotions from coworkers or supervisors, while two participants indicated they did not. Since all 17 of the participants were at most meetings regarding change, this indicates differing levels of social awareness and relationship management. The ability to read the room can be considered a critical skill for leaders. The responses from some of the participants can indicate a low level of social awareness or relationship management. Sampson and Johannessen (2020) recommended using real-life vignettes to explore a participant's experiences, especially when the real-life vignette helps the researcher understand a lived experience. The vignettes that follow have been edited to protect the anonymity of the participants. Participant 4 provided a real-life vignette as an answer to question nine, and an edited version is provided below.

Participant 4 shared:

I've seen people get emotional with him, and I even I did sometimes. He was very professional when it happened; I would say he was soothing, meaning he would let you vent. He would let you have your moment – and this is personal because I did it a couple of times, then come back and help you figure out how to do what he was asking. He would say, you know I still want this to happen, so let's figure this out. He was a good leader that way (personal communication, October 21, 2020).

Participant 4's response was typical of the thirteen participants who indicated they had seen coworkers get emotional during change. In contrast, Participant 5 shared the following in response to question nine. An edited version is provided below. Participant 5 shared:

I don't think I noticed anyone get visibly emotional. I know that there were conversations about why some of the change was happening and what am I going to do next? (personal communication, October 22, 2020).

The researcher cannot be sure if the participant did not feel comfortable with the question, the interview, the researcher, or simply was not in tune with what was happening at the meetings. The thirteen participants who did see coworkers get emotional were all sure the leaders handled the situations correctly. This certainly indicates a high EI on behalf of the leaders in this study.

The SSEIT score for the primary leader of the change in this study was indicative of someone with very high EI. Schutte et al. (2009) bounded high and low EI as between 11 and 137. Meaning a person with a score above 137 or below 111 would have unusually high or low EI. The primary leader for this study scored above 137. The interviews regarding this leader supported the SSEIT results. When participants described the primary leader's behaviors relating to EI codes such as understanding, empathy, and caring, this result was also born out by the interview transcripts. Figure 2 shows the 13 codes describing EI. First, the primary EI themes of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management were coded against RQ1 using Appendix D. Next, the researcher coded the four elements of self-efficacy as noted in Appendix E against participant responses.

During the coding, it was evident the participants universally thought the leader cared for them and listened to their concerns. Many commented that during periods of conflict or uncertainty, the leaders would purposively stop whatever was occurring and make time to listen to concerns of the follower or followers. The leaders and participants were keenly aware of how their actions affected the workforce and shared personal stories to illustrate this. One participant

shared a story of how during the change, they would be moved from their leadership position but understood the move was to allow for growth of both the participant and other employees. The participant also shared their apprehension and even hostility to the move at first, but after the move understood the net positive for the organization. Eleven participants related stories in being able to detect, understand, and moderate emotional changes in themselves related to the change.

Conversely, four of the participants seemed to have difficulty understanding the emotions of the team. One participant freely admitted to having an EI gap early on but that the two leaders had coached him to a better place by showing him how his behavior affected others. Another participant indicated that his colleagues were tone-deaf to the change that was being enacted by the leaders. One participant noted that change is "a team sport" and that you must understand the strengths and weaknesses of all the members of the team. This participant also noted that the leaders understood the team dynamics and played to the strengths and weaknesses of their team. This result also indicates high EI and awareness of the self-efficacy of the followers and leaders. Another participant noted during the conflict, the leadership team would take "a balcony moment."

A balcony moment is when the leaders and followers distance themselves from the conflict as if looking at the problem from a balcony and attempt to understand what was triggering the conflict. The team would then critically look at behaviors that caused the conflict and what needed to be done to correct those behaviors. The participant noted that many times the person who had caused the conflict would self-correct and self-identify. Again, this indicates a high level of EI for both leaders and followers. Seven of the participants noted that the leaders had shared many books on leadership with the team, some focusing on leadership attributes but

primarily focusing on the emotions of leadership. One such book, *The Servant* (Hunter, 2012), discusses servant leadership and the necessary EI skills needed to become a servant leader.

Hunter (2012) offers that leaders need to master the three Fs, Foundation, Feedback, and Friction. Hunter noted that foundation is where you set your principles, feedback is where you look for gaps and aggressively seek feedback, and friction is where you attempt to close gaps between yourself and your followers. All three of those traits directly correlate to EI competencies. The fact the leaders purchased these books and shared them with their leadership team indicates high levels of understanding of EI. All participants noted the care the leaders had in their well-being and emotions during the change.

The researcher believes the question of how do managers within the DoD describe EI and their understanding of self-efficacy was sufficiently answered early during the interviews and reinforced as the research reached saturation. It was evident the leaders understood self-efficacy and had a good understanding of all four EI traits, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

#### *Findings for RQ2.*

The next research question, how do managers within the DoD characterize follower self-efficacy during change within their organizations, was also explored during the interviews. Appendix B provides the leader's questions that guided the coding of this question as well as Appendices E and F. The researcher was looking for specific examples in the interviews where the leaders and followers acknowledged the emotional impact of change and how that was addressed by the leaders. Participant 1 provided a particularly good vignette describing a difficult leadership position that required him to mitigate the influence of a toxic leader on the workforce. The toxic leader would become hostile in meetings and attempt to assert dominance, which

challenged. Participant 1 worked with the workforce to mitigate those behaviors by changing the group dynamics of meetings. The vignette also described using positive role model behavior, positive thinking, influencing by encouragement, and understanding emotional and physiological feedback of the workforce. Codes such as emotions, group dynamics, awareness, and relationships were noted, with both leaders indicating an understanding of self-efficacy.

The researcher also used Appendix E to help answer RQ2 as the core of the question was rooted in follower self-efficacy during organizational change. Both leaders mentioned Kotter's (2012) eight-stage process of creating major change. The steps of creating that change could be coded from the interviews. The codes for change were a mandate, team, vision, strategy, communication, empowered, winning, and culture. Three participants noted the leaders took over with a mandate or sense of urgency. Eleven participants noted their participation in the leadership team as a guiding force developed by the two leaders in this study. Fourteen participants spoke of a distinct vision or strategy by the leadership team. All of the participants spoke to communication as being crucial in the change strategy. Fourteen of the participants spoke to being empowered or being part of the leadership team that was formulating the change strategy. Two of the participants spoke about quick wins that involved changes with personnel and teams. All participants spoke to the culture and the need to keep moving forward with change.

One participant shared a particularly powerful story of how the change affected their division and how the leaders made changes that were initially very unpopular with the workforce. The leaders spent extra time with those employees to help them see the benefits of the change, even though it meant moving to another part of the organization. Eventually, through communication and understanding the emotions involved, the leaders managed to relieve the

anxiety about change and move forward. Not every employee was happy with the changes. The participant shared that looking back now, every employee that was part of the change is in a better place because of the change. The leaders understood that dealing with emotions, providing encouragement, and having a shared vision would eventually achieve their desired change strategy.

Four participants were eager to share experiences of previous organizational changes, which were "disasters" or "doomed to fail." The researcher found the common subcodes with these failures were lack of vision, emotionally tone-deaf, no guiding coalition, and a lack of communication to the workforce. The four participants described these failed organizational changes as a way to highlight the recent successful change. One participant noted that the current leaders must have made detailed notes of his last organization's failed change and simply did the opposite. All participants emphasized the importance of communication and vision during change.

Sufficient positive thinking, role modeling, encouragement, and emotions were noted in all the interviews and could be attributed to the leader's behaviors and understanding to answer RQ2. How do managers within the DoD characterize follower self-efficacy as described by Bandura (1977) during change within their organizations? The leaders also understood the Kotter (2012) eight-stage process. Codes for change were: mandate, leadership team, vision, strategy, empowerment, winning, and culture. These codes were used to explore the change theme. The themes of self-efficacy and change were coded, and the researcher has high confidence that during this case study, the leaders understood those themes and actively used techniques to affect both self-efficacy and change positively.

*Findings for RQ3.*

RQ3 explored how DoD employees were affected by organizational change with regard to self-efficacy. The interview questions in Appendix A all touch on this subject, but questions 7 and 15 directly address self-efficacy. The interviews produced several stories or real-life vignettes regarding how participants and their subordinates dealt with change and how that change affected their self-efficacy. The researcher used Appendix F to code the interviews using Bandura's (1977) determining self-efficacy model. The categories supporting the themes were a success, failure, positive thinking, task difficulty, role modeling, encouragement and, discouragement. One of codes associated with the categories as emotions, which had several sub-codes describing the exact emotions such as anger, frustrated, scared, and patience. Participant 9 provided a real-life vignette on how the change affected their understanding of what they are capable of, and an edited version is provided below. Participant 9 shared:

When I was new to DoD, and I was relatively new to the organization, my boss wanted me to take a position outside of my current specialty and outside of my comfort zone. I explained to him that I knew nothing about the job being offered and told him I was not interested. Thankfully, my boss would not take no for an answer. He took a briefing the next day, and I still didn't understand what was expected and was very sure this was not a job I would enjoy or have success. To make matters worse, the person responsible for the new job center did not want me either because of my lack of experience in DoD and with the new position.

My boss knew my capabilities and knew better than me or the person in charge of the work center that I was the person for the job, even when I did not know them myself. My boss asked the new supervisor and me for 90 days in the position, and if it has not worked

out, then I could come back. I agreed, thinking that three months is not that long and if nothing else, it was a change of pace.

In the end, the new job was one of the best I ever had, and I ended up staying nine months instead of 90 days. The moral of the story is don't be afraid of challenges because this job showed that I was so much more capable than I thought I was. Even with no experience, I quickly learned the complexities of the job and succeeded in ways I didn't know I could. My self-confidence grew and has enabled me to take on more significant challenges because of what my boss saw in me and nudged me to do.

Participant 8 shared a similar real-life vignette about being apprehensive about the recent change. The participant was comfortable in their position and did not want to move to a new leadership position that was being offered. An edited version of Participant 8's real-life is offered below. Participant 8 shared:

The leadership team negotiated with me when I would move and said we would take it one step at a time. Small steps. They suggested moving to a different division, and my response was, okay, I'll do whatever you need me to do, but my face was saying I don't want to. And so, from looking at my face, the leaders saw that I was uncomfortable with the move and asked, what do you think would make you comfortable? I responded I don't see me moving out of division because I don't feel that I'm ready, and I don't feel that the team that works for me is prepared either. I also asked, who's going to replace me? The leadership team responded that it would open an opportunity for someone else.

We discussed who would be a good fit and how this would work, not just for me but for the organization. We considered the employees and how they would be impacted by the decisions. The leadership team suggested some stretch assignments. I replied, you say

stretched; that would be bending me and breaking me. We continued with the discussions, and to be honest, I was surprised because I thought there would be no negotiations. They eventually got me to a good place, and here I am. (personal communication, October 25, 2020).

Participant 8 eventually moved and shared how the move helped them grow in confidence and helped them realize the move opened opportunities for subordinates to grow. Several participants shared similar stories where the leaders had explained there had to be movement within the organization, so everyone had a chance to grow personally and professionally.

Seven participants shared similar real-life vignettes of achieving goals or moving into leadership positions they had never envisioned. All seven attributed the recent organizational change as something they dreaded at first, reluctantly embraced, and later were glad the change occurred. Not all the vignettes were positive. Participant 16 shared a real-life vignette of how negative leadership affected self-efficacy.

Participant 16 noted that when negative he experienced negative leadership interaction or low EI during a more recent change, it had the opposite effect on his self-efficacy. This real-life vignette was in response to interview question 15, describe experiences at work that shifted your beliefs about what you were capable of in all your work areas/responsibilities. The edited vignette from Participant 16 is offered below. Participant 16 shared:

I had a professional experience fairly recently, and unfortunately, this one is more negative. I've always had a hard time micromanagement professionally. I find I'm most effective and most productive when given a task, mission or goal, and I'm resourced to achieve the objective. I always use a kitchen analogy. Give me a kitchen, a frying pan,

and an egg. Tell me that you want an omelet, and then let me cook the omelet. Just tell me what kind of omelet you want, and I will get it for you.

When you stand there and tell me, you need to add this or you need to add that and flip it over now, it's been on one side too long. It shuts me down mentally. I become demotivated rapidly, and then I into Ben Hur mode, the quote from the movie and the scene where he was on the slave ship, and the slave master says, row well and live. My point is that I'm a paid professional, and I can do this. I knew the omelet what you wanted. I know how to make that omelet. Let me make it. Unfortunately, I recently had an experience where I was micromanaged in a job I've done for years. It was not a good experience, and it demotivated me. In my opinion, this experience has made me a less effective leader than I was in the past. (personal communication, November 1, 2020).

Participant 16 shared that vignette to illustrate the effect bad leadership can have on self-efficacy. The previous leadership team considered him a high-performing leader and entrusted him with one of the most crucial divisions in the last organizational change. This final real-life vignette illustrates the power good and bad leadership during change can have on follower self-efficacy. All participant interviews were rich with the self-efficacy categories and associated codes of success, failure, positive thinking, task difficulty, role modeling, encouragement, and discouragement. The interviews provided many real-life vignettes that show that DoD employees' self-efficacy is directly affected by the organizational change.

#### *Findings for RQ4.*

RQ4 explored how DoD employees described the EI of their leaders and if that EI influenced their self-efficacy. The interview questions in Appendix A, again all touch on the subject of EI and self-efficacy as they were written to provide open-ended answers and allow the

lived experiences of the participants to be explored. Questions 6 through 10 in Annex A were targeted at eliciting how participants felt about the EI of the leadership team. The open-ended nature of the questions necessarily also allowed the researcher to code the participants' responses against Appendix F as well as Appendix D.

All participants viewed themselves as having the ability to voice their opinions and achieve beneficial outcomes for themselves or their employees with regards to the leadership team. The codes of trust, self-control, service were often mentioned when describing the leaders by the participants. Participant 13 shared a real-life vignette on how the EI of the leaders influenced him and his self-efficacy. This response was to question 7 in Annex A, what were your beliefs about your ability to regulate your emotions, satisfy social needs, set and attain goals and voice your perspective during your office's organizational change? The edited real-life vignette is offered below. Participant 13 shared:

I was completely unaware of my own emotional reaction to events and how I was being perceived by my peers. I had received coaching, and I was being coached, but I was unaware of how my behavior was influencing, negatively, my coworkers and subordinates. It wasn't until the leadership team gave me examples of how I was perceived during meetings and how my negative behaviors were shutting down peer interactions. One of the leaders used a mirror analogy, essentially asking me to view my actions from a different point of view. I realized my own lack of EI, or lack of caring. It completely changed not only how I behaved but was more cognizant of how my actions affected others. I changed my demeanor during meetings and during interactions with subordinates and superiors. The leadership team helped cement those changes because they would give me immediate feedback after meetings if they saw my old destructive

behaviors reemerging. Everything changed after that, including my motivation to come to work and my love of the job and the organization. (personal communication, October 30, 2020).

Participant 13 also shared a personal observation that if the team had not intervened, he was sure he would not be in the organization and not as successful. This powerful real-life vignette was just one of the many shared by participants as they recounted experiences and encounters which had led to significant change within and for them. The previous real-live vignettes from Participant 8 and Participant 13's vignette provided codes on their perceptions of the leadership team as being empathetic, transparent, developing others, building bonds, and conflict management for EI. Those and other participant stories provided codes for positive thinking, influencing, emotional support, and positive role models for self-efficacy. All participants recognized the EI of the leaders, most not calling it EI by name but using the categories or codes within the research. The traits or themes of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management were evident throughout the interviews as the participants described their interactions with the leadership team in this case study. The participants also shared stories of other leaders who lacked some or all of those characteristics. These stories were unsolicited and shared to illustrate how the case study leadership team differed from past experiences. The interviews also provided ample examples of how participants' self-efficacy was influenced by the actions and interactions with the leadership team.

#### *Findings for RQ5.*

RQ5 explored the understanding DoD employees have of the links between EI, self-efficacy, and organizational change. The last question of both Annex A and B sought to elicit

responses from the participants regarding this question. The other questions provided opportunities for participants to discover through their answers how their actions during change are influenced by the EI and strategy of leaders as well as their understanding of their own EI. The interviews offered the researcher many examples of where participants became more self-aware and self-confident as a result of the leadership team's actions. Participants 8 and 13's vignettes above provided good examples of the linkages between the themes of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy.

Participant 16's vignette provided an example of the effect a leader's low EI behaviors, such as lack of trust and lack of empathy, can have on the self-efficacy of employees. Participants 2 and 7 shared their insights considering their experiences with both military and civilian change. Participant 2 noted that EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy could be viewed as a Venn diagram, but not all factors are always equal. Some will take precedent over others as the current situation and strategy dictate. Participant 7 noted a saying the last director of the organization used often, which was we finish the run together. The edited answer to this question by Participant 7 is offered below. Participant 7 shared:

Finish the run together. The saying is rooted in elite military units never leaving a member of the team behind. Being a good leader with high EI means that monitor your teammates and make sure you account for every member. That means growing them, helping them along the way, and finding ways to motivate them. It also means letting them know where you are going, how they are going to get there, and how you intend to make that happen. Good leaders know they can't do it alone, and they have to finish the run together. (personal communication, October 24, 2020).

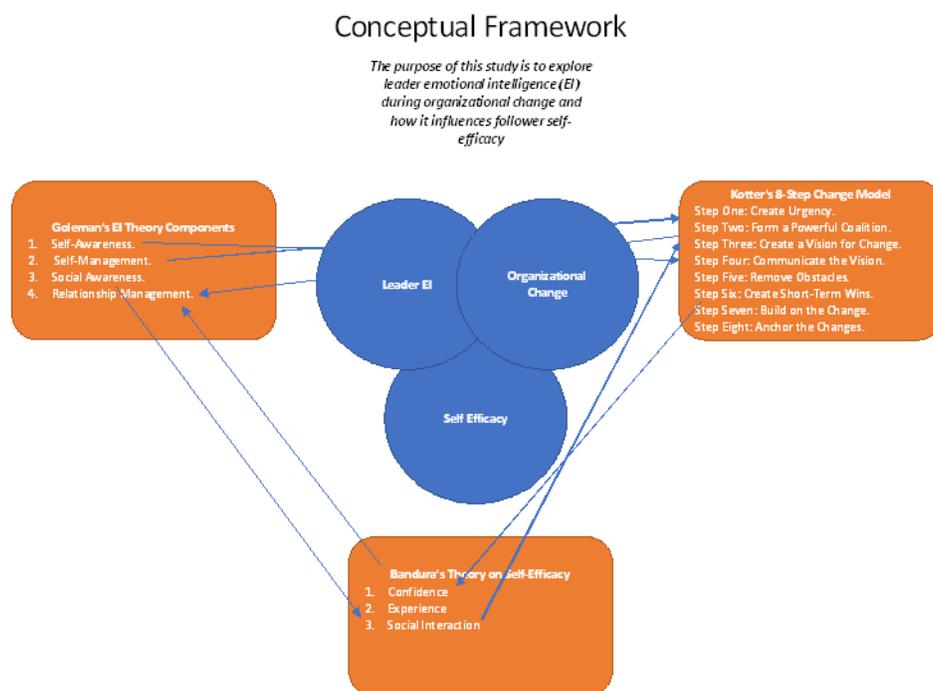
Participant 7's vignette describes a nexus of all three themes of this research, EI, organizational change, and follower self-efficacy. The vignette covers EI by showing a leader's self-awareness, a clear vision of with an organizational goal, and understanding follower self-efficacy by providing a positive role model and encouragement to their followers. The codes of each theme, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, as seen in Figure 4, illustrate how interrelated the concepts are and how they can complement or detract from the others. The results of the interviews provided the researcher an understanding of how DoD employees comprehend the linkages between EI, self-efficacy, and organizational change. All participants either explicitly or tacitly expressed their understanding of how the concepts are interrelated.

The researcher used the five research questions to support the purpose of this case study, which was to explore the effect leader EI has on follower self-efficacy during change management. During this study, the researcher's experience was the myriad challenges leaders face during organizational change can be managed, mitigated, or overcome if the leader has a good understanding of EI, theirs and their followers and the effect change will have on and follower self-efficacy. This idea should apply to any organization, not just DoD, regardless of the organization; it is to understand the effect change has on follower self-efficacy. The conceptual framework presented early in this study as Figure 5 also provided the framework for the research questions.

***Relationship of the findings to the conceptual framework.***

The framework for the research was based on established EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy theories as presented in the review of the literature. Figure 6 shows the themes or elements of the three theories and the relationship between the different categories within the theories. This study explored the linkages of the three theories using the

elements of the theories as categories and then coding to those categories. Figure 5 illustrates how all three theories share many of the same codes. The interviews, based on this conceptual framework, explored the level of the leaders, which, as the research showed, affected the success of the organizational change. The EI of the leaders, and the followers, also influenced follower self-efficacy. The research explored to what extent the recent change was successful based on the interviews of those who were part of the change. The research suggests that the high levels of EI demonstrated by the leaders aided in the success of the change. The fact the leaders also followed an organizational change structure, such as Kotter's (2012) eight-step change model, aided in measuring whether the change was successful. Bandura (1977, 2018) posited that a person's self-efficacy heavily influences a person's sense of self-worth and is an indicator of their success or failure. The vignettes in this research support Bandura's ascertains. The positive influence the leaders had on the followers' self-efficacy is a critical factor in the success of the organizational change in this research.



**Figure 6.** Conceptual framework

The research showed how the leader's self-awareness and self-management, as well as relationship management as described by Goleman et al. (2017), aided in implementing the 8-steps in Kotter's (2012) change model. The research also reinforced the connection between Kotter's (2012) change model and Bandura's (1977, 2012) self-efficacy model as many of the codes relating to experiences, wins, confidence, and mastery are connected to both themes. The link between EI and self-efficacy was illustrated many times during the interviews, particularly with Participants 8, 9, and 13. In each of those interviews, the participants shared vignettes of where their leaders were very perceptive of emotions and the participants' self-doubt of behaviors. In each of the interviews, the participants directly attributed high EI behaviors to their success.

The interviews also provided many examples of how the relationship between the three theories is in constant flux, depending on what point the organization is located within Kotter's (2012) model, the current leader's EI, and where follower's self-efficacy regarding task performance. As noted by Participant 9, they were not confident of their ability to perform a task until the moment they were called to perform the task. Their self-efficacy was in flux until they became comfortable with the task. The high EI leader knew Participant 9's abilities better than they did, in part to social awareness and relationship management skills. The conceptual framework also provided the researcher an opportunity to explore other themes related to EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, which are provided below.

***Anticipated themes.***

A review of the anticipated themes, EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, revealed myriad complex and interconnected codes that answered the research questions and supported

the purpose of the case study. The researcher also uncovered unanticipated themes for the research, such as how follower EI interacts with leader EI, the effect of leader self-efficacy on organizational change, and how high EI leaders with malintent detract from follower self-efficacy. Each of these three themes emerged during the interviews but were encountered and explored but were not part of the original conceptual framework for this research.

*Follower EI interaction with leader EI.*

It was evident from several of the interviews that many of the followers had exceptional EI based on their answers to questions and observations. Participant 7 had many interesting and insightful observations as well as vignettes to provide depth to his answers. Participant 7's interview lasted nearly 2 hours, and the transcript was 27 pages of single-space material. Every category and subcategory of EI was evident in the answers to the questions, and all the primary codes were touched upon as well. Participant 7 shared observations of how the organizational change of this study was implemented. An edited and shortened version is shared below.

Participant 7 shared:

So how do you define your vision? You know, in the context of the risk to the organization, the missions that it executes, the people that rely on the organization, and how do you unite the people around that vision? Some will be willing to follow based on your reputation and if you can't find a way to unite all of them, then unite some who could potentially be the advocates that may bring the others along. But more important, communicate, communicate, communicate. Share key decisions in advance with those advocates because you can read the room, and you will know if they disagree with the decision. Make sure your decisions are based on facts or hard data. Listen to their

concerns, get their buy-in, and admit if you are wrong. They will take ownership of those decisions giving the leader some breathing room to make mistakes.

Participant 7's observations showed a great deal of EI as well as an understanding of follower self-efficacy. Participant 7 would later play an important role in the change that was put in place by the leadership team. The combination of high EI by the leadership team and those they enlisted to help with the change ensured it would be successful at most levels. The interviews also revealed how leader self-efficacy could influence change.

*Leader self-efficacy and organizational change.*

Another unanticipated theme of the research was brought out during the interviews as four participants shared stories of how the leaders self-efficacy influenced them. Appendix F provides Bandura's (1977) framework to determine self-efficacy. As the researcher coded for self-efficacy, it was evident that many of the comments made during the interviews were directed at the self-efficacy of the leaders. Participant 6 noted the primary leader had a very calming influence on meetings and other interactions. This emotional influence can be tied to EI as well as self-efficacy. Participant 9 also mentioned the calming influence of the primary leader and noted the leader's way of defusing emotional situations that arose as a result of the change. Bandura's (2012) social cognitive theory described this as having innate abilities to regulate behaviors and not react to external stimuli. That certainly describes the leader behaviors noted by Participants 6 and 9. The last unanticipated theme encountered was how high EI leaders with malintent detract from follower self-efficacy.

*High EI leaders with malintent detract from follower self-efficacy*

The last unanticipated theme to emerge was how some leaders with perceived high EI attempt to harm follower self-efficacy by bullying or negative emotional feedback. Seven

participants shared experiences from previous organizations where high EI leaders had manipulated the emotions of their followers during change. These leaders understood what they were doing to the workforce emotionally, and as one participant noted, "just left bodies in their wake". One participant noted that during one of those changes, the workforce suffered and had still not recovered, almost seven years later. Hutchinson and Hurley (2013) noted that some EI traits allow leaders to be more empathetic, but this also allows leaders to understand how to manipulate emotions to get what they want to the detriment of the employee. Four participants noted instances where high EI leaders exhibited bullying behaviors and negative emotional feedback to influence change. Whereas the primary leader in this study was acknowledged as a calming influence, other high EI leaders were noted for the tension they brought to meetings. This theme needs more research as Hutchinson and Hurley noted the lack of research that examines the relationship of bullying, leadership, and EI in the workplace.

#### *The Literature.*

The researcher noted in the literature review a wealth of examples examining EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy individually or in pairs. The literature review also revealed a lack of literature that examined all three holistically. Other researchers such as Black et al. (2019) noted a gap in the literature regarding research that examined the three theories or themes of this research. This case study did reinforce some of the earlier research on EI and trust, such as Geofroy and Evans' (2017) examination of EI and trust. EI is crucial for leaders as they must adapt to the evolving workforce and cultural dynamics (Goleman et al., 2017). In today's dynamic business and management environment, leaders must understand how to effectively communicate and adapt to environmental changes.

There is a vast amount of peer-reviewed literature on organizational change as it is one of the most researched topics in business studies (Rosenbaum et al., 2018). EI is one of the most studied topics. This case study provided no new insights to this well-researched topic other than to reinforce the assertions that high EI leaders are crucial to successful change as they can navigate the emotions involved in change. Participant 2 noted that organizational change ultimately comes down to people and emotions.

There are many reasons for change; within the DoD, it usually involves a change of leadership, which is often tied to socio-cultural change (Burnes et al., 2018). This case study also enforces other studies that relate that the success or failure of an organizational change rests with leader-follower interaction (By, 2005; Kotter, 2012; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

This case study relied on the theory of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997), in particular his social-cognitive and self-efficacy theories. This research used the definition of self-efficacy as an individual's determinate belief in their ability to successfully accomplish a task (Chesnut & Burley, 2015). Based on the interviews in this study, most of the participants developed a better sense of self-efficacy due to their interactions with the leaders. The study also provided vignettes on how the participants coped with the change and how their strategies were aided by the leaders. As is evident from the interviews, the focus of this study was found in proxy agency, or how the leaders of this study influenced follower's self-efficacy or agency (Alavi & McCormick, 2016).

This study helped bridge the gap in the literature that exists and adds to the body of knowledge on linkages between self-efficacy, EI, and organizational change. This study and the literature provided examples of the correlation between EI and self-efficacy as provided by Goleman (1995) and Bandura (1977). The nexus of the two theories can be found in self-

awareness and self-management (Bandura, 2012; Goleman, 2000). The researcher believes this study will add to the body of knowledge and aids in answering the problem statement of this research.

### ***The problem.***

The general problem to be addressed was the lack of scholarly research on the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change, resulting in a gap in the understanding leaders have regarding the influence their actions exert on follower self-efficacy during change. The researcher believes this single case-study research helps address this problem by providing insights to an organization that has recently undergone a profound organizational change with high EI leaders. The resulting observations by the workforce have provided researchers a glimpse into the effect a leader's EI has on self-efficacy. The DoD would be particularly interested in the outcome of the study as DoD organizations tend to change leaders every two to four years. The study also provided many unanticipated themes for future research, which would also be of interest to DoD.

### **Summary of the Findings.**

This study provided findings on the three overarching themes of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each theme was examined individually and then how they are interrelated. The researcher provided a detailed overview of how the interviews were conducted then subsequently coded and analyzed. The researcher then offered his interpretation of the findings through visualization of the data.

As a support to the research, a detailed explanation of the research questions was provided along with participant vignettes to help the reader understand the researcher's methods. These questions were then viewed against the research's conceptual framework to support or

refute the earlier assumptions. The result of the exploration of the themes was the initial conceptual framework was a good model to tie the three concepts together. The codes presented in Figure 4 above illustrate how the concepts are linked. As the interviews were parsed, the researcher looked for unanticipated themes and found some unexplored concepts for future research. The findings were reviewed against the current literature for confirmation or possible conflicts with other research. This case study confirmed much of the existing research on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy, albeit in a very small population.

Finally, the research was matched against the original problem statement, the lack of scholarly research on the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change. The researcher found positive connections to leader EI and self-efficacy, especially during organizational change. The interviews provided many examples of the nexus of the three themes or theories.

### **Application to Professional Practice**

The value of this study is to those leaders and academics looking to understand how leader EI influences follower self-efficacy during change. Additional value is provided to DoD leaders who are looking to implement organizational change and who wonder how that change can be best implemented and the potential effects of their EI on the workforce. The ability for leaders to understand followers' emotions, perceptions, and motivation associated with change and personal self-efficacy can help leaders craft positive strategies for change. As noted by the researcher, DoD is in a constant state of change. Finding ways to mitigate the effects of change on employees should be of paramount concern to senior leadership within DoD and other industries.

### **Improving General Business Practice**

Leaders, regardless of industry, face the challenge of keeping employees motivated and productive. This is true whether the organization is going through organizational change or simply day-to-day operations. Leaders need to ensure good communication and conflict avoidance in the workplace in addition to spurring productivity. These leadership challenges are often mixed with fiscal constraints, tight schedules, and the pressures of evolving with the competition's strategies or innovations. To manage all the challenges listed above, leaders need to understand EI: both theirs' and their employees.

The results of this study show that leaders with high EI can achieve results in change and self-efficacy where others have failed. High EI leaders know how their actions will affect followers and ensure concerns are discussed before making serious changes to the work environment (Mayer et al., 2016). The findings of this study also showed the power of caring and engaged leaders. The interviews conducted for this study all support the importance of EI as it relates to follower motivation and well-being. The vignette's provided in the findings of this study show time after time that employees appreciated sincere understanding and awareness of the challenges they face with task accomplishment. EI can be learned through study and personal reflection. Leaders who can adapt to the challenges of organizational change are more successful than leaders who insist on following inflexible and outdated strategies. Goleman (2014) noted that leaders who can control their emotions tend to create an atmosphere of trust and teamwork. Organizations that create an environment of trust, employee empowerment, shared vision, and open communication require leaders who display high levels of EI. Goleman et al. (2017) encouraged leaders to take control of difficult situations and not let emotions drive

their decisions. The information provided by this study on EI and the effect it has on followers is one way the information in this dissertation can be used by leaders.

Another essential leadership practice explored in this dissertation was change management. The study provided examples of how high EI leaders successfully implemented change and the ramifications for others looking to emulate that success. Successfully implementing change requires leaders to carefully consider how the change will disrupt current organizational norms and culture. Understanding this can assist leaders in deciding whether the change is worth the potential disruption in productivity and performance. The leaders in this study discussed at length why they were making the change with the mid-level leadership and took the feedback from those discussions into consideration before making the change. The researcher noted that many of the participants found this to be a positive change from past organizational changes where the change happened suddenly and without the knowledge of the general workforce. The researcher also noted that how a leader approached change and their perceived EI during organizational change had a positive or negative effect on the participants' self-efficacy.

Understanding self-efficacy or how employees are motivated to perform is another important result from this study that can be applied by leaders. A leader's self-efficacy can be a positive influence on followers' self-efficacy. During the interviews, it was evident the participants were influenced by the leaders' belief in themselves and their abilities. The most frequent code among the research participants to the question, "how would you describe leadership that evokes inspiration, loyalty, and admiration from you" was confidence. Confidence is integral to self-efficacy. The most popular way to increase a leaders' self-efficacy is through leadership training programs (Hannah & Avolio, 2010).

### **Potential Application Strategies**

The three main themes of this research, EI, organizational change, and follower self-efficacy, are some of the critical elements of leadership in general. Anyone looking to become a better leader would be served by studying each of these themes. Additionally, any organization hoping to develop well-rounded leaders should also adopt training programs that emphasize the themes of this study. The study itself would also be of use to organizations as the literature review and reference material cited provide a foundation for each theme. Each theme and application strategies are shared below

#### *EI*

There are many instruments on the market that can be used to measure EI. A study sponsored by the World Economic Forum correlated high EI with 90% of high performers in the workplace (Bradberry, 2017). Bradberry also shared a study that stated those who tested with high EI earned an average of 29,000 dollars more per year. Organizations should examine each of the four EI traits, as each has differing influences on workplace productivity (Goleman, 2014).

#### *Self-awareness strategies*

For example, Eurich (2018) provided that working with a co-worker who is not self-aware can cut productivity in the workplace by almost 50 percent. Eurich also found it is also not enough for someone to identify as high EI; her study noted that 95 percent of participants identified as self-aware, but only 15 percent tested as having heightened self-awareness. Organizations can help leaders understand self-awareness by promoting 360-feedback instruments (Eurich, 2018). The researcher has extensive experience with 360-feedback instruments and can attest to the effectiveness of the instruments. The researcher has also

coached junior-level leaders through their 360-degree results and has seen the profound effect it can have on someone who did not realize how others perceived them or their actions.

#### *Self-management strategies*

Organizations should also provide self-management training to leaders. This training is crucial to those who have a difficult time keeping their emotions in check. This research showed that leaders who can remain calm, even when subordinates are not, tend to be more successful in achieving long-term goals. The study also showed that coaching and mentoring could help leaders with self-management. Self-management books such as Covey's (1989) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* are recommended starting points in addition to Maxwell's (2005) *The 360 Leader*. Also recommended are classes based on Covey's book, which are widely available.

#### *Social-awareness strategies*

Social-awareness is the understanding of personal emotions, the emotions of others, and how they interact (Goleman, 1995). A component of social-awareness is empathy (Goleman, 2014). Eurich (2018) noted that empathy ranked as the number one leadership skill according to studies cited in her work. Mahsud et al. (2010) recommend executive coaching and mentoring to improve empathy and social-awareness. Another way to enhance empathy among leaders is strong role-model behaviors by senior leaders in both culture and decisions.

#### *Relationship management strategies*

The last trait in EI as a focus for leadership training is relationship management. Goleman et al. (2017) noted that relationship management is the nexus of the other three EI traits. Relationship management is another area where coaching and mentoring are recommended. The researcher noted that all 15 of the non-leader participants of this study noted the influence, both negative and positive, of their relationships with leaders. All 15 participants

also shared they preferred leaders who showed them respect, listened, and trusted them as professionals.

### *Organizational change*

There were thousands of peer-reviewed articles and books on organizational change available to the researcher during this study. This researcher shows that having a clear vision is one of the most critical aspects of organizational change. All 17 participants in this study mentioned vision as a crucial component of change. The researcher recommends Kotter's (2007) *Leading Change* as a good starting point when planning for an organizational change. The leaders in this study did not prescriptively follow the steps in leading change but used it as a reference when preparing for change. As every organization is different in size, demographics, industry, or goal, it is not recommended to use a "one size fits all" approach. This study and the research can be used as a good starting point for organizational change.

### *Self-efficacy*

Margolis and McCabe (2006) recommended differing strategies for improving self-efficacy such as peer modeling and assigning tasks that increase in difficulty over time. This study provided many examples where followers were challenged with tasks where the participant did not believe they would succeed. The faith the leader had in the follower, plus encouragement, allowed the followers in this study to not only succeed but improved their overall self-efficacy. Margolis and McCabe provided the strategies of praising, prompt feedback, and continuing support as ways to improve self-efficacy. This study supports this type of continuing support to improve follower self-efficacy. It can also be noted that participants in this study noted a lack of support, praise, and micromanagement have the opposite effect on self-efficacy.

Organizations looking to improve in the themes of this study, EI, organizational change, or employee self-efficacy, would be advised to look at all three as they are closely connected. Figure 5 showed how all three themes are closely connected and interdependent. It is recommended to take a holistic training approach to these themes when planning for leader development.

### **Summary of Application to Professional Practice**

The need to adapt and change in today's fast-paced environment demands agile leaders, who exhibit high EI behaviors, understand their employee's motivation. These leaders need to understand the themes and traits presented in this study as well as master those skills unique to their industry. This requires mastery of the craft of leadership in all its forms. This study provides a glimpse of successful organizational change, due in large part to leaders who mastered EI and understood follower self-efficacy. The researcher has heard throughout his career that good leaders are also lifelong learners. Hennessy (2018) added that intellectual curiosity is also crucial for leaders. The results of the study provide leaders with additional information to satisfy intellectual curiosity in the areas of EI, organizational change, and follower self-efficacy. The researcher also provides leaders and academics with areas noted in the study which merit additional study.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

This study was conducted within a DoD agency, and it is recommended to replicate this study in other sectors as this provides leaders and academics additional information on the themes of EI, change management, and self-efficacy. Further research outside of DoD will also add to the body of knowledge as the lack of scholarly research into the effect of leader EI on follower self-efficacy during change was the focus of this study. A study outside of DoD would

also provide information on whether the DoD workforce is unique in any of the themes of this research.

The second recommendation for further study is the suggestion of a qualitative study to further explore the area of high EI followers on organizational change. This study revealed how many high EI followers enabled the leaders in this research to reach their goals. The researcher also suggests further research into the topic of follower EI and the effect it would have on organizational change, both positive and negative is necessary.

The third recommendation for future research would be to examine leader self-efficacy on organizational change. The researcher encountered two leaders with high EI and high self-efficacy during this study as measured by Bandura's (1977) framework for self-efficacy. Leader self-efficacy was not the focus of the research, but the theme certainly warrants further investigation.

The last recommendation for further study would be how high EI leaders with malintent can detract from follower self-efficacy. As noted in the findings, half of the participants shared experiences where leaders had manipulated followers' emotions or "gaslighted" them during organizational change. This also bears further study as the researcher could not find scholarly articles on this topic that related exclusively to leadership or organizational change.

## **Reflections**

The dissertation process was one of the most rewarding and, at the same time, one of the most frustrating endeavors the researcher ever completed. Doubt and writer's block plagued the researcher, and many times he considered becoming an "ABD" or all-but-dissertation doctoral candidate. The years required to complete this dissertation provided many opportunities for

growth and reflection. The lessons for personal growth and how this dissertation can be integrated into a Christian worldview are provided below.

### **Personal & Professional Growth**

The researcher held three leadership positions while completing this dissertation. The scope of responsibility in people and resources increased as the researcher moved to each new position. Coincidentally, the lessons and themes in the dissertation process seemed to match the challenges the researcher faced with each new position. When the researcher needed to craft a strategy for his new division, he was coincidentally taking Liberty University's (LU) *Strategic Thinking for Decision Making*. When the researcher was required to develop a long-term budget for his organization, he was taking LU's *Strategic Allocation of Financial Resources*. When executive coaching became a leadership focus, the researcher was taking LU's *Organizational and Executive Coaching*. Throughout the doctoral process, when the researcher needed a reference or basis for a project or program, the Liberty curriculum provided that answer. Many of the researcher's colleagues have or are taking classes which, have little benefit to their work or personal life; this certainly was not the case for the researcher. Over the last 36 years of Federal service, the researcher has taken dozens of leadership and management courses. Each course was a building block in this research and dissertation process.

The researcher was also blessed to have the opportunity to use what he has learned about leadership on a day-to-day basis. The researcher had the chance to observe many other leaders and use that experience to understand better the information provided during the doctoral process. This study has provided opportunities at work, which the researcher has used as a learning and teaching moment for many of the leadership cognates' concepts.

The themes of EI, organizational change management, and self-efficacy were relevant to the researcher's daily task of leading people and managing his division. During the research into EI, the researcher engaged in serious self-reflection on his past leadership successes and failures. The researcher also reflected on his own EI competencies while reading Goleman (1995, 2000), Goleman et al. (2017) as well as Feldman and Mulle (2007). While reading this and other scholarly articles about EI, the researcher endeavored to improve upon each of the four competencies. The researcher also became aware of the four EI competencies, or lack of, with his leaders, peers, and subordinates. The researcher even looked at personal relationships to understand what EI competency needed work by the researcher. It is not hyperbole to say it changed the way the researcher views the world.

The researcher also observed several organizational changes during this process, large and small, to include a DoD-wide organizational change while serving at the Pentagon. During the doctoral study, the person holding the title of Secretary of Defense changed eight times. It was during one of these changes where the researcher conceived the idea for this dissertation topic. The effects of so many changes in leadership had an evident detrimental effect on DoD employees as they could not accustom to the myriad leadership styles of the many leaders that held that title. Some were career military officers, some were career civil servants, yet others came from Defense Industry. The researcher also observed several smaller organizational changes within the DoD. Each change was implemented with varying success or failure. The researcher observed each with growing interest as to how they were implemented and the effect they were having on the employees.

The doctoral learning process also provided the researcher the opportunity to explore self-efficacy in depth. The researcher was introduced to Bandura's (1977, 2012, 2018) social

cognitive, agency, and self-efficacy theories. These theories gave the researcher a new perspective on leadership as he observed organizational change and the different leadership styles within DoD. The researcher read the autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt (2016) during the doctoral study. The actions and life of President Roosevelt seemed to embody all the qualities of someone with high self-efficacy. Bandura (2012) noted that self-efficacy could be viewed to the extent to which a person believes themselves capable of performing an action. The autobiography of Roosevelt portrayed a man who had no self-doubt in his abilities. One quote in the book stood out as an example of self-efficacy; Roosevelt was quoted as saying, "If you believe you can, you are halfway there" during a commencement speech at Harvard. Another book the researcher enjoyed that spoke to self-efficacy was Henry Ford's (1926) book, *Today and Tomorrow*. In this book, Ford expressed the idea that if a person believes they can or cannot perform an action, they are correct. Ford's quote regarding belief summed up the idea of self-efficacy for the researcher better than anything else read during the doctoral process.

The knowledge and new perspectives the researcher gained during this study has been invaluable as it has been applied as a leader, husband, friend, peer, and follower. The researcher also gained a new insight into himself. The researcher has grown, and although the dissertation process was sometimes frustrating, it has been a worthwhile endeavor and recommended to anyone who seeks to be a better Christian, leader, follower, peer, and friend.

### **Biblical Perspective**

The themes of the study, EI, change management, and self-efficacy, are applicable to a person's spiritual life. This study also seeks to help Christians understand that EI theory is compatible with a Christian worldview. The Bible is replete with examples of EI; such as Ecclesiastes 7:16-19 (English Standard Version):

Be not overly righteous, and do not make yourself too wise. Why should you destroy yourself? Be not overly wicked, neither be a fool. Why should you die before your time? It is good that you should take hold of this, and from that withhold not your hand, for the one who fears God shall come out from both of them.

The writer of Ecclesiastes was describing how a person with self-awareness and self-management should behave or demonstrating the awareness of someone who is wise enough to see what is occurring around them but not falling prey to the temptations the world represents. Christ also helped his apostles with EI when He commanded His apostles in Matthew 7:1-5 (English Standard Version):

Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Christ taught the principles, which were later described by Goleman et al., (2017) as self-awareness and self-management. Learning to control emotions, knowing yourself, and having an accurate self-assessment are critical for good leaders.

The traits of social-awareness and relationship management for leaders can be found in the Golden Rule; we read in Matthew 7:12 (English Standard Version), "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them..." Jesus was telling his disciples to practice empathy. During this study, the researcher encountered the theme of social-awareness from the participants as they wanted to be treated with the same respect they treated others. As noted in

Participant 16's vignette was the need to be treated with respect and not micromanaged. Leaders can find wisdom in the Bible that relates to EI, especially when examining the teachings of Christ. Leaders who follow the example of Christ can be said to practice mirroring, which describes a person or persons trying to be someone or traits they admire (Goleman et al., 2013). Change management is another topic that can be examined through a biblical lens.

This study has shown that change can be difficult for employees as most have become settled in their ways. Successful and meaningful change involves convincing employees that change for the organization and themselves is beneficial. The leader must have a vision. We read in Proverbs 29:18 (English Standard Version), "Where there is no prophetic vision, the people cast off restraint but blessed is he who keeps the law." The meaning behind this verse is where the people have nothing to guide them, no vision or law; they lose control and eventually fail or even die. The same goes for organizational change. The employees must have a clear vision with achievable milestones. The added benefit for leaders and followers, in this case, is with each milestone that is met or goal achieved, there is an increase in self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy in the Bible can be found in Isaiah 40:31 (English Standard Version), "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." God is telling us that if we have faith, then there is nothing we cannot accomplish. This is the essence of self-efficacy. Encouraging employees by positive role models, like Christ and His apostles, and providing emotional support as Christ did for those who follow Him.

The nexus of the themes of this study can be found in Philippians 2:4 (English Standard Version), "Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others." EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy all deal with the interests of others as well as your

own. Bourne et al. (2019) noted that the values of the leaders and their followers are also the values of the organization. If that is true, then the best organizations are a reflection of the values leaders and followers have for themselves. Thomas (2015) wrote about Southwest Airlines' success, which at the time of the article was one of the most respected and successful airlines in the world. This success reflected the culture embraced by the employees, with included empowering employees to make decisions based on a hypothetical notion of, "what would Herb do?" The culture created by Herb Kelleher was one of trust and empowered employees who treated customers as they would wish to be treated (Thomas, 2015). This study and the literature examined for the study have shown a strong correlation between the Christian principles listed above and success with EI, organizational change, and positive follower self-efficacy.

### **Summary of Reflections**

The researcher spent many hours in prayer seeking guidance and strength to complete this task. It is not without a sense of irony that it takes a strong self-efficacy and EI to complete a doctoral dissertation. Lim et al. (2019) noted that fully half of the doctoral students in liberal arts programs fail to earn their Ph.D. and posited that the number could be 20 percent higher for online programs. The researcher also noted a growth in personal self-efficacy as each task was completed. The researcher learned a tremendous amount about himself during this study, about EI, self-efficacy, and his ability to deal with change. The Apostle Paul shared in 1 Timothy 4:16 (English Standard Version), "Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." I have persisted and thank God for his grace.

### Summary of Section 3

This qualitative case study explored the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. Most of the data gathered for this single case study came from semi-structured interviews with employees and leaders in an East Coast Department of Defense (DoD) agency. The researcher conducted interviews as the primary means to explore participants' personal experiences concerning the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management.

This study provided findings on the three overarching themes of EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy. Each theme was examined individually and then how they are interrelated. The researcher provided a detailed overview of how the interviews were conducted then subsequently coded and analyzed. As a support to the research, a detailed explanation of the research questions was provided with participant vignettes to help the reader understand the researcher's methods. The findings were reviewed against the current literature for confirmation or possible conflicts with other research. This case study confirmed much of the existing research on EI, organizational change, and self-efficacy.

The research was matched against the original problem statement, the lack of scholarly research on the effect a leader's EI has on employee self-efficacy during organizational change. The researcher found positive connections to leader EI and self-efficacy, especially during organizational change. The interviews provided many examples of the nexus of the three themes or theories. This section also explored the researcher's recommendations for application to the industry, recommendations for further study, biblical themes, and personal reflections.

### **Summary and Study Conclusions**

This qualitative case study explored the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. Most of the data gathered for this single case study came from semi-structured interviews with employees and leaders in an East Coast Department of Defense (DoD) agency. The researcher conducted interviews as the primary means to explore participants' personal experiences concerning the effect of leader emotional intelligence on follower self-efficacy during change management. The researcher believes this study has helped reduce the gap in knowledge noted in the research problem, the lack of scholarly research exploring the effect of leader EI on follower self-efficacy during change.

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## **Appendix A: Follower Interview Guide**

I am a doctoral candidate in business administration at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia and am conducting a study to explore the effect leader emotional intelligence has on follower self-efficacy during organizational change. As a person identified as having such an experience, you are invited to participate in this study. It will involve a semi-structured interview and will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes.

All audio recordings will be erased upon transcription. I will personally make the transcription and will not outsource this work to another person. Additionally, any identifying information will be removed from the data. Upon completion of the transcription, the verbatim transcript will be shared with you before research starts to ensure the accuracy of the interview. The interview has been designed to last approximately one-half hour and no longer than one hour. During that time, you will be invited to talk in a manner you find safe and comfortable concerning your personal understanding of leader emotional intelligence and follower self-efficacy during organizational change.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may refuse to answer any question(s), withdraw your consent, and/or discontinue your participation at any time and for any reason without penalty or prejudice.

1. How long have you been with DoD and with your current organization?
2. Please describe your experience with organizational change in your organization.
3. What is your interpretation of organizational change and your participation in that change?
4. How would you describe the organizational structure after the change?
5. What, if anything, changed regarding organizational values and goals during the recent organizational change?

6. How would you describe your role in setting organizational goals and values during that change?
7. What were your beliefs about your ability to regulate your emotions, satisfy social needs, set and attain goals and voice your perspective during your office's organizational change?
8. How were differences of opinions and needs negotiated within your organization during change?
9. Did you witness any coworkers or supervisors get emotional during the organizational change?
10. How did your leader handle the stressful situations when a person got emotional?
11. How would you describe leadership and that evokes inspiration, loyalty and admiration from you?
12. When your life feels challenging what inner and outer resources do you draw upon to find solutions?
13. How would you describe the leadership and/or managerial style of the officer leadership during change? How does this compare and contrast with your preferred leadership and managerial style?
14. How are you influenced at work to achieve goals?
15. Describe experiences at work that shifted your beliefs about what you were capable of in all your work areas/responsibilities? Describe positive shift and negative shift.
16. Describe how relating to your leader's successes and failures has become internalized into your beliefs of what you are capable of.
17. Describe the qualities and characteristics of a person who you believe gets promoted in your corporation.

18. Please share with me anything that you find relevant on the topic of self-efficacy, organizational structure and leadership style of supervisors.

Thank you for your time and for supporting this research; are there any questions you have for me? *Address any questions and thank the participant for their time and contribution.*

This concludes the interview.

## **Appendix B: Leader Interview Guide**

I am a doctoral candidate in business administration at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia and am conducting a study to explore the effect leader emotional intelligence has on follower self-efficacy during organizational change. As a person identified as having such an experience, you are invited to participate in this study. It will involve a semi-structured interview and will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. All audio recordings will be erased upon transcription. I will personally make the transcription and will not outsource this work to another person. Additionally, any identifying information will be removed from the data. Upon completion of the transcription, the verbatim transcript will be shared with you before research starts to ensure the accuracy of the interview. The interview has been designed to last approximately one-half hour and no longer than one hour. During that time, you will be invited to talk in a manner you find safe and comfortable concerning your personal understanding of leader emotional intelligence and follower self-efficacy during organizational change.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may refuse to answer any question(s), withdraw your consent, and/or discontinue your participation at any time and for any reason without penalty or prejudice.

### Self-Awareness

1. How has your ability to perceive and understand your own emotions helped you be an effective change management leader?
2. Is there a time that you remember when this was of particularly importance to your leadership?

### Self-Management

3. How has being able to act or not act on your emotional reactions helped you be an effective change management leader?
4. Is there a time that you remember when this was of particularly importance to your leadership?

### Social-Awareness

5. How has being able to accurately pick up on emotions in other people helped you be an effective change management leader?
6. Is there a time that you remember when this was of particularly importance to your leadership?

### Relationship Management

7. How has using your awareness of your own emotions helped you to be an effective change management leader?
8. Is there a time that you remember when this was of particularly importance to your leadership?
9. How long have you been with DoD and with your current organization?
10. Please describe your leadership position during organizational change.
11. What was your impetus for change in your organization?
12. Did you have a pre-described framework for change?
13. How would you describe the organizational structure after the change?
14. What, if anything, changed regarding organizational values and goals during the recent organizational change?

15. How would you describe your role in setting organizational goals and values during that change?
16. What were your beliefs about your ability to regulate your emotions, satisfy social needs, set and attain goals and voice your perspective during your office's organizational change?
17. How were differences of opinions and needs negotiated within your organization during change?
18. Did you witness any subordinates get emotional during the organizational change?
19. How did you handle stressful situations when a person gets emotional?
20. How would you describe leadership and that evokes inspiration, loyalty and admiration from you?
21. When your life feels challenging what inner and outer resources do you draw upon to find solutions?
22. How would you describe your leadership and/or managerial style during change? How does this compare and contrast with your preferred leadership and managerial style?
23. Describe experiences at work that shifted your beliefs about what you were capable of in all
24. Describe the qualities and characteristics of a person who you believe gets promoted in your corporation.
25. Please share with me anything that you find relevant on the topic of self-efficacy, organizational structure and leadership style of supervisors.

Thank you for your time and for supporting this research; are there any questions you have for me? *Address any questions and thank the participant for their time and contribution.*

This concludes the interview.

### **Appendix C: The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)**

Test Removed to comply with copyright. The SSEIT can be obtained at the reference below.

Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Hall, L. E., Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., & Dornheim, L. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25(2), 167-177. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(98\)00001-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(98)00001-4)

## Appendix D: Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Domains and Associated Competencies

**Personal Competence:** The capabilities determine how we manage ourselves.

### Self-Awareness

- *Emotional Self-Awareness:* Reading one's emotions and recognizing their impact; using 'gut sense' to guide decisions
- *Accurate Self-Assessment:* Knowing one's strengths and limits
- *Self-Confidence:* A sound sense of one's self-worth and capabilities

### Self-Management

- *Emotional Self-Control:* Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses under control
- *Transparency:* Displaying honesty and integrity; trustworthiness
- *Adaptability:* Flexibility in adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles
- *Achievement:* The drive to improve performance to meet inner standards of excellence
- *Initiative:* Readiness to act and seize opportunities
- *Optimism:* Seeing the upside in events

**Social Competence:** The capabilities determine how we manage relationships.

### Social Awareness

- *Empathy:* Sensing other's emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns
- *Organizational Awareness:* Reading the currents, decision networks, and politics at the organizational level
- *Service:* Recognizing and meeting follower, client or customer needs

### Relationship Management

- *Developing Others:* Bolstering others' abilities through feedback and guidance
- *Inspirational Leadership:* Guiding and motivating with a compelling vision
- *Change Catalyst:* Initiating, managing and leading in a new direction
- *Influence:* Wielding a range of tactics for persuasion
- *Conflict Management:* Resolving disagreements
- *Building Bonds:* Cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships
- *Teamwork & Collaboration:* Cooperation and team building

Source: Goleman et al. (2017, p. 39).

## Appendix E: Kotter's Eight-stage Process of Creating Major Change

1. Establishing a sense of urgency
  - Examining the market and competitive realities
  - Identifying and discussing crises, potential crisis, or major opportunities
2. Creating a guiding coalition
  - Putting together a group with enough power to lead the changes
  - Getting the group to work together as a team
3. Developing a vision and strategy
  - Creating a vision to help direct the change effort
  - Developing strategies for achieving that vision
4. Communicating the change vision
  - Using every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies
  - Having the guiding coalition role model the behavior expected of the employees
5. Empowering broad-based action.
  - Getting rid of obstacles
  - Changing systems or structures that undermine the change vision
  - Encouraging risk-taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions
6. Generating short-term wins
  - Planning for visible improvements in performance or wins
  - Creating those wins
  - Visibly recognizing and rewarding people who made the wins possible
7. Consolidating gains and producing more change
  - Using increased credibility to change all systems, structures, and policies that don't fit together and don't fit the transformational vision
  - Hiring, promoting and developing people who can implement the change vision
  - Reinvigorating the process with new projects, themes, and change agents
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture.
  - Creating better performance through customer – and productivity-oriented behavior, more and better leadership, and more effective management
  - Articulating the connections between new behaviors and organizational success
  - Developing means to ensure leadership development and succession

Source: Kotter (2012, p. 23).

## **Appendix F: Bandura's Determining Self-Efficacy**

1. Mastery Experiences
  - Success or failure at a given task
  - Positive thinking
  - Difficult tasks that are rewarding when completed
2. Vicarious Experiences
  - Involve observing other people successfully completing a task
  - Positive Role Models
3. Social Persuasion
  - Influenced by encouragement (or discouragement)
4. Emotional and Physiological Feedback
  - influence of emotional, physical, and psychological well-being
  - intensity of emotions
  - anxiety

Source: Bandura (1977).